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Firewater myths: Alcohol and portrayals of Native Americans in American literature

Davis, Randall Craig, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1991

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FIREWATER MYTHS: 
ALCOHOL AND PORTRAYALS OF NATIVE AMERICANS 
IN AMERICAN LITERATURE 

DISSERTATION 

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for 
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate 
School of The Ohio State University 

By 

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I am sincerely thankful for the guidance of Professor Steven Fink, whose insight throughout this project has been invaluable in helping me to focus my argument. Thanks also to the other members of my dissertation committee, Professors Thomas Woodson and Daniel Barnes, for their suggestions and comments. To my wife, Denise, who has remained a constant source of understanding and support throughout my graduate career, I express the deepest appreciation.
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Chapter I

Introduction

Whites have had a special fascination with Native Americans virtually from the arrival of the first Europeans in the New World. Despite the fact that there were hundreds of different Native American tribes throughout North America when Europeans began to colonize the Atlantic seacoast—tribes with different languages, customs, and belief systems—many of the initial European immigrants (and their Euramerican descendants) naively perceived these different groups all simply as an essentially homogeneous race of "primitives." As Robert Berkhofer has observed, "the essence of the White image of the Indian has been the definition of Native Americans in fact and fancy as a separate and single other" (xv).

Euramericans have consistently used the label "Indians" to refer to most of the indigenous peoples of North America, a label which commemorates the geographical ignorance of the first Europeans who recorded their "discovery" of the New World; the more modern "Native American" is unquestionably more accurate, though it is equally sweeping in conflating various cultures into a single term.

From the beginning of white-Native American contact, whites have generated a substantial body of lore concerning "Indian character." Whites were curious about this "new" race of people who seemed in many ways so different from themselves. As Roy Harvey Pearce has noted, Euramericans developed the concept
of "savagism" to encompass virtually all aspects of Native American culture(s), defining Native Americans by their perceived differences from whites, and later using this belief that Native Americans were "irredeemably savage" (and thus incapable of assimilating into white society) to justify, among other acts, efforts to remove Native Americans from land coveted by whites.

A series of pervasive Euramerican images of Native Americans evolved from contact between Native Americans and whites in the New World, many probably originating from historically factual incidents or situations, but then becoming generalized, reified into stereotypes that served powerfully to shape subsequent Euramerican conceptions. Thus, for example, John Smith's tale of how Powhatan's daughter purportedly saved him from execution (which first appeared in his 1624 General Historie of Virginia) "blossomed" into the myth of Pocahontas, the model for virtually hundreds of "gentle Indian maidens" in American literature, and, as Raymond Stedman has argued, an image which flourishes still (31). Conversely, early American frontier war and captivity narratives rehearsed in great detail the tortures Native Americans were often said to visit on their white captives, fueling the myth of the "ferocious Indian savage" whose only desire is to destroy whites, an image that persisted as a convention of many modern western paperbacks and films. Euramerican fantasies and fears selected actual details of white-Native American interaction and often transformed them into fixed images, many of which became lasting staples of Euramerican culture.

Not surprisingly, a number of major studies have examined how Native Americans have been portrayed in American literature. In his 1933 The Indian in American Literature, the first extended treatment of the subject, Albert Keiser announced, "In distinct contrast to English literature, the American Indian is an integral part of the writings produced within the boundaries of what is now the
United States of America” (293). Many literary scholars have followed Keiser’s lead, exploring what the myriad depictions of Indian characters throughout American literature have suggested about evolving white perceptions of Native Americans. Several have investigated connections between portrayals of Native Americans and Euramerican policies. In his landmark 1953 The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization (later reprinted with its present title Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind), Roy Harvey Pearce illustrates how Euramerican writers, as products of their social environment, frequently utilized literary images of Native Americans to rationalize the triumph of white “civilization” over Indian “savagism.” Pearce documents that though throughout the early years of intercultural contact Euramerican writers often portrayed Native Americans as susceptible to conversion to Christianity (then thought a necessary condition of civilization), soon afterwards Indians came to be consistently depicted as irredeemably “savage.” In Regeneration through Violence (1973), Richard Slotkin builds upon Frederick Jackson Turner’s “frontier hypothesis,” treating it as a powerful myth as opposed to an historical truth. Slotkin argues that the creation of a distinct, self-conscious white American identity initially required a repudiation of Native Americans; thus many of the early images of the Indian in American literature, from which many later writers took their cue, often supported “a policy of exterminating the Indians, or, at best, reducing them to a semicaptive status” (42). In The Ignoble Savage (1975), Louise K. Barnett claims that popular literary works about the frontier both received inspiration from and gave impetus to the myth of “manifest destiny” — the land-grabbing U.S. nationalism that in the first half of the nineteenth century was responsible for the destruction of many and removal westward of virtually the remainder of the Native Americans who had lived east of the Mississippi. Elémire
Zolla insists that Euramerican notions of progress served as the ultimate measuring stick of the Native American in American literature, demonstrating in his "morphology of the American Indian" how white authors consistently portrayed Native Americans as necessarily sacrificed to a sublime vision of inevitable progress. In The Return of the Vanishing American (1968), Leslie Fiedler argues that the most representative American myth is centered around the essential conflict between whites and Native Americans—"a confrontation in the wilderness of a transplanted WASP and a radically different other, an Indian—leading either to a metamorphosis of the WASP into something neither White nor Red...or else to the annihilation of the Indian" (24). More recently, Elizabeth Hanson (1988) has pointed out that America's "master writers" from the "dissensus tradition" have consistently used images of Native Americans to illustrate what they perceived as the cultural deficits in contemporary American society.

Literary scholars have found fertile ground in portrayals of Native Americans in American literature. Many of these scholars categorize Euramerican images in a fairly consistent manner: Indians are either "good" or "bad." Berkhofer traces this recurring binary imagery back to the strikingly different impressions of Native Americans recorded by the first Spanish explorers of the New World, and he suggests this basic dichotomy also characterized, though not necessarily determined, later European and Euramerican conceptions of Native Americans. Zolla likewise perceives two competing sets of imagery: the Puritan tradition, which cast Indians as "minion of the devil," and the Enlightenment tradition, which saw Native Americans as naturally noble, though primitive, beings.

1 Variations on these labels include "noble" and "ignoble," "primitively pure" and "naturally depraved."
Many literary scholars have accepted this fundamental "good-bad" distinction as a general taxonomic principle which the authors they study had apparently "inherited". Individual scholarly studies have thus distinguished themselves from one another primarily by the particular writers, genres, and/or chronological periods they cover and not by different types of "Indian imagery." It has only been fairly recently that attention has been focused upon how more specific images of Native Americans have appeared in American literature, images which do not necessarily invalidate the basic "good-bad" dichotomy but which illustrate how it does not fully suggest the range of Euramerican literary conceptions of the Indian. For example, William Scheick has analyzed how the image of the "half-breed" was used as a cultural symbol in nineteenth-century American fiction, affording white American writers a particularly appropriate vehicle through which to speculate on the prospects of a multi-ethnic New World civilization.

To date, though, no extended study has investigated in detail how Euramerican writers have conceived of and portrayed Native American drinking behavior. To be sure, literary scholars have frequently commented upon images of "the drunken Indian": Barnett claims that in the frontier romance, "bad" Indians who have had any great degree of contact with whites are frequently depicted as "transform[ed] . . . into degraded and drunken derelicts" (91); Fiedler refers to liquor as "the not so secret weapon of the WASP male" against Native Americans (57). Berkhof er even observes, "If there has been a third major White image of the Indian [aside from "good" and "bad"], then [the] degraded, often drunken, Indian constitutes the essence of that understanding" (30). Aside from such references, however, no literary scholar has yet focused primarily upon portrayals of drinking by Native Americans in American literature.
And yet some of the most widespread and longstanding Euramerican myths about Native Americans have involved drinking. "It's a well known fact that Indians can't hold their liquor." "Indians sure make mean drunks." "An Indian would drink himself to death if he had enough money and booze." "They can't help it—they're just addicted to alcohol." These and other beliefs about the drinking behavior of Native Americans have remained entrenched in the imaginations of many Euramericans virtually from colonial times to the present day; "the drunken Indian" has become a familiar cultural type.

One of the reasons why such beliefs have persisted so long is that while contemporary Native Americans have little resource and opportunity to engage in widespread combat against whites—and thus the "savage Indian warrior" has necessarily become a stereotype associated with the past—many do have opportunity (and, some researchers add, incentive) to drink. Though today Euramericans are likely to see the "war-whooping, flaming arrow-shooting Indian," only in old movies and cheap paperbacks, they may very well hear about problems associated with drinking in some Native American communities.

Indeed, perhaps the primary reason why stereotypes of "the drunken Indian" have remained so durable is that, more than many other stereotypes concerning Native Americans, some of them seem to be based on more than a grain of truth. Descriptions of drinking among Native Americans have appeared not only in sensationalistic adventure stories, but in scores of what are even today understood to be reliable historical documents—reports by agents of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, anthropologists, missionaries, etc. Bernard Sheehan's judgment of how alcohol affected Native Americans is typical of many modern historians: "Alcohol held a special place in the history of tribal disintegration . . . In epidemic force it ravaged tribe after tribe until the drunken, reprobate Indian became a fixture in
American folklore" (232). Within the last thirty or so years, social scientists have published literally hundreds of articles on drinking behavior among Native Americans. Academics, federal government officials, Native American activists—many experts have asserted that alcohol has caused serious problems within Native American communities, on and off reservations. A recent study concludes that "alcohol abuse continues to be the foremost medical and social problem in contemporary American Indian populations" (Weibel-Orlando 219). Through his award-winning The Broken Cord and his interviews with the national media, Michael Dorris has brought to widespread public attention the devastation drinking has caused in some Native American communities. Dorris cites estimates that 10% to 25% of Native American children born today (and even as high as 40% on some reservations) suffer from either Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Fetal Alcohol Effect due to maternal drinking. Dorris, who is part Modoc, writes of his reaction to such statistics: "I thought of the generations of Indians, of ancestors, who had managed to survive into the twentieth century despite invasion and plague and government policies aimed at cultural genocide: would our story end with alcohol, a liquid so deceptively fragile that it could evaporate in ordinary air?" (Broken Cord 183).

This dissertation traces portrayals of drinking by Native Americans in American literature from the seventeenth through the early twentieth centuries, examining significant literary and cultural factors that helped determine how certain images of "the drunken Indian" evolved and how others remained relatively static. The subject of Native American drinking behavior is especially important in assessing the history of white-Native American relations, and particularly in understanding Euramerican perceptions of these relations. The argument of the "bad" versus the "good" Indian could be debated without ostensible consideration of the role of Euramericans in the New World. Indeed, as Pearce has
noted, many works of nineteenth-century American literature (poetry in particular) cast Native Americans in a timeless, Edenic state, before any contact with whites. Yet writers who portrayed Native American drinking could not ignore the consequences of contact between Native American and white cultures, since before the advent of whites, North American natives were unacquainted with alcohol (see Levy and Kunitz; MacAndrew and Edgerton). Portrayals of Native American drinking behavior thus necessarily commented (if only implicitly) upon the results of intercultural contact. Indeed, for many Euramerican writers, "the drunken Indian" was treated as a compact symbol representing the perceived incongruity between Euramerican and Indian "natures," an index of the inevitable defeat of "savagism" before "civilization."

In order best to analyze images of Native American drinking behavior in American literature, ideally one would construct a New Historical juxtaposition of particular literary portrayals of "the drunken Indian" against the "historical truth"—what modern historians have reconstructed as "what really happened." After all, we cannot fully assess a stereotype until we know to what degree it is based on actuality; a full understanding of that actuality allows us to understand just how exaggerated the stereotype is. Yet, as Jane Tompkins has illustrated, there are significant disagreements among contemporary scholars concerning the history of white-Native American relations, disagreements which pose serious questions about just what constitutes the "actuality" of intercultural contact.

In her article "'Indians': Textualism, Morality, and the Problem of History," Jane Tompkins describes her experience preparing to teach a course in colonial American literature. To better understand the historical context for much of the

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2 With the exception of several tribes in the American southwest, who produced fermented beverages.
material she planned to assign. Tompkins had decided to research the relations between Puritans and Native Americans. She found more than she had bargained for: Alden Vaughan argued that on the whole, Puritans dealt quite fairly with Native Americans, scrupulously purchasing every bit of land before occupying it. Francis Jennings, though, "rips wide open the idea that the Puritans were humane and considerate in their dealings with the Indians. In Jennings' account ... the early settlers lied to the Indians, stole from them, murdered them, scalped them ... confiscated their land, destroyed their crops ..." (106-07). Calvin Martin suggested that Northeastern Native Americans over-hunted and over-trapped furbearing animals because of "a breakdown of the cosmic worldview that tied them to the game they killed in a spiritual relationship of parity and mutual obligation" (Tompkins 108). However, in Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade, seven historians refute Martin's approach, claiming that regardless of any Native Americans' change of beliefs, the exploitation of game by Native Americans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "can only be understood ... in terms of a Western materialist and political analysis" (Tompkins 110). Overwhelmed by competing modern explanations regarding interactions between Puritans and Native Americans, Tompkins decided to turn to the primary sources themselves. She soon realized, however, that these could hardly provide a corrective for the disparate modern accounts, "since the primary materials are constructed according to their authors' biases" (113). Tompkins found herself "in an epistemological quandary.

3 Ethnohistorian Jack Waddell makes a similar observation: much of the primary material upon which modern histories and anthropological studies are based was written by those who unhesitatingly accepted contemporary stereotypes of "the red man." Waddell writes of colonial descriptions of Native American drinking:

Fur traders' journals, missionary accounts, the correspondence of frontier diplomats, and other documentary records convey a common message about Native American vulnerability to alcohol.
not only unable to decide among conflicting versions of events but also unable to believe that any such decision could, in principle, be made" (103).

Following this train of thought to its logical conclusion, Tompkins muses, "The effect of bringing perspectivism to bear on history was to wipe out completely the subject matter of history. And it follows that bringing perspectivism to bear in this way on any subject matter would have a similar effect; everything is wiped out and you are left with nothing but a single idea—perspectivism itself" (117). Yet, refreshingly, Tompkins is not content with simply noting that different perspectives produce different accounts of white-Native American relations and leaving it at that; instead she argues that concerning such an important subject, a retreat into "radical perspectivism" would be irresponsible. Individual scholars must decide what the most reasonable historical explanation is, if need be picking and choosing from among rival accounts, forming decisions "as best [they] can given the evidence available" (118).

Any scholar interested in "the true story" of Native American drinking behavior will soon discover him or herself in a dilemma similar to Tompkins's. For while there is general agreement between most modern historians that drinking on the whole has had an overwhelmingly negative impact upon Native American cultures (and populations), still there are a variety of questions regarding just how and why this was (and is) so. My survey of the recent literature on the subject has noted quite a range of thinking, several sets of different theories:

For these Euro-American observers, alcohol symbolized the "redman's" fall at the "touch of civilization"... Students of these records have tended to uncritically accept the ideas of early observers that natives had an inexhaustible craving for alcohol and that this led them, inevitably, to debauchery. (246)
I. "Racial"/genetic susceptibility:

Some researchers have theorized that Native Americans as a genetically distinct group tend to have a physiological addiction to alcohol, an addiction which would explain why Native Americans historically have been perceived as "problem drinkers." Joy Leland observes that it "is still popularly believed that some hereditary peculiarity makes it impossible for Indians to drink without disastrous consequences" (2). Several recent studies have tested this time-worn notion with differing results (for examples, see Brod).

Despite its popular acceptance, many contemporary anthropologists and sociologists have approached this genetic theory with considerable skepticism, suspecting it as a throwback to scientific racism. With the mixing of gene pools in Native American populations over the last three hundred and more years, some researchers insist that "Native American" now denotes more a social than a "racial" distinction (see Dozier 74). More importantly, others argue, purely genetic/physiological theories may, in the minds of researchers and policy makers, "exclude or eliminate environmental forces" (A. D. Fisher 84), forces which may more fully account for observed patterns of drinking by Native Americans.

II. Cultural susceptibility:

Some researchers suggest that patterns of Native American drinking behavior can best be understood by observing how Native American groups have incorporated liquor within their cultures; they argue that certain aspects of particular Native American cultures may have predisposed members of those cultures to drink "inordinately." A. I. Hallowell has argued, for example, that

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4 Indeed, Thomas Brod and others have pointed out that researchers may be in no position to assess any Native American drinking behavior as "inordinate": "We simply do not know how serious a problem alcohol poses generally for Native
many Native Americans of the eastern woodlands traditionally emphasized
"restraint in the expression of all emotion, particularly in the expression of
aggression" (MacAndrew and Edgerton 108); drinking thus offered a welcome
release from these social restraints, a pleasurable "disinhibition." Several
researchers believe that traditional Native American social customs may have in
many incidences promoted the regular consumption of large quantities of liquor.
Hurt and Brown theorize that the traditional desire of the Yankton Sioux to gain
prestige through generosity has encouraged the hosts of "drinking parties" to
provide their guests with "generous" amounts of alcohol (224). Conversely, Heath
notes that among the Navaho, "To decline the offer of a drink would be to offend the
person who offered it as a gesture of friendship" ("Prohibition" 125).

Other researchers have suggested that in certain Native American cultures
drinking became analogous to particular traditional activities. Thomas speculates
that drunkenness "partakes of the aura of religious experience to North American
Indians. Extreme drunkenness [resembles] that state of consciousness in the vision
quest, just before one receives a vision" (33). Adler and Goleman "suggest that the
intensive alcohol usage of American Indians may be a cultural transformation of a
tradition of compulsive gambling" (Brod 1388). These theorists believe that
drinking may have served as a substitute for established, acceptable cultural
functions.

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Americans and their cultures... Even if we accept the evidence that a relatively
high proportion of Native Americans use alcohol heavily, we have a paucity of
information to help us evaluate whether or not the motivations for such behavior
are pathological" (Brod 1385). Price even claims, "There is evidence that drinking
has positive social functions for various Indian societies" (19).
Many researchers point to the dynamics of white-Native American relations as the strongest basis for explaining continuing patterns of Native American drinking behavior. Most proponents of this set of theories cite the cultural and economic destruction to Native American communities that such federal policies as Removal and Allotment have caused. Dozier argues that for many Native Americans, "Alcoholic beverages have been the easiest and quickest way to deaden the senses and to forget the feeling of inadequacy" (77); he contends that "the very problem of inebriety arose with the breakdown of traditional social and cultural life" (81). Several researchers emphasize the effects of "deculturation" or "anomie." French and Hornbuckle write that "Cultural marginality and escapism through alcohol have become major Native American problems" (278). Whittaker asserts that among the Standing Rock Sioux "there seems little doubt that increasing contact with white society, and with it the breakdown of social norms regulating the behavior of group members, is contributing to the high incidence of alcoholism" (87).

Others have suggested that repressive white liquor laws themselves have heightened many of the damaging consequences of Native American drinking. In 1832 the United States government officially banned all sale of alcohol to Native Americans, making it a crime for Native Americans to drink, a federal prohibition that lasted until 1933. Thus, as Baker notes, in order to avoid penalties for breaking the law, "Indians learned to drink secretly and quickly; gulping liquor became a pattern of intake that still exists today" (197). French and Bertoluzzi even argue that "The Federal Government's policy of selective prohibition has likely prevented Indian groups from developing norms for alcohol use and control" (336).
Perhaps the most interesting, certainly the most controversial, among the sociocultural reaction theories is Nancy Lurie's contention that many Native Americans may drink to prove to others their 'Indianness.' French and Bertoluzzi warn that the "major danger in fostering a myth such as 'the drunken Indian' is that, if believed by enough people, it could become a self-fulfilling prophecy" (344). Lurie suggests that many Native Americans have responded with a vengeance to the negative stereotype of them as drunkards, that many drink as a form of "protest demonstration":

Indian drinking is an established means of asserting and validating Indianness. . . . The "form" of Indian drinking (as opposed to other kinds of drinking Indians may also indulge in) is getting purposefully drunk to confirm the stereotype of the drunken Indian. Its function . . . is maintenance of the Indian-white boundary by conveying a message: "like it or not, I am an Indian." (315-16)

Lurie notes that such a motive has the positive effect of reinforcing a sense of solidarity and community for many Native Americans, but she emphasizes, "The tragedy is that the Indian protest has been so prolonged that in some cases it becomes a way of life with disastrous consequences" (331).

IV. Learned Behavior:

In their frequently cited Drunken Comportment, MacAndrew and Edgerton suggest that many of the notorious patterns of drinking that have come to be popular stereotypes of Indians were less the result of alcohol's physiological effect on the natural "savage" and more the result of Native Americans observing and emulating the behavior of white drinkers. In the earliest accounts of Native American drinking behavior (mostly from the first European explorers and traders), Native Americans did not initially engage in "drunken mayhem"; "instead we find account after account of these earliest days in which the Indians showed remarkable restraint while in their cups" (113). MacAndrew and Edgerton claim
that Native Americans "took as their exemplars of alcohol's effects on comportment the drunken doings of the very white men who introduced alcohol to them" (136); "from the beginning of the white man's presence on this continent and throughout his westward march, he drank; and when he got drunk his comportment often changed in such a manner and to such a degree that it could not possibly have escaped the attentive gaze of the ever-present Indian" (147). As A. M. Winkler and George F. Stanley both testify, there were plenty of hard drinkers—fur traders, miners, soldiers—among the first whites encountered by North American natives.

As this brief survey indicates, modern researchers have offered a variety of theories to account for observed patterns of drinking among Native Americans: some emphasize the specific relations between whites and Native Americans; some emphasize the nature of Native American cultures themselves; MacAndrew and Edgerton even point to the nature of drinking patterns among certain groups of whites. Several researchers have sought to bridge these and other hypotheses to arrive at a comprehensive explanatory model of Native American drinking behavior (for instance, see Lemert 92). Yet most seem to disagree with such attempts to derive a single theory; indeed, most of the researchers noted above acknowledge the viability, even necessity, of acknowledging a diversity of explanations. Hurt and Brown, for example, write that Native American drinking patterns "result from many determining factors rather than from any one universal causal factor" (222). Indeed, several researchers argue that attempts to "discover" such a "universal causal factor" may very well contribute to the stereotyping that has so long characterized Euramerican perceptions of Native Americans. Westermeyer writes, "Alcohol usage patterns among Indian people vary widely. . . . the actual state of affairs appears considerably more complex than
indicated by the usual stereotype" (31). As Heath contends, not only are there probably several different reasonable explanations for Native American drinking patterns, several causes for drinking, but these causes also "may change drastically through time" ("Critical Review" 18). Indeed, the assumption that there is such a discrete phenomenon as "Native American drinking," as opposed to different patterns of drinking among Native Americans—patterns which may or may not be related—may very well in itself be stereotypical.

While I have no intention to retreat into the perspectivism Tompkins characterizes as so tempting (and ultimately so paralyzing) for the literary scholar, it is not within the scope of this dissertation to mediate among the different theories outlined above. The very range of theories, and especially the determined open-mindedness of those contemporary researchers who insist that the complexity of Native American drinking patterns demands correspondingly complex and complementary explanations, provides a background against which we may measure individual portrayals of "the drunken Indian." The stereotypical nature of these portrayals may likely be based not so much on the blatant falseness of an author's assumptions about Native American drinking (though this might be the case in many instances) as on the partial explanation the portrayal implies. In other words, a stereotyped depiction may result as much from what an author does not show about Native American drinking behavior as much as from what he or she does depict.

This dissertation charts portrayals of Native American drinking in American literature from the colonial period through the early twentieth century.

5 Except perhaps insofar as the survey of historical images of Native American drinking behavior will illustrate what stereotypes may have contributed to the "self-fulfilling prophecy" mentioned by French and Bertoluzzi.
Euramerican authors who wrote about drinking among Native Americans frequently editorialized about the subject, often offering sweeping propositions about how alcohol affects Indians. Some authors claimed that liquor unleashed the "violently beastly natures" of Indians, turning them into "mad foaming bears." Others asserted that liquor had a completely debilitating effect upon Indians, sapping them of their will to live. Some suggested that frequent and excessive drinking by many Native Americans demonstrated the inherent moral inferiority of "Indian nature"; others believed drinking to be a "superficial vice," attributable only to the cupidity of white whiskey traders. Indeed, such kinds of contradictory generalizations have appeared within works by the same author—sometimes even within the same work. The prevalence of such conflicting assumptions suggests that there was no uniform stereotype of "the drunken Indian"; it would be quite simple to "deconstruct" the notion of any uniform stereotype merely by pointing up inconsistencies between individual depictions of Native American drinking behavior. Indeed, I would argue that this dissertation in part offers such a "deconstruction."

Yet what is most noteworthy is not how different authors portrayed Native American drinking behavior in different ways, but rather how certain sets of images of "the drunken Indian" converged into a set of recurring literary stereotypes which seem to have been passed down from one writer to the next. Keiser observed that "The character of the Indian [in American literature] is variously described and interpreted, mainly as a result of the purpose of the author and the circumstances under which he became acquainted with the native" (294). More recently, scholars have suggested that there is a distinct limit to this "variety" of description and interpretation. Berkhofener claims that while scientific images of Native Americans evolved dramatically as more accurate and detailed information
about Native Americans was gathered, and as scientific concepts concerning "race" and the nature of cultures changed, literary images tended to remain relatively static, so that "one finds less of a cumulative development in the genealogy of the [literary] imagery . . . the basic images . . . persist from the era of Columbus to the present without substantial modification or variation" (71). Kaufmann offers partial support for Berkhofer's thesis in his essay "The Indian as Media Hand-Me-Down," which illustrates the highly derivative nature of images of Native Americans in twentieth-century film and television. This dissertation characterizes and seeks to account for some of the most pervasive conceptions of and assumptions about Native American drinking behavior which have recurred in American literature.

Werner Sollors's recent observations concerning the "invention of ethnicity" may help to explain the development of many Euramerican portrayals of and assumptions about drinking among Native Americans. Sollors has argued that many concepts of "ethnicity" and "race" (including those held by members of a given "ethnic group" as well as those held by others outside the group) have often been shaped not so much through a recognition of truly essential qualities as through the "invention" of "collective fictions" about such qualities. Of the term "invention," Sollors writes, "this usage is meant not to evoke a conspiratorial interpretation of a manipulative inventor who single-handedly makes ethnics out of unsuspecting subjects, but to suggest widely shared, though intensely debated, collective fictions that are continuously reinvented" (xi). Sollors holds that in many ways "ethnicity" may be understood as "not a thing but a process [requiring] constant detective work from readers, not a settling on a fixed encyclopedia of supposed cultural essentials" (xv).
Many assumptions about Native American drinking behavior may be usefully perceived as "collective fictions," not in the sense that they were necessarily always false, but that they were often shaped more by powerful cultural beliefs about "Indian nature" and relations between Euramericans and Native Americans, and by conventions of literary genres which "textualized" Native Americans, than by "objective" consideration of actual instances of drinking among actual Native Americans. (Indeed, as we will see, the observations of those whites who did attempt such "objective" consideration were often profoundly influenced by the observers' ethnocentrism.) This is not to suggest that cultural and literary factors fully determined in all cases how Euramerican authors portrayed Native American drinking. Within any given period, there was no single, monolithic understanding of "Indian nature" among Euramericans; nor was there a monolithic set of conventions within genres of "Indian literature." Individual Euramerican authors could, depending on their own perspective on Native Americans and how they should be depicted in literature, position themselves along a spectrum of existing conceptions about "Indian nature." Yet, as suggested earlier, at any time there was a distinct boundary delimiting accepted (and acceptable) viewpoints along this spectrum, a defined range of cultural belief.

Sherry Sullivan argues that ethnography offers the most promising method of examining depictions of Native Americans in American literature. According to Sullivan, portrayals of Native Americans should be perceived not simply in terms of how they contributed (however unwittingly or unwillingly) to white injustices against Native Americans, but also from an "internal, contextual perspective" (239). Literary scholars should reconstruct the perspective of the original intended audience, probe what its acknowledged concerns were, and not concentrate solely upon a conjectured underlying mythical drive in the audience's attitudes toward
Native Americans, which will invariably, due to historical hindsight, result in "a negative consensus" (241). A "reexamination of the products and events of an historical period from the standpoint of its participants" (239) will provide the literary scholar with a deeper understanding of those products and events.

The ethnohistorical approach suggests that we should accept as serious and worthy of study in themselves the various positions in the ongoing debates in American literature concerning the character and fate of Native Americans, and not simply melt them all in the crucible of ultimate historical processes. This dissertation thus observes individual variations in portrayals of Native American drinking behavior, analyzing them in terms of the writer's probable understanding and awareness of the problems created by drinking among Native Americans, as well as noting the development of patterns between individual portrayals. In order better to understand the range of the contemporary thinking about the subject, and to give the project a greater ethnohistorical depth, this dissertation not only examines works of fiction and literary travel narratives, but also observes how prominent American ethnographers have perceived Native American drinking behavior. Analyzing these different kinds of texts—the "literary" and the "scientific" (though these distinctions frequently blur)—and suggesting the social and literary contexts in which these texts were written and read, serves to indicate just which factors were the most influential in determining how Native American drinking was stereotyped, allowing us to account for distinct patterns in the "collective fictions" about "the drunken Indian" in American literature.

As this dissertation demonstrates, assumptions about the perceived "phenomenon" of Native American drinking came to play a key role in white Americans' attempts to interpret relations between Euramericans and Native
Americans. Native American drinking was treated as a sort of "leading indicator" of how Native Americans would adjust (and were believed actually to be adjusting) to the expansion of Euramerican society westward across the North American continent. Images of "the drunken Indian" became focal points both for those who criticized the policies which accompanied the unquestioning belief in "manifest destiny" and for those many more who argued that "Indian nature" was weaker, inferior to that of whites. Stereotyped images of Native American drinking behavior, which were used often to explain the dynamics of white-Native American interaction, were often, in fact, largely influenced by a particular Euramerican writer's theory of Native American-white relations, which was, in turn, often governed by the conventions of the genre in which he or she wrote. This dissertation identifies some of these most significant conventions, and speculates how they have come to shape persistent Euramerican assumptions about Native American drinking behavior, demonstrating in part just why the "the drunken Indian" has remained such a resilient American type, "so long-lasting and so thoroughly ensconced in our social fabric" (Westermeyer 29).
Chapter II
Early American Literature

Many of the texts written by Anglo-Americans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were primarily utilitarian. Sermons, which dominated the early American presses for decades (Mott 14), directed readers how to comport themselves in the New World. Travel narratives, a conspicuous product of the Mid-Atlantic and especially the Southern presses, beckoned to prospective immigrants to settle on the fertile lands of British America, in some cases providing (relatively) explicit instructions of "how to get here from there." While private library and import records show that many colonial Euramericans were interested in British poetry and fiction of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—with Bunyan, Fielding, and Pope topping the lists of the most popular authors—most of the texts written by emigrant Europeans and their descendants were generally directed to some immediate practical purpose and were not considered contributions to a "national" literature.

Colonial Euramerican writers obviously faced a different situation than their counterparts in England. Until the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, North America as a whole was sparsely explored. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, despite greater emigration westward by many Euramerican colonists, the frontier between the "civilization" that the whites prided themselves with having established on a widening strip along the eastern
coast of North America and the "howling wilderness" beyond was an object of enduring fascination. The American landscape offered the displaced European features unlike anything to be found in the Old World: great cataracts, large stretches of "untouched" forest, interspersed with countless lakes and ponds. One especially curious feature of this landscape was "a race of dark-skinned people" misnamed "Indians" in the thwarted attempt to find a quick, cheap westward passage from Europe to India. Hailed in the early nineteenth century as the ideal subject by many writers who sought to establish a self-conscious American literary tradition, Native Americans were a natural staple of colonial "literary material." reflecting colonists' unprompted preoccupation with this intriguing people. In his study of popular American literature, Russel Nye notes:

The largest body of [colonial] literary materials... was that which concerned the Indian. The English, who had few contacts with primitive peoples, found the "red savages" puzzling, dangerous, and absolutely fascinating. Every journal keeper, diarist, sermonizer, explorer, and historian who had any contact with Indians, seemed to have written it down. They recorded customs, dress, manners, language, society, and appearances, speculated endlessly about the Indian's origins and history... (Unembarrassed Muse 14)

Anglo-American colonists were predictably concerned with how whites should interact with Native Americans. Should the two intermarry, grafting the "superior qualities" of the European mind upon the "hearty New World body" in order to create a new American race? Should whites attempt to lure the "savage pagans" into the fold of Christianity? Should there be a rigid separation maintained between Native American and white cultures? Should Anglo-Americans seek Native Americans as military allies in their disputes with other European nations who had attempted to carve out their own piece of the New World pie? Should they, as Conrad's Kurtz was to suggest of the natives of the African Congo.
"exterminate the brutes"? Although not all Anglo-American writers explicitly addressed these questions, in their attempts to define and/or facilitate the mission(s) of Anglo-Americans in the New World, many necessarily implied what stance whites should take towards Native Americans.

Proposed answers to these and other questions regarding white-Native American contact more often than not depended, of course, upon an individual writer's conception of "Indian nature." Though they often recognized differences between tribes, many colonial writers assumed that there was such a thing as a general "Indian nature," and many of their works sought to illustrate or explain just what constituted this nature. Berkhofer has noted that from the earliest European contact with Native American peoples, two distinct traditions of white conceptions of Native Americans have evolved: the Noble and the Ignoble Savage. The Noble Savage tradition, exemplified in a work such as Benjamin Franklin's "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America," emphasized that whites have much to learn from the primitive Native Americans, in his essay, Franklin praises in particular the decorum with which Native Americans conduct political discussions, contrasting this with what he perceives as the chaos of the white man's manner of political debate.

The Ignoble Savage tradition, exemplified in, for example, Hugh Henry Brackenridge's edition of the Knight and Slover captivity narratives, often explicitly suggested that all Native Americans should be eradicated from land that "by right" belonged to whites; in his editorial comments Brackenridge argues that all Indians have an irredeemably violent nature, concluding that "the tortures
which they exercise on the bodies of their white prisoners justify [their]
extermination" (36).

Of course, not all seventeenth- and eighteenth-century works dealing with
Native Americans were as polarized as these two examples. most writers did not
argue as decisively for Euramericans to imitate certain "noble" Indian traits or to
exterminate the entire "ignoble red race." Yet in virtually every case an individual
writer's explicit or implicit stance on what should be the relationship between
Euramerican colonists and Native Americans was in large part determined by his or
her understanding of just what constituted "Indian nature."

The depiction of "Indian nature" in a given colonial work often was suggested
not so much by a writer's direct focus upon this question but more by the function
of Native Americans in the work as a whole. While many works of colonial
literature did focus largely upon Native Americans, few accepted Native Americans
as subjects to be studied for their own sake. Some ulterior agenda is apparent in
nearly every Euramerican colonial work dealing with Native Americans, and it is
this agenda that to a large degree determined what kind of information about Native
Americans was included. information that, in turn, provided readers with a sense of
"Indian nature." New England Puritans had a different sense of their presence in
the New World than did Euramerican colonists in the south. this different concept
of mission naturally affected the portrayal of Native Americans in Puritan and mid-
Atlantic and Southern colonial literature. Richard Beale Davis poses the
provocative question, "Why is it that the captivity narrative is the principal
literary form in which northeaster (and later western) Indians survive? And ... why is it that the great quantity of southeastern literary expression regarding the
Indian concerns more peaceful things, really economic or ethnological matters?"
(107). Yet while diversities between Euramerican regional “subcultures” do help account for the different forms of Native American portraits in colonial literature, I wish to suggest a different, though in some ways related, framework for understanding significant variations in the depictions of “Indian nature,” not only in Anglo-colonial but in later American literature as well. Texts concerning Native Americans can be perceived as drawing upon one of two distinct modes of perception (or to differing degrees upon both)—what I have termed “epic” and “ethnographic.”

Most Anglo-American colonists who wrote about Native Americans, unlike many of their nineteenth- and twentieth-century counterparts, drew upon their own face to face contact with Native Americans, which, despite these writers’ inevitable ethnocentricity, often makes their work, even among modern anthropologists, invaluable sources in studying eastern Native Americans. Yet, as suggested, not all colonial writers wrote with the same agenda and thus not all writers gave the same shape to their portraits of Native Americans. Broadly speaking, epic narratives centered upon the Euramerican experience in the New World, attempting to make sense of this experience in terms of a culturally coherent white group (most notably, but not confined to, Puritans). Epic narratives cast this white experience as a dramatic struggle with whites striving to maintain their “cultural integrity” against the chaotic, threatening “dark forces” of the American wilderness. Epic narratives purported to chronicle the process of Euramericans redefining themselves in the New World, often through violent interaction with the unknown wilderness, of which Native Americans were
conspicuous constituents. In most cases, the Indian was necessarily on the periphery of this kind of text, figuring only insofar as he was conceived to contribute to the New World Euramerican drama, principally in the role of antagonist.

Ethnographic texts, while also written from a distinctly Euramerican perspective, focused less upon the "Euramerican New World drama" and more upon "scenic" elements, the unknown American wilderness, of which the Native American was an intriguing inhabitant. Often written by those who had little interest in celebrating the creation of a distinctively "new and better" Euramerican society in North America, ethnographic accounts attempted to explore Native Americans more upon their own terms, that is, with fewer (or less strongly formed) preconceptions about "Indian nature," (though admittedly such exploration was often a prelude to white intervention, most notably in the form of Europeans migrating and settling upon American land). While epic narratives attempted to construct a story, a dramatically coherent version of events, and thus forced the Indian to fit into the plot of this story, ethnographic texts demanded no necessary coherence of plot, the Euramerican writer was more observer than actor. "Indian nature" in ethnographic literature tended to be induced from observed traits. Not surprisingly, ethnographic portrayals of Native Americans were generally more open-ended, and often more sympathetic, than epic portraits.

Anglo-colonial literature as a whole provided a vast range of "information" which created varying versions of just what comprised "Indian nature." A writer's focus on aboriginal methods of torture could suggest quite different things about

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1 See especially Slotkin, Chapter 2.
"Indian nature" than, for example, an extended description of native medicinal practices. One "Indian trait" that figured significantly in many Anglo-colonial texts involved the perceived attraction that many Native Americans had to alcohol. Although some of the colonists who wrote about Native Americans did not explicitly promote the image of the Indian as drunkard, many seemed to subscribe to such a belief. Lender and Martin claim that "The colonial view of Indian drinking, that red men could not hold their liquor, was in fact the beginning of a long-standing stereotype of the impact of alcohol on the tribes" (23).

Colonial writers in both the epic and ethnographic modes often tended to write about Native Americans who were frequently thirsty for alcohol, who would imbibe to their physiological limits, who, once started, just could not stop. Yet the explicit consequences of Native American drinking behavior, while varying across individual works within the epic and ethnographic modes, in general were given dramatically different treatment between these two modes. Epic treatments, which focused upon how Native Americans affected New World white civilization, tend to present the drinking Indian as a violent, dangerous, unreasoning force. The primary consequence of Indian drinking in the epic is an increased risk to the Euramerican presence in the New World; alcohol serves to exacerbate the latent violence in the "red man."

Ethnographic descriptions, on the other hand, tend to focus more upon the effect of alcohol upon Native American societies themselves. Native American drinking behavior in ethnographic literature often demonstrates not how alcohol makes Native Americans more of a threat to Euramerican society but rather how alcohol serves as a destructive force within Native American communities and
consequently how Euramericans pose a threat to Native Americans. These opposed images would naturally have significant implications in how Euramericans perceived the potential development of intercultural relations and especially how they would develop policies which attempted to regulate their dealings with Native Americans. Not surprisingly, some of the first policies implemented by Euramericans in the New World concerned what came to be known as the Indian liquor trade.

The Fur Trade and Colonial Liquor Legislation

Alcohol undeniably played a key role in early Native American-white relations. Accounts of initial encounters between European explorers and North American natives often include the sharing of liquor, a symbolic gesture on the part of the whites but one which is reported to have had a more than symbolic effect on Native Americans. The famous story of Henry Hudson’s 1609 encounter with the natives of what came to be known as Manhattan Island certainly fits this pattern: one of the group of Delawares greeting Hudson and his crew accepted the mysterious proffered cup from the “Manitto,” with some trepidation as the story goes, but soon found that the strange liquid brought about a very curious and pleasant sensation. Intrigued, the Delaware asked for more of the Manitto’s drink, encouraging his fellows to partake as well, bringing about a general state of intoxication and inspiring the name of the island of Manhattan, which, as Heckewelder records, “in the Delaware language means ‘the island where we all became intoxicated’” (262). William Johnson writes, “Likewise spirits figured conspicuously in the first meeting of the English with the Indians of the
Massachusetts. Shortly after the landing, in 1620, the native king, Massasoit, visited
the settlement at Plymouth, where the governor treated him to a military salute
with music and 'a pot of strong water'" (186). Martin and Lender note that Samoset,
"the tribesman who helped the Pilgrims survive the first winter, was particularly
fond of beer" (23).

Wilbur Jacobs claims that in negotiations between Anglo-Americans and
Native Americans, "Rum was the most popular of all gifts. . . . Since the British had
almost a monopoly on rum, they used it extensively in all their dealings with the
Indians" (Diplomacy 53). In fact, Charles Thomson, later Secretary of the
Continental Congress, wrote an influential treatise in the middle of the eighteenth
century (considered later in this chapter) asserting that white negotiators' practice
of plying Native Americans with rum was a major cause for the "alienation" of the
Delaware and Shawnee from "British interests."

Yet by far the most significant source of alcohol for Native Americans in
seventeenth- and eighteenth-century was fur traders. French, Dutch, and English
explorers had been greatly disappointed when they found there was no easy
passage to India north of the Spanish colonies, and their disappointment had only
grown when they discovered they could not expect from their newly claimed
territories the rich mineral deposits Spanish explorers had brought home to
Europe. Yet they were delighted to find in North America a vast quantity of
furbearing animals and a people proficient at performing the dirty, difficult work
of hunting and skinning these animals. Fur had been a precious commodity in
Europe throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, much of it imported
overland from Russia. The prospect of a cheaper fur source was especially enticing to many explorers and settlers of North America as well as their European sponsors. French fishermen along the coast of New Foundland in the late sixteenth century found that the natives were greatly interested in the European metal items they carried—knives, hatchets, pots, and other utensils. Such tools had obvious advantages to a people who had to spend much time and labor to fashion a comparatively blunt-edged stone knife or a relatively short-lived earthen cooking pot. These fishermen recognized a large, untapped market. "These furs in Europe brought a price so large as to dwarf the profits from fish, and many French fisherman became traders" (Phillips 1:15). The economic potential for the fur trade was so great that Henry IV believed the most efficient way to colonize New France would be to grant monopolies to furtrading companies who would in turn agree to settle a certain number of French families along the St. Lawrence (Phillips 1:28). New Netherland was developed in a similar fashion: the Dutch West India Company was granted a charter in 1621 giving it sole authority to trade in the Hudson Bay area with the expectation that it would lure colonists.

While the fur trade did not play as significant a role in the founding of English colonies in America as it did for the French and Dutch, it became an important aspect of relations between Native Americans and Anglo-Americans, especially as far as the Indian liquor trade was concerned. Though fur was not among the initial reasons for the colonizing efforts of the Virginia Company, who came to rely upon tobacco as a cash crop, by the later seventeenth century a fairly sizable fur trade had begun in Virginia; Charlestown, the hub of the Carolina
colonies was founded in large part on the expectation of a large plantation trade with Native Americans, mainly for slaves and deerskins (Hudson 435).

Although the English immigration to New England is often described as a religious exodus, the fur trade played an important role in New England's early economic history. The Pilgrims' voyage to America was financed in large part by English merchants who expected a profitable return in beaver furs. The Massachusetts Bay Colony sought to raise revenue for its colonial government by "granting a [fur] trade monopoly to a small number of respected, influential men" (Kawashima 77). Until King Philip's War, the fur trade was a major source of New England's economic clout, and even after the war it remained an important aspect of Native American-white interaction.

North American natives apparently eagerly received European metal tools and woolens. This often posed an inconvenience for European traders; in fact, one of the reasons why the first European colonists in Virginia were discouraged from opening an extensive trade with Native Americans was because they needed for their own purposes all the tools and clothing they brought with them from Europe. However, many traders, some taking their cue from French traders in New France, soon discovered a commodity that brought them even more profit: alcohol. Liquor could be imported in an extremely potent form from Europe or, increasingly for Anglo-Americans throughout the colonial period, from the New England rum distilleries fed by Caribbean molasses. It could then be carried to Native American villages or trading posts and there diluted with water, thus making it a cheap, portable trade good. Although some traders feared the idea of "the drunken Indian," many recognized the distinct advantages of an inebriated trading partner.
whose faculties for bargaining had become impaired. Alcohol was a profitable consumer good for the traders since there was a frequently recurring demand for it, whereas a woolen blanket might last for many months and a metal knife or copper pot for years, liquor was quickly consumed, creating a demand that perpetuated itself. Richard White suggests that some fur traders would purposefully get their Native American trading partners "addicted" to rum in order to create in them a virtually unlimited desire which the traders could turn into a greater number of furs traded since they had noted that Native Americans would often stop hunting when they had traded for enough durable European goods (58). Sheehan writes that "Rum, whiskey, and brandy assumed major importance in trade between white and Indian and were critical factors in the decline of native society" (233).

Liquor came to be a consistent feature of the French, Dutch, and English fur trade, and a continual target of colonial regulations. Euramerican settlers generally opposed the liquor trade because it was thought to create "unruliness" among Native Americans. Christian missionaries complained that the traffic interfered with their efforts to convert the "heathen." Again and again throughout virtually every European colony in North America a similar pattern was established: laws either curbing or prohibiting colonists from trading liquor (and often firearms) with Native Americans were passed by colonial governing bodies, European monarchs, or their colonial representatives, and Euramerican traders found a way to circumnavigate such regulations. Jesuit missionaries and colonial officials in New France argued heatedly over the role of liquor in the fur trade. The Jesuits claimed that the brandy traders hindered their efforts to convert the heathen: in 1660, Bishop Laval of New France "took the bold step of
excommunicating all those who sold intoxicants to the Indians" (Stanley 492-93). Officials of the ancien régime in turn argued that brandy was essential to the economy of the colony and that if the liquor trade was stopped, New France would lose a considerable amount of Native American "business" to the Dutch and English. Alternately heeding both sets of arguments, the French King and parliament instituted a series of regulations alternately prohibiting and permitting the liquor trade until in 1679 an ordinance was passed which prohibited traders from taking liquor to Native American villages but which allowed the sale of liquor to Native Americans within established French settlements, a law which stood throughout the remainder of French rule in Canada. New Netherland also sought to control its Indian liquor trade; beginning in 1643, it enacted a series of regulations prohibiting traders from trading liquor to Native Americans.

New England regulation of the liquor trade began in 1633, when the General Court stipulated that no trader was to provide "wine or strong water" to Native Americans without permission of the governor or deputy governor (Kawashima 80). Within the next few years, Puritan leaders, realizing this policy had failed to curtail the perceived problem of drinking among Native Americans, experimented with a series of laws limiting the privilege of trading liquor with Native Americans (in specified small amounts) to a few, select persons, until in 1657 a general prohibition of selling liquor to Native Americans was passed. Puritan authorities also tried to regulate Native American drinking behavior itself. Native Americans within white communities were subject to the same laws against drunkenness as were whites. In fact, "the colonists considered drunkenness in an Indian as a source of various crimes and thus a more serious infraction than drunkenness in a
white man" (Kawashima 216). Native Americans could even be fined heavily for
giving or selling liquor amongst themselves.

However, violations of the prohibition were still judged to be rampant. A 1694
statute sought to put an end to the problem once and for all: for the "plantation
Indians" it "effectively forbade settlers to trade with the Indians in 'any strong
beer, ale, cider, perry, wine, rum, brandy, or other strong liquors'" (Kawashima 82-
83). All trade with Native Americans outside the jurisdiction of white settlements
was confined to government-run "truck houses" (except for those areas specifically
not served by a truck house). "Although private traders who illegally sold liquor to
the Indians were to be fined fifty pounds or suffer six months' imprisonment, the
truck masters were allowed to supply the natives with rum in moderate quantities
'as they shall in prudence judge convenient and necessary'" (Kawashima 87-88).
This truck house system lasted until the American Revolution.

Other Anglo-American colonies also instituted measures for curbing the
trading of liquor to Native Americans. The course of liquor trade regulation in
South Carolina, Georgia, and New York is in many ways representative of the
general trend throughout the colonies. The commission established by the royal
proprietors of the Carolinas in 1680 prohibited Carolinian traders from selling
liquor to Native Americans (Gibson 212). Number 2 on a list of instructions issued to
traders by South Carolina Commissioners in 1711 stated, "That you neither directly
nor indirectly carry up, give, sell, or any other way dispose of, to, or among the
Indians any rum or other spirits and all debts contracted for rum or any other

2 Those Native Americans living in "praying towns" or within the
recognized bounds of white communities.
spirits would be declared void" (Johnson and Sloan 93). Nevertheless, South Carolina liquor traders were the occasion of friction between Georgia and the older colony in the 1740s. From the beginning of Georgia's history, Oglethorpe had prohibited rum and other ardent spirits from being imported into the colony, allowing only beer, wines, and ale (Osgood III: 48). According to enactments of 1735, it was illegal for Georgians either to drink spirits or to trade it to Native Americans. Yet in an attempt to allow Georgian traders to become more competitive with their South Carolinian brethren who were capitalizing on trade with Native Americans of Georgia by bringing rum across the border (and to bolster Georgia's ailing lumber trade with the West Indies), Georgia's prohibition was lifted in 1742 (Osgood III: 60, IV. 138). Oglethorpe's ideal vision of a dry colony fell to pressure by (among others) Georgian Indian traders who wanted to compete with the illegal South Carolina rum traders.

Allen Trelease notes that the Duke's Laws of 1655, established when the English seized New Netherland from the Dutch, "prohibited the [Indian liquor] traffic on Long Island and its dependencies, but excepted the sale of up to two drams 'by way of reliefe and Charity to any Indian in Case of sudden extremity sickness faintness or weariness" (188). All Indian traders were required to be licensed by the governor. the governor would permit licensed traders to sell liquor only if the trader could guarantee the Indians' good behavior. In 1691, the Long Island prohibition was relaxed to allow Native Americans to purchase up to five gallons at a time. During Queen Anne's War, Albany officials decided that their problems in negotiating with the neutral Iroquois, which the whites at least partially blamed on Iroquois drunkenness, justified a general prohibition of the liquor trade with
Native Americans: except for several months in 1710 and 1711, from 1709 to 1713 no traders were allowed to barter liquor with Native Americans (Norton 68). However, after 1716 the New York colonial government allowed the liquor trade to continue, apparently regarding any further attempt to stop it as a lost cause.

In 1755, Edmund Atkin, onetime Indian trader in South Carolina, submitted what Jacobs calls "the first complete plan for the management of Indian–white affairs" to the British Board of Trade (Dispossessing 63). One of Atkin's major complaints about the then current system (or lack of system) was how it allowed traders to sell liquor to Native Americans despite legislation forbidding this practice in virtually every colony. Atkin proposed a plan whereby all colonial Indian trade practices would be overseen by two Board-appointed superintendents, one for the northern district, one for the southern. Persuaded by Atkin's emphasis on the need to standardize Indian policy throughout British America, the Board of Trade established the Indian superintendency system. Sir William Johnson, superintendent for the Northern department (consisting of all English territory north and west of the Ohio River) in an effort to police trading between whites and Native Americans, in 1761 ordered that all Indian traders be licensed and restrict their base of operations to established trading or military posts. This measure was intended in large part to keep traders from carrying rum into the Native American villages where their actions could not be supervised. "At first [Johnson] simply attempted to limit the sale of rum, but in early 1762 he accepted advice from Amherst and completely prohibited the use of liquor in the Indian trade" (Norton 210). Pontiac's Rebellion (1763) caused a temporary suspension of the Indian trade. When the trade reopened in the spring of 1765, the superintendents appeared to
come to the same conclusion about the liquor trade as the New York government did in 1716: "General Gage and the Indian superintendents, with approval from London, agreed to . . . allow the sale of rum. 'It has long been my Opinion,' wrote Gage. 'That we must at length yield to the immoderate Thirst which the Indians have for Rum and let them have it' . . . Johnson agreed, noting that 'the Indians value it above everything else.' " (Norton 213).

Thus despite attempts by virtually every Anglo-American colony to prohibit or at least limit the Indian liquor trade, many of the colonial leaders and modern historians seem to concur that such attempts were ultimately bound to fail. Douglas Leach writes, "Even a superficial scanning of the records of nearly every English colony on the northern frontier will disclose repeated attempts to suppress the abuses in the fur trade; the frequent reiteration of rules and regulations indicates how ineffective such attempts usually were" (145). Indeed, fur traders could often muster persuasive arguments to defend their lucrative liquor trade with Native Americans. With competition all along the western frontier from Canada to Louisiana, Franco- and Anglo-American traders alike could argue to their respective governments that a prohibition of the Indian liquor trade would only damage their country's "national interests," since Native Americans could purchase liquor from the other side anyway and that would divert trade to "the enemy."

But perhaps the most important reason why the various colonial attempts to implement an "Indian prohibition" generally failed was in the nature of the British "occupation" of America: though the area of established Anglo-American communities grew throughout the colonial period, increasing from a thin strip along the coastline throughout much of the seventeenth century to much of the
land east of the Appalachian range in the late eighteenth century, the area through which traders roamed extended far beyond the settled Euramerican communities. Even if colonial officials had the desire (which the repeated legislative attempts throughout the colonial period do suggest), they could not effectively police the frontiers. In spite of repeated attempts by Native American leaders to convince colonial officials to stop traders from selling liquor to their people, no amount of colonial legislation could put an end to the liquor trade with such a perceived Native American demand for liquor and with such profits to be made. As historian of American Indian policy S. Lyman Tyler notes, "The official position of the crown was almost always against making liquor available to the Indians. In actual practice the trader or frontiersman found a way to use it when it was his advantage to do so" (28).

**Epic Literature: Indian War Histories**

Although the epic mode of colonial literature concerning Native Americans was not completely monopolized by New England Puritans, the evolution of the epic mode of "Indian literature" was certainly influenced by the Puritan's conception of their mission in America. The nature of the Puritan's "errand in the wilderness" helps to explain their affinity for the epic mode. As Slotkin notes, "the Puritan saw the New World as a desert wilderness" (59): it was a land of refuge from persecution, where God's elect could build a theocracy unknown anywhere else upon earth. New England was the New Zion; every event that befell the Puritan colonists had possible typological significance. These events were perceived not
only to have been prefigured in the Holy Scriptures but were also interpreted as
signs of God's present disposition toward his newest set of "chosen people."

Narrative history became the primary method of textualizing the Puritan
two experience in the New World; literature was often a self-conscious meditation upon
the American "divine experiment." For one, it helped to prove to both those
Puritans remaining in England and to the Puritans' enemies abroad the success of
the "city on a hill" (see Murdock 74). Secondly, and perhaps more importantly,
narrative history served to instruct New England Puritans themselves. A group
that emphasized the relation of the individual with God, which consciously avoided
the elaborate hierarchical structure of Roman Catholicism or Anglicanism,
demanded that church members have direct access to the scriptures. Locally
printed books and pamphlets augmented the church service as a means of
exhorting New England Puritans to fulfill their destiny 3

Puritans believed that if their experiment in America was in fact led by God,
then every occurrence, even the most minute, may very well be a divine sign.
Murdock writes, "the Puritans' wholehearted belief in 'Providences' involved a
confidence that, since all events were controlled by God, all were worth recording
as evidence of the divine will. The historian, therefore, must so far as possible set
down everything, without imposing on the facts any personal prejudice or
individually contrived principle of selection" (76). So goes the rhetoric of many of
the prefaces to Puritan histories; the presumption of divine ordination of Puritan

3 Murdock writes of the Puritan press, begun as early as 1638. "In seventy
years [Puritans] made Boston second only to London in the English speaking world
as a center for the publishing and marketing of books" (31)
affairs itself constituted a formidable communally-based "prejudice" or "principle of selection."

Though first printed in London in 1654, Edward Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence of Sion's Saviour in New England exemplifies the early Puritan historical narrative; J. Franklin Jameson considers it "the first sustained mythicizing of the American experience" (Edward Johnson v). In an attempt to trace the course of God's covenant with his chosen people of New England from 1628 to 1651, Johnson (re)casts the history of New England as a series of "wonder-working providences"; virtually every incident becomes a sign of God's pleasure or displeasure with the New World elect. Johnson begins with a six-chapter "commission" from the Lord commanding his people to leave England, wherein a "multitude of irreligious lascivious and popish affected persons [has] spread the whole land like Grasshoppers" (23), and travel to America, "the place where the Lord will create a new Heaven, and a new Earth in, new Churches, and a new Common-wealth together" (25). Focus here is entirely upon the Puritan mission—what the Puritans are running from in England—and not upon what they should expect to find in the New World; America is seen as a blank slate upon which God, through the worldly means of the Puritans, will write the New Zion.

Not that Johnson assumes that the building of the New Zion would have no opposition. Indeed, a governing metaphor in the Wonder-Working Providence is the elect as "soldier of Christ," involved in continual combat with all minion of the "Divel." The elect must guard themselves against the "heathen Indians";

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4 Johnson also cautions the elect to guard themselves against the "seven sectaries"—Gortonists, Papists, Familists, Seekers, Antinomians, Anabaptists.
ultimately Indian hostility serves to bind the "soldiers of Christ" closer together, fighting for a common "holy" cause. Johnson's book is thus structured in large part around the founding of churches in New England, each new church seen as another step toward the fulfillment of the New World Zion.

Within this framework, Indians play a circumscribed, predictable role, bit players in the drama of the New World Israelites. Not surprisingly there are no Native Americans who are reported to drink in this story. This is not necessarily because Johnson was unaware of drinking as a perceived problem among Native Americans—he was commissioned as an Indian trader when he first emigrated from England in 1630 and, as we have noted, Massachusetts Bay had officially curbed the Indian liquor trade as early as 1633. Rather, Johnson's use for Indians does not invite him to provide such kinds of details. The most significant function Indians play in the book, a role prefabricated for them, is to fall away at the advent of the elect, either by dying off from disease or by being slaughtered in the Pequot War, both interpreted by Johnson as signs of God honoring his covenant with the Puritans. For instance, in 1616-17, a few years before the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, an epidemic had killed off "at least a third of the natives" of New England (Vaughan 28). Modern scholars assume that this unidentified plague, which they believe was brought to the area by European fisherman or fur traders, had such a devastating effect upon the native population because the Native Americans' immune systems were not conditioned to fight such common European diseases as yellow fever, the bubonic plague, or smallpox. Johnson, though, writes of this Prelates—who in some ways pose an even greater threat than do Indians since they represent forces that threaten to undermine the integrity of the Puritan community from within.
plague, "by this means Christ ... not onely made roome for his people to plant: but also tamed the hard and cruel hearts of these barbarous Indians, insomuch that halfe a handful of his people landing not so long after in Plimoth-Plantation, found little resistance" (41-42). A later dispute with Indians over land is considered to be resolved in a similar manner: "but the Lord put an end to this quarrel also, by smiting the Indians with a sore Disease, even the small Pox, of which great numbers of them died" (79). Johnson forces events so neatly into his religious framework that he attributes the Pequot War, which Vaughan insists was "no racial conflict between white man and red, no clash of disparate cultures or alien civilizations" (135), in large part to the "heathen nature" of the Indians; the Pequots' greatest offense is that they allegedly blasphemed against the Almighty:

... the Indians ... blasphemed the Lord, saying the Englishman's God was all one Flye, and that Englishman was all one Squaw, and themselves all one Moor-hawks. Thus by their horrible pride they fitted themselves for destruction. The English hearing this report, were now full assured that the Lord would deliver them into their hands to execute his righteous judgement upon these blasphemous murtherers; and therefore raised fresh soldiers for the warre. (164)

Indians are two dimensional cardboard cutouts; though Johnson does comment briefly upon the efforts of John Eliot and others to convert the Indian heathen (261), their major function in this Puritan drama is to serve as sparring partners for the "Soldiers of Christ," a hostile threat against which the elect could rally and thus fulfill their conceived mission in America.

Certainly authors of Indian war narratives focused in much more depth upon the clash of Indian and colonial cultures than did Johnson in Wonder-Working Providence. Yet for the most part the same kind of role Johnson casts for the Indians, that of earthly representative of the "Divel," colors the war historians'
assumptions about "Indian nature." Jennings emphasizes that it was the greater
destructive force of European firearms over Native Americans' weapons which
allowed the New England colonists to defeat the Pequots so handily in the Pequot
War. John Mason, the Connecticut captain who led the infamous attack on the
Pequot Mystic Fort, had quite a different explanation for the Puritan victory. In his
popular A Brief History of the Pequot War. Mason describes the Mystic Fort battle:

God was above them [the Pequots], who laughed his Enemies and the
Enemies of his People to scorn, making them as a fiery oven: Thus
were the stout hearted spoiled, having slept their last sleep, and none
of their men could find their hands: Thus did the Lord judge among
the Heathen, filling the place with dead bodies. (10)

God's displeasure, and not English guns, brought about the Pequot's defeat.

One of the most noted Puritan historians of the Indian wars, one who helped
establish the stereotype of the degraded, violent "drunken Indian" in the colonial
epic narrative, was Increase Mather. In his typical jeremiad fashion, Increase
Mather had lamented in a 1673 sermon Wo to Drunkards, that alcohol, which
Albertson notes played an important role in Puritan communities, was being abused
by many in his contemporary audience: "Time was, when it was a strange thing to
see or hear of a man drunken in New-England; and is this sin now become common?
The Lord help! Will you be sinners in Zion? W'll you be fools in Israel?" (27). In
his sermon Mather asserts of drunkenness, "it hath no better an author than the
Devil himself... Drink is in it self a good creature of God, and to be received with
thankfulness, but the abuse of drink is from Satan" (4). Even worse than the white
Christian who abuses the "good creature of God," is the white man who sells drink to
the Indians:

Some among us (who they are the Lord knoweth) out of Covetousness
have sold Liquors and strong drink to these poor Indians... and
have made them drunk therewith. What a fearful sin is that! . . . The Indians themselves are the saddest spectacles of Misery, and the most woful remembrance of the ruins of the righteous and glorious Image of God, that ever mortal eye beheld, but therefore their sin is not a little aggravated, that shall make poor creatures more the children of Hell than they were before. (21)5

Yet not only are Indian souls thought to fall to a greater state of damnation through drinking: more importantly for the structure of the epic war narrative, when intoxicated Native Americans are portrayed as becoming more of a tangible, violent threat to Euramerican colonists. In his sermon Mather had suggested that God sometimes raises up barbarous nations to punish those civilized nations who have too many drunkards in their midst. In his 1676 A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New England, published in the midst of King Philip's war, Mather purports in part to illustrate this theological dictum. Mather is more interested in wresting the meaning of the war for the elect than in plainly recording the events of the war, and thus offers a multitude of reasons why God has chosen to punish his chosen people. Mather turns his war narrative into a scatter-shot Jeremiad against any and all manner of what he considers Puritan back-sliding: "Nor were our sins so ripe for so dreadfull a judgement untill the Body of the first Generation was removed, and another Generation risen up which hath not so pursued, as ought to have been, the blessed design of their Fathers, in following the Lord into this Wilderness" (86).

Predictably, Mather lists two sins as especial targets of the Lord's wrath: Puritan tippling and the Indian liquor trade (105). In fact, several passages within

5 This curious notion of drunken Indians becoming "two-fold more the Children of Hell than they were before" recurs in Samuel Danforth's 1710 sermon The Woful Effects of Drunkeness.
Mather's war narrative suggest that the liquor trade was a significant factor in precipitating the war. Mather reports of July 6, 1676, negotiations between Native Americans and "the English in the Eastern parts of this colony": "One of the sachems did earnestly desire, that the English would promise that no more liquors should be sold or given to the Indians, so that they might not be in the capacity of making themselves drunk, having found by wofull experience, that that hath been a ruining evill to many of them" (131). Mather recounts of another instance of Indian-white peace negotiations, "the Sachems ... desired that no more Liquors might be sold to the Indians, professing that that was a principle cause of the mischiefs that had been done, and that they were not able to keep their men in subjecton, when once they were become mad with drink" (100).

This last passage suggests the peculiar ambivalence in Mather's portrayal of Native American drinking in the Brief History. On the one hand, Mather complains of Puritans who sell drink to the Indians and who thereby further confirm the destruction of already damned Indian souls. This suggests some kind of compassion, some sympathy for the "drunken Indian," as Mather openly acknowledges, mostly through the reports of Indians themselves, that liquor has harmed Native American communities. Yet the dominant role of the Indian in the narrative counters and virtually negates this potential compassion. For Mather is concerned less with the effect of drinking upon Indian souls (much less upon their earthly communities) than he is with the effect on white Puritan souls. Selling drink to the Indians is but one of a multitude of sins for which Mather wants to chastise New Englanders. Mather wants to convict his readers of as many sins as possible: "it is the secret subtlety of Satan to perswade men that this judgement [i.e. King Philip's War]"
cometh for one secret sin, that so may keep them from taking notice of that which
is indeed the Lord’s controversie, and from repenting of those evils” (173). That
some Indians should object to the liquor traders is in accordance with divine justice:
those who sin shall be punished by those whom they sin against: the drinker shall
punish he who provides him with drink. Thus the primary focus is not upon Native
Americans as victims of traders who have “ debauched” them with liquor, but upon
Indians as violent agents of Satan, savages “mad with drink

William Hubbard’s 1677 A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New
England, another important contemporary narrative of King Philip’s War, differs
from Mather’s in several significant ways. First, Hubbard’s history is no heavy-
handed jeremiad: Hubbard was not primarily interested in turning every event in
the war into a divine judgment upon the New England colonists. Second, Hubbard
had access to and incorporated in his narrative many more eyewitness accounts of
events of the war than did Mather: his work is consequently more detailed and
much longer.

Yet despite the Narrative’s greater length, it focuses scarcely more upon the
impact of the war (or of Anglo-colonial culture in general) upon Native Americans.
Hubbard, like Mather, still casts his narrative as a general display of divine
provider.” “Something of this nature may be of some use to posterity, as well as to
those of the present Generation, to help them both call to mind, and carry along the
memory of such eminent deliverances and special preservations granted by divine
favour to the people here” (A3r). Though Hubbard makes some attempt to probe the
specific causes of the war, not immediately content to chalk it up solely to the Lord’s
displeasure, he dismisses Philip’s complaints against Plymouth colony as unfounded
and concludes that Philip must be simply evil, malicious, moved by the Devil: "For once before in this year 1671 the Devill, who was a Murderer from the beginning had so filled the heart of this salvage Miscreant with envy and malice against the English, that he was ready to break into open war with the inhabitants of Plimouth, pretending some petite injuyes done him in his planting land" (11).

The narrative of the war itself is cast in the form of the hunt of a wild animal. We get very little information about the designs of the Indians themselves—we hear of Philip's actions only from second hand and that from the mouths of Indian "turncoats." As Hubbard describes the initial skirmishes between Philip and the colonial army in the swamps of Mount Hope, Philip and his band are invisible, dangerous presences in the dark woods, a mysterious shadowy threat. As the colonial army pursues Philip's band throughout New England, we get a sense of Philip and his followers not from any face to face encounters, but from the "wake of destruction" the Indians leave behind. Hubbard describes the colonial army at one point

after they had marched about a mile and half, they passed by some Houses newly burned: not far of one of them they found a Bible newly torn, and the leaves scattered about by the Enemy, in hatred of our Religion therein revealed, two or three miles further they came upon some Heads, Scalps and Hands cut off from the bodys of some of the English and stuck upon Poles near the Highway, in that barbarous and inhumane manner bidding us Defyance . . . . (19)

The Indians are themselves faceless presences, understood in terms of the results of their actions in the war—looting and burning of property, death and dismemberment of white colonists. The epic focus allows no room for sympathy with any Native American grievances, no room to even speculate in any depth upon intercultural relations.
Yet Hubbard does address the subject of Native American drinking behavior in his *Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England, from Pescataqua to Pemmaquid*, an account of the war with the northern New England Indians during King Philip's War appended to (and separately paginated from) his *Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians*. Hubbard notes that Indians have often complained that traders have greatly diluted the rum they trade. "But this is not all the Evil that attends this wicked Trade of strong Liquor, for when [the Indians] are drunken therewith, they are ready to fight with their Friends, Parents, Brethren, etc. Yea, often have murdered one another" (77). However, despite this suggestion that drinking makes Native Americans self-destructive, the dramatic focus within the narrative is upon the threat that the drinking Indian poses to the white colonist. Hubbard recounts the story of one Thomas Cobbett, "son of that Reverend and worthy Minister of the Gospel, Mr. Thomas Cobbett Pastor of the Church at Ipswich" (57), a friend and colleague of Hubbard's. Young Cobbett was captured by Indians and taken to Mount Desert Island, where Hubbard emphasizes the tortures he was forced to undergo by his captor. Cobbett was at one time threatened "by a drunken Indian, who had a knife at his Throat to cut it, when his hands were bound" (57). "At another time, the Salvage Villain whose Prisoner he was, so long as he had strong liquor, for five dayes together was so drunke, that he was like a furious mad Beast, so as none durst come near him" (59). Like Increase Mather, Hubbard chastises those colonists who sell liquor to and thus "debauch" the Indians; but again like Mather, within his story of King Philip's War Hubbard emphasizes the drunken Indian as a violent threat to whites. In both war narratives, the drinking Indian is more an object of fear than of pity.
Perhaps the most influential Puritan to write about Native Americans was Cotton Mather. Increase Mather's son. In 1699 Cotton Mather published *Decennium Luctuosum. An History of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Long War, which New England hath had with the Indian Salvages from the Year 1688 to the Year 1698*, during which occurred a series of skirmishes, raids, and counterraid known today as King William's War, the first of the French and Indian Wars. In his first “Article,” Mather considers “The Occasion and Beginning of the War,” tracing several accounts of the sources of Native American-white dispute that led to the war. Among a list of reasons for the war suggested by “a gentleman of Dover,” is “the common abuses in trading, viz. Drunkeness. Cheating, etc. which such as trade with [the Indians] are seldom innocent of” (16). Yet Mather is not as interested in probing the exact causes of the war as he is in dramatizing the effect of the war upon New England Puritan society (though Mather does return to the theme of Indian drinking in his accompanying sermon). Thus he tosses off “Doubtless these Indian Allegations may be answered with many English Vindications” (16) and shortly proceeds with the narrative proper, a series of tales of “blood and thunder.”

More so than either his father or Hubbard, Cotton Mather leans heavily on tales of Indian captivity in his Indian war narrative 6 *Decennium Luctuosum* is replete with stories of Indians dashing out the brains of infants, popping out the eyeballs of children, dismembering, burning, drowning helpless white victims. Mather takes pains to recount the exact details of Indian torture, for instance

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6 Indeed, Cotton Mather's 1706 *Good Fetch'd Out of Evil*, published in the midst of Queen Anne's War, was little more than a series of individual captivity narratives strung together.
writing of the experience of one man nicknamed Robin Pork: "[The Indians] danced about him, and at every turn, they did with their knives, cut colllops of his flesh, from his naked limbs, and throw them with his blood into his face. When he was dead, they set his body down upon the glowing coals, and left him tyed with his back to the stake... Reader, Who should be the father of these myrmidons?" (49).

Although Mather's accounts of Indian torture and captivity themselves contain no explicit instances of Indian drinking (it is hard to imagine drinking Indians being any more crazed and violent than the ones Mather creates in his reworked versions of the captivity narratives he incorporates into his war narrative), the subject of Indian drinking does figure significantly in *The History of Ten Years Rolled away under the Great Calamities of War with Indian Salvages Repeated and Improved in a Sermon at Boston Lecture 27d. 7m. 1698*, which is appended to *Decennium Luctuosum*. In this sermon Mather purports to interpret the spiritual meanings of the war: "A long War is the text I am now to insist on" (204). Mather speculates, "Will you please to enquire into the properties and qualities of our adversaries? 'Tis possible that in their properties and qualities, we may read something of those miscarriages, for which our God hath raised them up to be our adversaries" (211). Curiously, Mather poses several different, even contradictory roles for Indians in the drama of the war. Mather, however, does not acknowledge the incongruity of his conceptions of the Indian: he sacrifices logical consistency to the rhetorical power he can squeeze from the Indian as image, turning these images different ways around to instruct and, in jeremiad-like fashion, chastise the unregenerate New England colonists.

Mather thus begins:
It has been commonly seen, That when the people of God have
sinfully come to imitate the evil manners of other nations, God hath
made those very nations to be a sore scourge unto them . . . Now since
the Indians have been made by our God, The Rod of his anger, 'tis
proper for us to enquire whether we have not in some instances too
far imitated the evil manners of the Indians? The Indians are
infamous especially for their three scandalous vices. First, they are
lyars of the first magnitude . . . Secondly, they are sluggards to a
proverb; they are for any way of living rather than work. Thirdly,
they are abominably indulgent unto their children; there is no
family government among them. Will you now enquire, Sirs, how
far we have Indianized in every one. but especially the last of these
Evil Manners! (211-12)

Mather next considers matters from another angle:

sometimes the sovereign God chooses a nation remarkably laudable
for some Good thing to punish his own people for the want of that
thing . . . Well, but can any good thing be reported of our Indian
invaders? Yes, there is one good thing which the French have
taught them; there is family prayer among them, a daily family
worship upheld among them. I fear, I fear, this is more than can be
said of many English sufferers, that have been annoy'd by those
Indian invaders. (212)

Mather's third turn is the most significant in terms of his perspective on
Indian drinking

In the War that hath been upon us, whoso is wise, may observe, that
the very objects of our sins have been made the very engines of our
plagues . . . You will now demand of me whether I think that we are
chargeable with any crime relating to the Indians which have been
so bloodily destroying of us . . . observe how signally the wrath of God
hath fallen upon the persons or estates of them that have debauched
the Indians by selling of drink unto them. The Trading houses,
where the Indians of the East had so much of their drink and bane,
what is become of them, every one of them? The Sword has been
drunk with the Blood of the English in the hands of those very
Indians which have been so often drunk among them. And these
Bloody merchants of the souls of the Indians, when they have
summed up all their gains, the foot of the account has been this, wo
to him that gives his neighbor drink, that puts the bottel to him, to
make him drunk. Those men are not wise but mad, who can observe
these things and now dare to repeat this iniquity or dream that any
gains are to be got by feeding the Indian lust of drunkenness. (216-217)
Mather's purpose here to condemn those colonists who contribute to the
damnation of the Indians by selling them liquor. Yet the image of the drinking
Indian Mather creates is, like similar images in Increase Mather's and William
Hubbard's Indian war narratives, designed to inspire not compassion but terror.
Traders should desist from selling liquor to the Indians not for the Indian's sake,
but rather for their own sake, to avoid their own destruction at the hands of savages
"crazed with drink."

Mather preaches a close variation of this message in his sermon *A Monitory
and Hortatory Letter to Those English who debauch the Indians by selling strong
drink unto them*, published the year after *Decennium Luctuosum*. Mather invokes
the contemporary popular myth that all Indians naturally have an inordinate
craving for alcohol:

> there are none that Rave more after Strong Drink than the people of
> those Countrieys that have it from far brought unto them, and
> perhaps the Ravingest after it... are our American Salvages. They
> will Sell and Pawn all they have in the world for Strong Drink; they
> never can tell when they have enough, but keep guzzling till they
> have Drunk themselves down, and when they Awake, whatever it
> cost them, they say I will seek it out again. (4)

Indeed, Mather even seems on the verge of full-fledged pity for the poor
Indian drunkard: "their Drunkenness has made them Good for nothing. Their
Health is Lost; and they often perish by other Disasters in their Drunkenness" (9).
Yet consistent with his strategy in the sermon which concludes *Decennium
Luctuosum*, Mather turns his primary focus upon the consequences of Indian
drinking for the white colonists:

> The Souls of these Drunken Indians, will go down into the place of
> Torment; but whither will they go, think ye, and how horribly shall
> they be Tormented, that have brought them thither? ... Will you
> then throw your selves into those Everlasting Torments, where the
Roaring Indians being made your Companions, will upbraid you. 'Tis you English men, that have brought us hither! (13)

And it's not only the colonists' eternal souls that are imperiled by their providing liquor to Indians:

And if the Holy God should be provoked (which who fears not?) again to let the Indians be Intoxicated into the Fury making another War upon us, as the iniquity of your Covetousness will doubtless be one of the principal Provocations, that procure so dire a Calamity to you will be sure of no little Share in that Calamity. Be sure your Sin will find you out ... the Objects on whom you have Sinn'd, may be the Agents by whom you shall be Plagued, and God may give you Blood to Drink in Revenge of the Drink with which you have poisoned and ruined the Souls of them, that He will now Commission to be the Executioners of His Wrath upon you, even a Wrath unto the uttermost. (15)

Epic Literature: Indian Captivity Narratives

As we have seen in the case of Cotton Mather, the captivity narrative came to play a significant role in the structure of the Indian war narrative. In fact the captivity narrative came to be the dominant Puritan literary form dramatizing Native American-white interaction, though "Not until the late seventeenth century did captivity narratives emerge as a separate and distinct literary genre" (Vaughan and Clark 2). The Puritan captivity narrative, most popularly exemplified in A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (1682), evolved not only from the war narrative, but also from such distinctly Puritan literary forms as the spiritual autobiography, the sermon, and the jeremiad; as Minter notes, Puritan captivity narratives were "not only ... stories prefiguring an individual's eternal fate, but also ... paradigms of the larger society's story" (342). The Puritan tendency to individualize spiritual experience, illustrated in John Bunyan's Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners and especially in Pilgrim's Progress (which became a perennial American "bestseller" upon its first printing in the New World
in 1681), found an apt form in the captivity narrative. Just as Bunyan's Christian, the Puritan Everyman, encountered and successfully battled such enemies as Apollyon as a means of approaching the Celestial City, so the Puritan captive among Indians was often described as undergoing physical and psychological torment at the hand of the New World "savages" as a means toward earning a place in the Puritan heaven. Indeed in some ways the captive was an even more appropriate Puritan representative than that "Soldier of Christ" Christian: the captive had to endure the humiliation of captivity, staunchly but passively praying to the Lord for release. It is true that Puritan "housewife" Hannah Duston became an American folk hero when, with a stolen tomahawk, she brained and scalped her sleeping Indian captors and thus escaped from her captivity, leading her children safely back into the Puritan community. Yet while Duston's bloody response to Indian captivity was actually imitated by several other white captives, hers was not the typical Puritan reaction. By far the most representative response was to "pray without ceasing": the Lord was believed to have brought the captive into his or her situation, the Lord would award release to the most humble and pious.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the captivity narrative, whose form had already been mapped out and abundantly exploited by Puritan writers, was adopted for use in more secular contexts. Scholars such as Roy Harvey Pearce ("Significances"), Richard VanDerBeets, and Wilcomb Washburn ("Introduction") have emphasized that the societal "significances" of the captivity narrative dramatically evolved throughout the eighteenth century. From individual and

7 Cotton Mather relates her story at least three separate times, including in Decennium Luctuosum.
communal religious expression, the Indian captivity narrative assumed an increasingly propagandistic function as tensions between Anglo-American settlers and the French and their Native American allies grew, sparking a series of French and Indian wars. Starting with King William's War in 1689, the English and Anglo-American colonists fought four official wars with the French, including Queen Anne's War (1702-13) and King George's War (1739-48), a history of fighting not concluded until 1763, the end of the North American campaign of the Seven Year's War, when France ceded Canada and Spain Florida to Great Britain. As in the earlier Puritan captivity narrative, white captives still painted a picture of atrocities committed by Native American captors, but French Catholics were in many cases cited as the instigators of this Indian violence, instead of agents of the devil, hostile Indians became agents of the French enemy. After the final French and Indian War, as tensions mounted between the Anglo-American colonies and Britain, resulting finally in the Revolutionary War (often called at the time the "British and Indian War" since most Native American tribes remained allied to the king of England, the "Great White Father"), the American captivity narratives began to cite the British as responsible for Indian cruelty. After the Revolution, as the new country began to focus upon westward expansion, captivity narratives "devoid of either anti-French or anti-British sentiments, take on the tone of general Indian hatred that foreshadows the full blooming of nineteenth century Manifest Destiny and the irresistible force of American nationalism" (VanDerBeets 19). In this last case, the Indian was often depicted as neither an agent of the devil nor of a hostile European imperialist power, but a bothersome hindrance to westward development, a nuisance to be dealt with by removal or extermination (see especially...
Brackenridge's edition of the Knight and Slover captivity narratives and the Williamson narrative in the "Manheim Anthology").

Aside from, and in many cases in addition to, these propagandistic functions, the tale of Indian captivity evolved into a self-conscious "literary" genre by the mid to late eighteenth century; it became increasingly popular as a sensationalistic tale designed to titillate colonial readers. These narratives often became more stylized in their diction and more detailed in their description of gruesome Indian torture. "It was a short and almost inevitable step for narrative excesses for the purpose of propaganda to excesses in the interest of sensation and titillation, from promoting hatred to eliciting horror, from inspiring patriotism to encouraging sales, from chauvinism to commercialism" (VanDerBeets 25). In fact, it is this last "significance" of the captivity narrative that perhaps most profoundly influenced the frontier romances of Cooper, Bird, and Simms, a textual form that Barnett and other scholars associate with the movement for American literary nationalism in the early nineteenth century (see Barnett 21-22). Washburn writes, "Americans discovered that the captivity theme provided an instant tradition for a society that, in a European sense, lacked a past. Though America could boast of no ancient buildings and no classical heritage, it was not bereft of the traditions upon which a literature is based" (Introduction xxii).

Despite these dramatic variations in the purposes of the early American Indian captivity narrative—religious expression, political propaganda, penny dreadful—and despite the temporal and geographical span of the individual Euramerican captivity experiences that found their way into print, scholars have noted a distinct pattern that informs the structure of virtually every representative
of the genre. VanDerBeets claims that the "journey of the archetypal initiate proceeds from Separation (abduction), Transformation (ordeal, accommodation, and adoption), and Return (escape, release, or redemption) . . . this configuration [is] an essential structuring mode of the tales" (50). VanDerBeets also notes that many of the Indian captivity narratives, despite differences in overall rhetorical purpose, contain similar kinds of information about Native Americans, even across different tribal groups. Not surprisingly, most of this information focuses upon methods of torture: instances of cannibalism, blood-drinking, scalping, and rites of initiation of whites such as running the gauntlet. Yet also included, especially in the narratives of those whites who had spent months or in some cases years with their Native American captors, is information about Native practices of farming, hunting, husbandry, religious ritual. And, of course, often included as well are accounts of drinking.

The captivity narrative, as suggested, generally provides more information about Native American culture than does the war narrative. Euramerican captives who had spent extended periods of time within a Native American tribe brought a different perspective towards Native Americans than did the war historian. Whereas the war historian focused primarily upon instances of Native American-white fighting, the captive took the reader behind the battlefront, providing the reader a glimpse of Native American life beyond areas settled by Euramerican colonists. Indeed, John Gyles's popular *Memoirs of Odd Adventures, Strange*

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8 Vaughan and Clark perceive a similar pattern (11).

9 Though the lifestyles of virtually all Native American tribes east of the Mississippi had been affected by the white presence in America, if not by frontier
Deliverances, etc., published in Boston in 1736, drawn from Gyles's six years among the Abenaki Indians (1689-96) in what is now Maine and Southeastern Canada and three subsequent years among the French, focuses more upon ethnographical information about the Native Americans and data on the flora and fauna of the temperate zone forest than it does upon Gyles captivity experience itself. Only the first chapter (relating the experiences of his first year with the Abenaki) and the last chapter (an account of Gyles's experiences among the French) are arranged in a narrative format; the bulk of the Memoirs is divided into such headings as "A Description of Several Creatures Commonly Taken by the Indians on St. John's River." Gyles abstracts his experiences from the chronology of his six years among the Abenakis and re-casts them in an analytical, descriptive format. Interestingly, the only reference to Native American drinking in the Memoirs emphasizes how liquor is a destructive force within the Abenaki community (113).

Yet Gyles's Memoirs is somewhat of an anomaly among Indian captivity narratives, an exception to the rule. By far the majority of captivity narratives are structured strictly chronologically, conforming to the to pattern observed by VanDerBeets. Whether they are minion of Satan or agents of the hostile French, Indians are necessarily cast as the immediate aggressors, threatening a white captive who is all the more vulnerable as an individual removed from his or her community. As in the war narrative, in the captivity narrative Native Americans are assigned the role of villains, and information provided about their culture is naturally colored by this association. In fact, the rhetorical purposes, the

settlers encroaching on land Native Americans considered theirs then by traders whose clothing, tools, not to mention liquor, had profoundly altered Native American "home economy."
"significances," of the genre virtually necessitate that only those most violent, threatening aspects of Native American life be reported.

In addition to overall rhetorical purpose, such a mechanical matter as length often seems to have influenced how much and what kind of material concerning Native Americans was reported: some narratives purport to record captivity experiences which cover years and yet are textualized in only a few pages. While individual captivity narratives differ in their inclusion of such ethnographical information about Native American captors as farming, hunting, and religious practices, virtually all emphasize methods of torture. And while only about half of the roughly thirty captivity narratives published in the seventeenth and eighteenth century which have been canvassed for this study contain references to Native American drinking, virtually all of these, like the Indian war narratives, present an Indian who craves alcohol, and who is, when drunk, a violent brute, a danger to whites.  

In what was the first separately published Indian captivity narrative, Mary Rowlandson, captured from the Massachusetts town of Lancaster in February, 1676, in the midst of King Philip's War, and ransomed in May of the same year, describes the effect of liquor on her otherwise "kind Indian master," who was "the first

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10 One notable exception, however, is Jonathan Dickinson's 1699 God's Protecting Providence Man's Surest Help and Defence. The narrative is an account of the Philadelphia farmer and trader's shipwreck off the coast of Florida in the fall of 1696 and his party's subsequent attempt to make their way up the coast of Florida to St. Augustine, facing cold, mosquitoes, lack of food, and less-than-friendly Indians, who harass but never truly "capture" them. Dickinson, notes that in looting the wrecked ship, the Indians "opened all the stuffs and linens and spread them to dry they would touch no sort of strong drink sugar or Molasses, but left it in the Vessell" (9).
Indian I saw drunk all the while that I was amongst them" (67). John Hoar, a white man sent to negotiate for the release of Rowlandson and other white captives, had apparently struck a deal with Rowlandson's Indian master for her release: "my master would let me go tomorrow if [Hoar] would let him have one pint of liquors" (67). Yet this deal became jeopardized when Rowlandson's master started to drink: "My master, after he had had his drink, quickly came ranting into the wigwam again and called for Mr. Hoar, drinking to him and saying he was a good man. And then again he would say, 'Hang [the] rogue.' Being almost drunk, he would drink to him, and yet presently say he should be hanged. Then he called for me. I trembled to hear him..." (67). Although Rowlandson assures her readers that he offered her "no incivility," 

still the drunken Indian master is an object of fear: liquor has made this Indian dangerously volatile.

This image of the violent "drunken Indian" recurs in John Williams's 1707 The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion, which along with Rowlandson's and Dickinson's narratives, was one of the three Indian captivity "bestsellers" of the colonial period (Mott 21). The first night after Indians had attacked Williams's town of Deerfield, Massachusetts, marching their captives north, Williams relates "Some of the enemy who brought drink with them from the town fell to drinking, and in their drunken fit they killed my Negro man, the only dead person I either saw at the town or on the way" (174). Jemima Howe, captured by Indians near Bridgman's Fort, New Hampshire, on July 27, 1755, recounts:

11 Indian rape of white female captives is rarely reported until the nineteenth-century Plains Indian captivity narratives.
my (adopted Indian) sister's husband having been out with a scouting party to some of the English settlements, had a drunken frolick at the fort, when he returned. His wife, who never got drunk, but had often experienced the ill effects of her husband's intemperance, fearing what the consequences might prove, if he should come home in a morose and turbulent humour, to avoid his insolence, proposed that we should both return, and keep out of the reach of it, until the storm abated. (13-14)

Henry Grace, a British soldier captured by Indians in Nova Scotia in 1750 recounts an incident in which his Indian captors attacked and looted a small English vessel:

They took what they pleased out of the Vessel, but what they were fondest of was spirituous Liquors. When they had plundered the Vessel, they set it on Fire and burned it. After that they began drinking and drank to such a Degree that they were all stark raving mad, and then sought after the poor unfortunate Prisoners, in Order to kill them for their Diversion: but as for me I had a very narrow Escape, having luckily gained the Favour of some of the Squaws who were so kind as to hide me under a great Tub before a Frenchman's Door, where I continued for three days. There were some dancing around the House, some sitting upon the Tub that I was under, and others looking after me, and the rest of us poor Prisoners; had they found us, they would have put us to the most cruel Death they could think on. (20-21)

In his account of the captivity experience of Benjamin Gilbert and his family, taken from their frontier Pennsylvania farm in 1780 and separated among several bands of Indians, William Walton writes of Elizabeth Peart (the daughter-in-law of Gilbert's stepson), who had been adopted by a family of Senecas: "A drunken Indian came to the Cabin one Day, and the old Indian Woman complaining to him of Elizabeth, his Behavior exceedingly terrified her; he stormed like a Fury, and at Length struck her a violent Blow which laid her on the Ground; he then began to pull her about and abuse her much" (50). Walton follows this lively description with an editorial comment that in many ways typifies the implicit assumptions of the majority of references to Indian drinking in early American captivity.
narratives: "such is the shocking Effect of Spirituous Liquor on these People, it totally deprives them both of Sense and Humanity" (50).

A number of captivity narratives emphasize drinking as a trait indicating indicate the essential moral inferiority of "Indian nature." Elizabeth Hanson, taken from Dover Township, New Hampshire in 1724, describes the difficulties her Indian master had in procuring enough food to feed his family. Hanson claims that Indians in general do not sufficiently provide for stores of food and other necessaries but are wasteful with what they have:

these kind of people when they have plenty spend it as freely as they get it, spending in gluttony and drunkenness in two days' time as much as with prudent management might serve a week. Thus do they live for the most part in excess of gluttony and drunkenness or under great straits for want of necessities. (237)

Henry Grace similarly describes the comportment of his Indian captives:

The old Squaws drink as bad as the Men . . . the Squaws that have their Companions which they call their Husbands will dance and drink quite naked along with the Men. They have all bloodthirsty Minds and are a very jealous sort of People, insatiable in their Revenge, to gratify which they will refuse no Difficulty or Danger. Otherwise they are lazy and sluggish, and hate all Employment except hunting and fighting; in their Lodging, Diet, and Dress, they are filthy and nasty to the last Degree, Strangers to all the Rules of Decency and Modesty, and seem almost void of natural Affection. (22)

Some captivity narratives acknowledge that Indians themselves often recognized the negative effects of drinking too much liquor.¹² Frontier farmer Nehemiah How tells of the events of one Sunday in 1745 soon after he was captured.

"[The Indians] having Rum with them, most of them were much Liquor'd" (8). One

¹² For instance, the behavior of the Indian women in passages quoted from Grace's and Howe's narratives signals their awareness that their males are more dangerous when drunk.
of his captors asks How about a friend of his who was rumored to have been killed by the English colonial forces. When How denies knowing anything about such an incident (though he admits to the reader that he does): "the Indians now got into a Frolick and quarrelled about me: They made me set in the Canoe by the Water-side: I was afraid they would hurt if not kill me: They attempted to come to me, but the sober Indians hindered them that were in Liquor" (8).

This same pattern of sober Indians protecting white captors from those who are drunk recurs in the narrative of Charles Johnston, who in 1790 spent five weeks in captivity in present day Kentucky. Indians had ambushed the boat upon which Johnston and his party were traveling, looting liquor from whites in the area. Johnston writes of his first night in captivity:

[the Indians] then indulged to the utmost excess in drinking whiskey found on board one of the boats. But they observed a precaution which, I believe, is never neglected by them in those situations which call on them for vigilance. A sufficient number for safe keeping and guarding their captives refrained from tasting the spirituous liquor, and had watchful eyes over us. The rest of the party drank to deep intoxication ... Their invariable habit is, not to quit the bottle or cask while a drop of strong drink remains; and they poured it down their throats until their stock was exhausted (261-62)

Johnston continues:

In the meantime we [captives] were separated by our guard from those who were intoxicated and removed to some distance from them. when we laid down to sleep ... [In the middle of the night] one of the drunken Indians straggled from his companions, and came to us, brandishing his scalping knife. He quickly worked himself up into a great rage and throwing himself across the body of Skyles [one of Johnston's fellow captives], fastened on his hair and was determined to take off his scalp. it was with some difficulty that he was prevented, by those who were sober, from effecting his object. (261-62)

This supposed practice of the Indians themselves insuring that some of their number remain sober to protect captives (who, after all, could be used as servants
and ransomed later for money) on the one hand helps to counter the notion suggested in Hanson that Indians have no self-control, that they will always indulge their "excess of gluttony." On the other hand, this alleged "habitual precaution" of the Indians helps further to confirm the stereotype that a "drunken Indian" is a dangerous one, that alcohol transforms the Indian into a violent, raving beast.

Thomas Brown's 1760 Plain Narrative contains one of the most telling accounts of Indian drinking in the captivity narrative. A member of the famed Roger's Rangers during the French and Indian War, in January 1757 Brown was wounded in a skirmish and was captured by Indians. Brown was then marched northward, held alternately by Indians and French. Arriving at Montreal, in the hands of his original Indian captors, Brown is taken to stay at a French merchant's house. He writes:

The third Night two of the Indians that took me came in drunk and asked for me; upon which the Lady called me into the Room and as I went and stood by the Door, one of them began to dance the War-dance about me, designing to kill me; but as he lifted his Hand to stab me, I catch'd hold of it with one of mine, and with the other knocked him down, and then ran up Garret and hid. - The Lady sent for some Neighbors to clear the House of her Guests, which they did. It was a very cold Night, and one of the Indians being excessively drunk, fell down near the House, and was found in the Morning froze to Death. The Indians came to the House and finding their Brother dead, said I had killed him and gathering a Number together with their Guns beset the House and demanded me of the Lady, saying I should die the most cruel Death. The Lady told me of it and advised me to hide myself in the Cellar, under the Pipes of Wine. (16-17)

The drunken Indian, who in a violent rage threatens to kill the white captive, is easily subdued by the unarmed white. In fact, the Indian freezes to death in a drunken stupor, himself a fatal victim of drinking. Yet the epic perspective allows for little compassion for this "drunken Indian." for the epic narrative, written by a
Euramerican author for a Euramerican audience, emphasizes above all the plight of the white held against his or her will in an alien environment. In Brown's narrative, the drunken Indian's death is presented on the one hand as a relief to Brown since it eliminates one source of danger and on the other hand as a further occasion for worry, since the dead Indian's comrades come after Brown, blaming Brown for their comrade's death.

Hugh Henry Brackenridge perhaps epitomizes the epic Euramerican perspective on Native American drinking. Brackenridge, the consummate eighteenth-century Indian hater, edited the popular pair of captivity narratives of Dr. Knight and John Slover, members of Colonel Crawford's ill-fated 1782 expedition against the Indians. At the conclusion of these narratives, which themselves typically emphasize the barbarous treatment shown by the Indians towards their white captives, Brackenridge appends a few remarks about how he perceives Native Americans in relation to U.S. policy of westward expansion, or as he puts it, "I subjoin some observations with regard to the animals vulgarly called Indians" (32). Brackenridge rejects all claims that Native Americans have any right to the lands west of the Appalachians, claiming that "improvement," and not "mere occupation" is the basis of land ownership. Brackenridge argues, "I am so far from thinking that Indians have any right to the soil, that not having made a better use of it for many hundred years, I conceive they have forfeited all pretense to claim, and ought to be driven from it" (36).

Brackenridge offers a radical solution to "the Indian problem": "The tortures which [Indians] exercise on the bodies of prisoners justify [their] extermination... These nations are so degenerate from the life of man, so devoid of every
sentiment of generosity, so prone to every vicious excess of passion, so faithless,
and so incapable of all civilization that it is dangerous to the good order of the world
that they should exist in it" (36-37). To argue his case further, Brackenridge then
turns to the stereotype of "the drunken Indian" as violent brute: "I am well
persuaded that for a keg of whiskey you might induce any Indian to murder his
wife, child, or best friend. I am informed that the experiment was actually made by
a trader. An Indian for a quart of whiskey, in one of the western towns cut the
throat of his own child" (38). Locked into the epic perspective, which cast the
Indian as the archetypal foe, Brackenridge cites this ultimate act of self-
destruction, an act so repulsive as to overwhelm any sense of pity, as evidence of
the Indian's "depraved nature," as one more reason for extermination of "the red
man."

**Ethnographic Literature: Promotional and Travel Accounts**

Though Anglo-colonial ethnographic texts often include much of the same
kinds of information about Native Americans, in general they tend to portray
Native Americans quite differently from texts in the epic mode. Several factors
help account for this difference. Perhaps the most significant is the different
relationship between writer and reader. Whereas the war and captivity narratives
(most of which were first published in America) were designed mainly for an
Anglo-American audience, intended to help colonists interpret their experience in
the New World, ethnographic literature often targeted, though not exclusively, a
European audience; many of the texts were originally published in London and
were not reprinted in America until years afterward. Many of the colonial texts in
the ethnographic mode sought in part to entice Europeans to emigrate to the New World and thus emphasized such aspects of America as its "ideal" climate and soil. Whereas the war and captivity narratives necessarily cast the Indian as a hostile outsider, ethnographic literature often considered the Native American as a part of the New World landscape, as a curious object of study. While the European and Euramerican writers of ethnographic literature to varying degrees colored their observations of Native Americans with their own ethnocentric conceptions of "Indian nature," still in ethnographic literature Native Americans were not automatically assigned the role of villains; they were generally approached with fewer (or at least less vehemently held) preconceptions, a pattern which seems to have significantly influenced portrayals of and assumptions about Native American drinking.

One of the earliest and most popular examples of Anglo-colonial promotional literature is William Wood's *New England's Prospect*. Wood's study of New England was first published in London in 1634 and by 1639 was in its third edition. Unlike many other seventeenth-century texts about New England, Wood's is not primarily concerned with the Puritan's "errand in the wilderness." Rather, in his attempt to excite English interest in its northern colonies, Wood describes what the prospective immigrant should expect to encounter in New England. Part One thus describes various aspects of flora and fauna, with chapters entitled "Of the Nature of the Soil," "Of the Herbs, Fruits, Woods, Waters, and Minerals," concluding with a chapter covering "What Provision is to Be Made for a Journey at Sea, and What to Carry with Us for Our Use at Land."
Part Two of the *Prospect* is devoted entirely to information about Native Americans of New England, though modern editor Alden Vaughan cautions, "because [Wood] spent little time with the Indians . . . his account of Indian life is sometimes unreliable" (7). Wood’s second chapter is on the “Tarrranteen” Indians, which Wood declares are more “savage and cruel” than other Native Americans of the area. He writes:

These Indians are the more insolent by reason they have guns which they daily trade for with the French, who will sell his eyes, as they say, for beaver. But these do them more credit than service; for having guns they want powder, or if they have that they want shot, something or other being always wanting, so that they use them for little but to salute coasting boats that come to trade who no sooner can anchor in any harbor but they present them with a volley of shot, asking for sack and strong liquors which they so much love, since the English used to trade it with them, that they will scarce trade for anything else, lashing out into excessive abuse, first taught by the example of some of our English who to unclothe them of their beaver coat clad them with the infection of swearing and drinking, which was never in fashion with them before it being contrary to their nature [emphasis added] to guzzle down strong drink or use so much as to sip of strong waters until our bestial example and dishonest incitation hath too much brought them to it.

From which I am sure hath sprung many evil consequents, as disorder, quarrels, wrongs, unconscionable and forcive wrenching of beaver and wampompeag, and from overflowing cups there hath been a proceeding to revenge, murther and overflowing of blood. (79)

Wood notes here, as do many of the writers of the Indian war and captivity narratives, that drinking tends to make Native Americans violent, dangerous. Yet Wood uses this observation more as a criticism of English and French trading practices than as evidence of any essential “Indian nature.” Instead of stressing how “the drunken Indian” treats white captives, Wood emphasizes the effect of

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13 Vaughan identifies these as Abenakis (79f).
alcohol on a Native American community, tracing the responsibility back to the source: European traders. Native Americans are victimized by liquor; if they become aggressive when drunk. Wood reminds his readers that this is ultimately the fault of whites. Indeed, secure in his role as "neutral" observer, Wood even goes on to note of the "Tarranteens": "Take these Indians in their own trim and natural disposition and they be reported to be wise, lofty-spirited, constant in friendship to one another, true in their promise, and more industrious than any others" (80).

Robert Beverley's *The History and Present State of Virginia*, first published in London in 1705, was, according to modern editor Louis Wright, designed in part to attract French Huguenots to the Anglo-American colony. Beverley's *History* is divided into four "Books," and though he mentions Native Americans in each of them, it is most interesting to compare his treatment of Native Americans in Book I ("The History of the First Settlement of Virginia, and the Government thereof, to the present Time") to that in Book III ("The Native Indians, their Religion, Laws, and Customs, in War and Peace").

Book I is presented as a narrative history of the Euramerican presence in Virginia. From Raleigh's ill-fated Roanoke colony, through the Indian uprising of 1622, through Bacon's Rebellion in the 1670s, Native Americans play the role of antagonists, nowhere near as savage as the "dark-skinned heathen" of the Puritan histories, but nevertheless a bothersome obstacle to the spread of "civilization" in Virginia. There are no references to Indian drinking in Book I.

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14 During the eighteenth century, the book went through "four printings in French on the Continent" (xx) as compared to only two English editions.
In Book III Beverley concentrates more fully and directly upon Native Americans, drawing upon his first-hand observations of their culture. Gary Nash notes of Book III, "In Beverley's description can be seen the beginning of a new genre of literature on the Indian—a genre...fundamentally rooted in a desire to describe the Indians' culture..." (223). In his chapter on "Cookery and Food," Beverley observes.

For their Strong drink, they are altogether beholding to us, and are so greedy of it, that most of them will be drunk as often as they find an opportunity; notwithstanding which, it is a prevailing humour among them, not to taste any Strong drink at all, unless they can get enough to make them quite drunk, and then they go as solemnly about it, as if it were a part of their Religion (182)

Beverley concurs with captive Elizabeth Hanson that Native Americans are "addicted" to alcohol and drink only to get drunk, but unlike Hanson, Beverley uses this observation to chastise whites for introducing alcohol to Native American.

The "drunken Indian" is here more an object of compassion than disgust. Indeed. Beverley concludes his extended descriptions of Native American dress, architecture, social and religious customs, sport, language, medicine:

Thus I have given a succinct account of the Indians: happy, I think, in their simple State of Nature, and in their enjoyment of Plenty, without the Curse of Labour. They have on several accounts reason to lament the arrival of the Europeans, by whose means they seem to have lost their Felicity, as well as their Innocence. The English have taken away great part of their Country, and consequently made everything less plenty amongst them. They have introduc'd Drunkenness and Luxury amongst them, which have multiply'd their wants, and put them upon desiring a thousand things they never dreamt of before. (233)

A number of Anglo-colonial texts in the ethnographic mode employ narrative structures which are similar to many epic narratives. The travel narratives of such writers as John and William Bartram recount in a chronological fashion the
writers' experiences in the American wilderness. Like Indian captivity narratives, travel narratives often begin with a Euramerican individual or group leaving a relatively "civilized" area, journeying into an unknown and mysterious wilderness, and finally returning to a Euramerican community, often in some manner transformed. Yet the perspective within the travel narrative, especially the conceived relationship between the writer and Native Americans, places most travel narratives more within the ethnographic than the epic mode. In the travel narrative, the writer has entered the wilderness of his own volition with the intent not to resist Native American culture and return unaltered to white civilization, instead his mission is actively to apprehend the forest environment of "the red man," to fathom the unknown American wilderness, opening himself to its influences. The Euramerican traveller's contact with Native Americans and the wilderness is not a threat to his mission, as in the captivity narrative, but rather constitutes his mission. Whereas the major focus within the captivity narrative is the captivity experience itself, the focus of the travel narrative is upon the information recorded, the travel experience is a necessary means to this information and (usually) not in itself of central interest. Native Americans are objects of study rather than agents of torture.

John Lawson laments in the preface to his A New Voyage to Carolina, first published in London in 1709 (with new editions printed under the title Lawson's History of North Carolina in 1714 and 1718), that "most of our Travellers, who go to this vast Continent in America, are Persons of the meaner sort . . . at their Return, incapable of giving any reasonable Account of what they met withal in those remote Parts, though the Country abounds with Curiosities worthy a nice
Observation" (xix). Drawing from his experiences travelling throughout North Carolina from 1700 to 1708,15 Lawson devotes much space to descriptions of Native Americans. In a section entitled "An Account of the Indians of North Carolina," Lawson, echoing Beverley, writes of Native Americans' perceived desire for alcohol:

Most of the Savages are much addicted to Drunkenness, a Vice they never were acquainted with, till the Christians came amongst them. Some of them refrain drinking strong Liquors, but very few of that sort are found amongst them. Their chief Liquor is Rum, without any Mixture. This the English bring amongst them, and buy Skins, Furs, Slaves and other of their Commodities therewith. They never are contented with a little, but when once begun, they must make themselves quite drunk; otherwise they will never rest, but sell all they have in the World, rather than not have their full Dose.

According to Lawson, Native Americans' "addiction" to the white man's "fire-water" not only causes them to neglect their means of survival, it is also responsible for Native Americans becoming more directly self-destructive. In his journal that he kept in the course of his 1700-01 "thousand mile travel" from Charleston, South Carolina, northward throughout the interior of North Carolina, Lawson records some of the particular "sad disasters" caused by Native American drinking:

some [Indians] falling into the Fires, burn their Legs or Arms, contracting the Sinews, and becoming cripples all their Lifetime; others from Precipices break their Bones and Joints, with abundance of Instances, yet none are so great as to deter them from the accursed Practice of Drunkenness, though sensible how many of them (are by it) hurried into the other World before their Time, as themselves oftentimes will confess.

15 Randolph notes that Lawson "apparently became deputy surveyor in the colony" (79).
And later. "In these drunken Frolicks . . . they sometimes murder one another, fall into the fire, fall down Precipices, and break their Necks, with several other Misfortunes which this drinking of Rum brings upon them: and though they are sensible of it, yet they have no Power to refrain this Enemy" (214). Lawson clearly identifies whites as the final culprits: "[Indians] have learned several Vices of the Europeans, but not one Vertue; as I know of. Drunkenness was a Stranger, when we found them out . . ." (252) "We trade with them, it is true, but to what End? Not to show them the Steps of Vertue and the Golden Rule, to do as we would be done by No, we have furnished them with the Vice of Drunkenness, which is the open Road to all others" (256-57)

In his *History of the Dividing Line*, an account of a 1728 joint Virginia-North Carolina surveying expedition intended to settle a border dispute between the two colonies, William Byrd II notes that excessive drinking had become an habitual element of the lifestyle of both whites and Native Americans along the border. No teetotaler himself (in fact, throughout his travel narrative, Byrd refers with great relish to his daily dram of rum), Byrd nevertheless is quite concerned with what he considers the rampant abuse of alcohol. Of trade in 1728 Norfolk, which has "most the ayr of a Town of any in Virginia." Byrd writes, "The worst of it is, they contribute much towards debauching the Country by importing abundance of Rum, which, like Ginn in Great Britain, breaks the Constitution, Vitiates the Morals, and ruins the Industry of most of the Poor people of this country" (36). But this cannot compare with the effect of the rum trade on the Native Americans in Virginia and North Carolina. Byrd writes of a Nottoway Indian town through which the surveying team traveled.
The whole Number of People... if you include Women and Children, amount to about 200. These are the only Indians of any consequence now remaining within the Limits of Virginia. The rest are either removed, or dwindled to a very inconsiderable Number, either by destroying one another, or else by the Small-Pox and other Diseases. Tho' nothing has been so fatal to them as their ungovernable Passion for Rum, with which, I am sorry to say it, they have been too liberally supply'd by the English that live near them. (116,118)

Describing the Catawaba town of Nauvasa on the Santee River, Byrd writes:

These Indians were all call'd formerly by the general Name of the Usherees, and were a very Numerous and Powerful people. But the frequent Slaughters made upon them by the Northern Indians, and what has been still more destructive by far, the Intemperance and Foul Distempers introduc'd amongst them by the Carolina Traders, have now reduc'd their Numbers to little More than 400 Fighting Men, besides Women and Children (300)

Byrd seems to subscribe to the notion of the "Vanishing American," a belief that came to predominate many nineteenth-century literary perspectives of Native Americans, and he cites liquor as a major factor in Native Americans' perceived decline. Of the Tuscaroras, most of whom had been driven northward where they joined the Iroquois confederacy after being routed in a 1713 war with white Carolinians, a war originally begun when the Tuscaroras reacted against white trading practices. Byrd writes, "The trade they have had the Misfortune to drive with the English has furnisht them constantly with Rum, which they have used so immoderately that, what with the Distempers, and what with the Quarrels it begat amongst them, it has proved a double Destruction" (290).

In July of 1743, John Bartram, the leading Euramerican botanist of the day, accompanied Conrad Weiser from Bartram's famous botanic gardens on the "Shuykil" River through Pennsylvania and New York to Fort Oswego. Weiser's "business was to settle an affair with the Indians at Onondago" (10). Colonists in western New York had reported problems with the Iroquois of the region and
Weiser had been sent to negotiate a peace. But as his journal of this trip, first printed in London in 1751, indicates, Bartram was along for the ride, interested mainly in observing the western frontier and recording information about any new specimens of flora he could find. Throughout his journal Bartram frequently turns his attention from American plantlife to his Native American guides.

Arriving at the town of Shamokin, Bartram finds lodging at an Indian trader's cabin, where he writes,

about midnight the Indians came and called up [the white trader] and his squaw, who lay in a separate part where the goods were deposited, whether together or no I did not ask. She sold the Indians rum, with which being quickly intoxicated, men and women began first to sing and then dance round the fire, then the women would run out to other cabins and soon return, leaving the men singing and dancing the war dance, which continued all the next day. (15)

Throughout the journal Bartram complains of being kept awake at night by drunken Indians' shouting, singing, and general revelry, and he fears that his party will be endangered by the negligence of his intoxicated guide. (see 54-55).

Whereas in a war or captivity narrative a drunken Indian is conceived as most likely to cut the white protagonist's throat, in Bartram's text, "the drunken Indian," responsible for guiding the white man through the woods, is conceived to be a threat to the white narrator by failing in his duty.

In Bartram's narrative there is also an assumption that liquor can make the Native American a danger to himself. Indeed, in a letter attributed to Peter Kalm appended to the 1751 edition of Bartram's *Travels in Pensilvania and Canada* describing a journey from Fort Oswego to Niagara falls, Kalm recounts a popular legend involving "drunken Indians": a couple of Indian hunters had carried their canoe to a point on the Niagara River just above the falls. Drowsy from too much
French brandy, the two laid their canoe upon the river bank and fell asleep in it.
The canoe somehow got loose and drifted rapidly downstream; the Indians were
saved only when one was awakened by the roar of the falls. Kalm writes of the pool
below the falls: "They have found there pieces of human bodies, perhaps of
drunken Indians, that have unhappily came down the Fall" (93). In a similar vein,
John Bartram, echoing Lawson on the Indians of North Carolina and Byrd on the
Tuscaroras, remarks on the perceived decline of the Six Nations of the Iroquois
Confederacy, "their numbers being very much diminished by constant wars, with
both neighboring and distant nations, and perhaps a good deal partly by the
spirituous liquors and diseases the Europeans have brought among them" (78).

Perhaps the most noted eighteenth-century American travel narrative was
written by William Bartram, John Bartram's son, describing his four year journey
through the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. From 1773-77, William Bartram roamed
throughout the Southern portion of what became the United States of America,
hired by England's Dr. John Fothergill to collect botanical specimens and make
sketches of southern flora. The extensive notebook Bartram kept during his
journey developed into the famous Travels, published in Philadelphia in 1791.
Though William shared his father's interest in flora, his journal exhibits quite a
different attitude towards his subject. Whereas John Bartram coolly records his
observations in a matter-of-fact manner, William approaches his task with an
excitement that anticipates the Transcendentalists: "This world, as a glorious
apartment of the boundless palace of the sovereign Creator, is furnished with an
infinite variety of animated scenes, inexpressibly beautiful and pleasing, equally
free to the inspection and enjoyment of all his creatures" (li).
Bartram's near apotheosis of the "vegetable world" is carried over to his perspective of Native Americans; indeed, in his "Introduction," Bartram hopes that his account of the Native American tribes of the American south will demonstrate "that they [are] desirous of becoming united with us, in civil and religious society" (lx). He even wishes that the American people will sponsor a study of Native Americans to determine the best and most effective way to accomplish "their civilization and union with us" (lxii). Throughout Bartram's idealization of southern American flora are interspersed many accounts of his encounters with Native Americans. The following incident suggests Bartram's stance towards ideal white-Native American relations:

nature seemed silent. and nothing appeared to ruffle the happy moments of evening contemplation. when, on a sudden, an Indian appeared crossing the path, at a considerable distance before me. On perceiving that he was armed with a rifle, the first sight of him startled me and I endeavored to elude his sight, by stopping my pace. The intrepid Seminole stopped suddenly, three or four yards before me, and silently viewed me, his countenance angry and fierce, shifting his rifle from shoulder to shoulder, and looking about instantly on all sides, I advanced towards him, and with an air of confidence offered him my hand, hailing him, brother; at this he hastily jerked back his arm, with a look of malice, rage and disdain, seeming every way disconcerted, when again looking at me more attentively, he instantly spurred up to me. and, with dignity in his look and action, gave me his hand, possibly the silent language of his soul, during the moment of suspense (for I believe his design was to kill me when he first came up) was after this manner: "White man, thou art my enemy, and thou and thy brethren have killed mine; yet it may not be so and even if that were the case, thou art now alone, and in my power. Live, the Great Spirit forbids me to touch they life; go to thy brethren, tell them thou sawest an Indian in the forests, who knew how to be humane and compassionate." In fine, we shook hands, and parted in a friendly manner, in the midst of a dreary wilderness, and he informed me of the course and distance to the trading house; where I found he had been extremely ill treated the day before. (15)
Self-appointed goodwill ambassador, throughout his *Travels* Bartram recounts many instances of salutation rituals with Native Americans, some including drinking rum, more including smoking tobacco. Yet despite the numerous instances of drinking he records, unlike virtually every one of his seventeenth- and eighteenth-century fellow writers who focused on Native Americans, Bartram does not even hint that liquor is an especial problem among Native Americans. In a (somewhat reluctantly provided) brief list of "Indian vices" (135), which includes such "bad habits" as gambling and fighting amongst one another, drinking is conspicuously absent. There is, in fact, only one actual instance of what Bartram deems "excessive" Native American drinking behavior in all the *Travels*—a small band of Seminole warriors had stopped at a trading house carrying "a very liberal supply of spirituous liquors, about twenty kegs, each containing five gallons" (161). Bartram continues.

These sons of Mars had the continence and fortitude to withstand the temptation of even tasting a drop of it until their arrival here, where they purposed to supply themselves with necessary articles to equip them for the expedition, and proceed on directly; but here meeting with our young traders and pack-horse men, they were soon prevailed on to broach their beloved nectar; which in the end caused some disturbance, and the consumption of most of their liquor, for after they had once got a smack of it, they never were sober for ten days, and by that time there was but little left.

In a few days this festival exhibited one of the most ludicrous bacchanalian scenes that it is possible to be conceived, white and red men and women without distinction, passed the day merrily with these jovial, amorous topers, and the nights in convivial songs, dances, and sacrifices to Venus, as long as they could stand or move; for in these frolicks both sexes take those liberties with each other, and act without constraint or shame, such scenes as they would abhor when sober or in their senses; and would endanger their ears and even their lives, but at last their liquor running low, and being most of them sick through intoxication, they became more sober, and now the dejected lifeless sots would pawn everything they were in
possession of, for a mouthful of spirits to settle their stomachs, as they termed it. (161: emphasis added)

Here Bartram seems to echo some of the Euramerican conceptions of Native American drinking that inform many other early American travel narratives: that once started the Native American will not stop drinking until either all available liquor is consumed or he is unconscious. Yet the role Bartram casts for Native Americans in his Travels—that of "noble red man" ready to unite with white civilization—allows him to downplay this image of the Native American as drunkard. Not only is drinking absent from the forementioned list of "Indian vices," but Bartram lists temperance as a positive quality of "Indian character" in his "Description of the Character, Customs, and Persons of the American Aborigines" that concludes the Travels, a section in which Bartram generalizes from his four years' observations of Native Americans. "The Muscogulges with their confederates, the Chactaws, Chicasaws, and perhaps the Cherokees, eminently deserve the encomium of all nations, for their wisdom and virtue in resisting and even repelling the greatest, and even the common enemy of mankind, at least of most of the European nations. I mean spirituous liquors" (311-12). Encountering a pair of hapless looking white traders, Bartram reports:

They informed us that they were running about forty kegs of Jamaica spirits (which by dashing would have made at least eighty kegs) to the Nation; and after having left the town three or four days, they were surprised on the road in the evening, just after they had come to camp, by a party of Creeks, who discovering their species of merchandize, they forthwith struck their tomahawks into every keg, giving the liquor to the thirsty sand, not tasting a drop of it themselves. (311-312)

The "drunken Indian" becomes the Indian as teetotaler, a type of Cary Nation
Ethnographic Literature: Policy Reports

Another kind of early American ethnographic text was the "policy report," intended in some way directly to influence Anglo-American policy concerning Native Americans. Of course, other "genres" of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literature often included suggestions for how to "resolve" some aspect of "the Indian problem," which was conceived in a different manner by different parties. We have already observed how Brackenridge used his edition of the Knight and Slover captivity narratives to argue for westward removal of the Indians. In the account of Peter Williamson's captivity included in the "Manheim Anthology," the narrator asserts that the tortures undergone by himself and other white captives "must strike the utmost horror, and cause in every breast the utmost detestation, not only against the authors, but against those who, through inattention, or pusillanimous or erroneous principles, suffered these savages at first, unrepelled, or even unmolested, to commit such outrages, depredations and murders" (222). Ethnographic travel narratives such as Beverley's, Lawson's, and Byrd's explicitly criticized the Indian liquor trade, citing it as the cause of much destruction within Native American communities.

Yet I wish now briefly to examine a set of texts whose primary purpose seems to have been to promote a specific official policy towards Native Americans. While all have been subsequently published, several even within the eighteenth century, most of these texts were directed not as much to a general audience as to governing bodies responsible for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Anglo-American policy regarding Native Americans. Though they had various particular motives for writing about Native Americans, all of these writers suggested some way of
using Native Americans to benefit Euramericans—"transforming" Indians either as converts to Christianity, as military allies, or as "upstanding" trading partners. Not surprisingly, all of these reports explicitly mention the generally perceived problem of drinking among Native Americans. They describe this problem, however, in a manner vastly different from contemporary epic writers.

Daniel Gookin, a captain in the Massachusetts Bay Colony militia, was one of the first "superintendents" of the Indians. In 1656 and again in 1661 Gookin was appointed overseer of the "praying Indians," those Native Americans who had converted to Christianity and who lived in "praying towns," supposedly abandoning their tribal lifestyles. In a document dated December 7, 1674, Gookin provides what he calls Historical Collections of the Indians. Though the document purports to describe Native Americans throughout the northeast, mostly New England, its main immediate purpose was apparently to report to the London-based Corporation for Gospelizing the Indians in New England the success of their missionary efforts. Gookin even includes an itemized list of expenses (78). Thus, for example, while Gookin admits his ignorance of the "Inland Indians... particularly the Mohawks or Maquas" (16), he nevertheless suggests that the Corporation should sponsor missionary expeditions to these tribes, especially since "the fathers of the Romish religion do travel among them" (16).

16 Moses Coit Tyler claims Gookin had prepared this text for publication (154), but it was not widely available until the Massachusetts Historical Society published it in 1792.

17 Gookin was in fact on the Corporation "payroll."
Gookin is greatly concerned that liquor has made Native Americans less amenable to becoming "God's servants." He writes that although "Their drink was formerly no other but water," presently,

Many of the Indians are great lovers of strong drink, as aqua vitae, rum, brandy, or the like, and are very greedy to buy it of the English; and though all strong drink is prohibited to be sold to any Indians in the Massachusetts colony, yet some ill-disposed people, for filthy lucre's sake, do sell unto the Indians secretly... Hereby they are made drunk very often, and being drunk are many times outrageous and mad, fighting with and killing one another, yea sometimes their own relations. This beastly sin of drunkenness could not be charged upon the Indians before the English and other Christian nations, as Dutch, French, and Spaniards, come to dwell in America, which nations especially the English in New England have cause to be greatly humbled before God, that they have been, and are, instrumental to cause these Indians to commit this great evil and beastly sin of drunkenness. (11)

In his 1677 _An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians in New England in the Years 1675, 1676, 1677_, his defence of the "praying Indians" who had been taken from their towns and herded into detention on Deer Island during King Philip's War (an ancestor of the U.S. policy of detaining Japanese-Americans during World War II), Gookin defends the Christian Indians from the charge of general drunkenness:

I cannot deny but that many of them, especially of the younger sort, are too apt to be overtaken by drink. I could wish they had not so much example and temptation thereunto by some English, especially such as have been their fellow soldiers in the wars, who are very ready, when they meet the Indians, to give or procure strong drink for them, and others for filthy lucre's sake, sell them strong drink, expressly prohibited by law. (515)

Whereas other Puritans such as Increase and Cotton Mather, in their criticisms of the "filthy lucre" that motivates those whites who sell liquor to the Indians, emphasize the effect upon the white community, either the violent physical threat that a "drunken Indian" poses towards the whites or the damnation
of white souls for making the Indian "twofold more the child of Hell." Gookin's focus here is upon the unfortunate effect that alcohol has on the Native Americans. Gookin laments that liquor makes Native Americans less susceptible to conversion to (Protestant) Christianity. Though he emphasizes that drunkenness is much less prevalent among the "praying Indians." Gookin acknowledges that some Christian Indians still drink. Of Nashabah, one of the New England "praying towns." Gookin notes that the inhabitants often "abuse" the cider they make from their apple orchards.

I have often seriously considered what course to take, to restrain this beastly sin of drunkenness among them: but hitherto cannot reach it. For if it were possible, as it were not, to prevent the English selling them strong drink; yet they have a native liberty to plant orchards and sow grain, as barley and the like, of which they may and do make strong drink that doth inebriate them: so that nothing can overcome and conquer this exorbitancy but the sovereign grace of God in Christ which is the only antidote to prevent and mortify the poison of sin. (Historical Collections 48)

Yet Gookin doesn't abandon all to "God in Christ." retreating into the commonplace notion that "Indians are natural drunkards and nothing will keep them from their liquor": in addition to his insistence that "All strong liquors (be) prohibited to be sold or given to the Indians, unless in case of sickness, by permission" (38). Gookin suggests that the most effective method to curb Native American drunkenness would be to appoint "constables" among the Native Americans themselves who would be empowered to "take away strong drink" from their brethren. Gookin has faith that Native Americans, victimized by the white man's liquor, can help solve the problems drinking has caused in their communities.
Cadwallader Colden was also interested in converting Native Americans—not to "servants of Christ" but rather to military partners with the Anglo-American colonists. Despite its scholarly-sounding title, *The History of the Five Indian Nations Depending on the Province of New York in America* was designed in large part to persuade officials of colonial New York to court the political alliance of the Iroquois Confederacy. Colden even goes so far as to suggest that the support of the Iroquois was crucial in maintaining the British stronghold in North America. In a preface addressed to Governor William Burnett, Colden makes clear that the British have not fully recognized the importance of their relations with the Five Nations, that they have taken for granted or discounted their support, unlike the French, who had successfully lured alliances with several Native American tribes.

Colden hints that the Iroquois possess many qualities that make them ideal allies, and that they are (at least partially) capable of civilization.

> If care were taken to plant in them, and cultivate that general benevolence to mankind, which is the true principle of virtue, it would effectually eradicate those horrid vices occasioned by their unbounded revenge; and then the Five Nations would no longer deserve the name of Barbarians, but would become a people whose friendship might add honour to the British nation, tho' they now be too generally despised (vii)

Colden suggests that the Iroquois have much to teach the colonial British about effective methods of warfare in the New World: "The whole country being one continued Forrest, gives great advantage to these skulking parties, and had obliged Christians to imitate the Indians in this method of making war" (x).

Throughout his work, which essentially traces Iroquoian martial history from the

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advent of Euramericans in the Great Lakes region through the end of the seventeenth century. Colden generally praises the Five Nations for their skill in warfare with the French and their Huron allies. He notes, however, one particular weakness of some of the warriors. Colden reprints several speeches by British colonial officials exhorting Native Americans to refrain from drinking liquor, which white traders have made available to the Iroquois. Governor Thomas Dongan is reported to have addressed a delegation of Iroquois shortly before King William's War. "Not to suffer their People to be drunk, during the War: a soldier thereby ... loses his reputation, because of the Advantages it will give the enemy over him" (69). Colden writes that in July of 1693 a British colonel addressed Iroquois delegates: "He advised them to guard against being drunk, and shewed them the ill consequences of it in time of war" (136). As if to illustrate this principle in action, Colden reports of the July 26, 1688, Iroquois attack on the French Island at La Chine, near Montreal. "There was above a Thousand of the French kill'd at this time ... The Five Nations only lost three men in this Expedition, that got Drunk and were left behind" (72). The message seems clear: "the drunken Indian" is an ineffective warrior. Strongly implicit in Colden's references to Native American drinking is that the colonists should prevent Native Americans from drinking not because the colonists themselves will be directly endangered by "drunk raving beasts," but that the colonial liquor traders will diminish the effectiveness of a valuable potential ally against the French.

Pennsylvanian Charles Thomson, best remembered as Secretary for the Continental Congress, also wrote of Native Americans as potential military allies, though he focused on different tribes than did Colden. Thomson published in
London (1759) *Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawnee Indians from the British Interest*. Concerned that these two tribes had in the course of the mid-eighteenth century become increasingly allied to the French, Thomson sought to explain and remedy this "alienation." Thomson thus traces the history of treaty negotiations between British colonial representatives and the Shawnee and Delaware for the previous thirty years to prove his assertion that the tribes had good reason for their "defection" from "the British interest," a task Thomson was especially suited for since he served as interpreter at many of these negotiations. Thomson charges the British colonists with continually violating deeds, encroaching on lands specifically set aside for Native Americans, blatantly disregarding previous treaties. Many of the Native American complaints Thomson reports concern alcohol: colonial negotiators are repeatedly found guilty of plying their Indian counterparts with liquor in order to make them more "agreeable." Thomson notes that in many of the negotiations, "the Indians complain of the damage they receive by strong liquor being brought among them" (11). Thomson complains that the official colonial response to Indian elders' pleas to stop the liquor trade were all too often the same. At a 1729 treaty with the Conestogas in Philadelphia, the colonial negotiator washes his hands of responsibility; Thomson writes of his reply, "the Indians make all these laws of no effect; they will have it [liquor] ... he could make no Laws against their drinking it ... they must make these themselves" (25). Thomson greatly criticizes such official colonial advice: "This was commonly the case when Indians complained ... no effectual measures seem to have been taken to redress the grievance" (25).
One of the most telling sections of Thomson's report is his description of the 1753 treaty of Carlisle. The Delaware and Shawnee, along with the Six Nations, had protested British and French colonial settlement in the Ohio region and the meeting at Carlisle had been arranged in part to address this problem. The Carlisle treaty proceedings are undoubtedly best remembered by students of American literature through Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography. Franklin, assigned by the Pennsylvania Assembly to be a delegate at the Carlisle treaty negotiations, portrays Native Americans as greatly desirous of liquor. Franklin claims that the Native American negotiators were kept focussed on the business at hand only by colonists' promises that they would be given all the liquor they wished after the negotiations were concluded. Franklin describes the drinking spree that followed the negotiations:

In the Evening, hearing a great Noise among them, the Commissioners walk'd out to see what was the Matter. We found they had made a great Bonfire in the Middle of the Square. They were all drunk Men and Women, quarreling and fighting. Their dark-color'd Bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy Light of the Bonfire, running after and beating one another with Firebrands, accompanied by their horrid Yellings, form'd a scene the most resembling our Ideas of Hell that could well be imagin'd. (121)

The next day, when Franklin questions the Indians about their behavior, he claims that one of their old counselors "then endeavour'd to excuse the Rum, by saying, 'The great Spirit, who made all things . . . when he made Rum, he said "Let this be for Indians to get drunk with," and it must be so' " (121). Franklin then muses, anticipating the more heated rhetoric of Brackenridge, "indeed, if it be the Design of Providence to extirpate these Savages in order to make room for Cultivators of the Earth, it seems not improbable that Rum may be the appointed
Means. It has already annihilated all the Tribes who formerly inhabited the
Seacoast" (121).

Thomson, however, is not so willing to dismiss Native American drinking as
"the design of Providence." He writes that in the negotiations at Carlisle the Native
Americans had asked that some of the colonial traders be recalled from their
territory.

They were sensible of their own weakness, and immoderate desire of
strong drink, by which they exposed themselves to many abuses and
inconveniences. They had frequently complained to the English
governments and desired that some measures might be taken to
prevent liquors from being carried among them in such quantities,
but nothing was done to purpose. (74)

The Native Americans claimed that they wanted honest, sober traders, not
"roving white renegades" who would simply barge into their villages with their
rum. Thomson argues, "Had this been complied with, the English might easily have
engrossed the Trade, and secured the Affections of many Indian Nations" (75).
Thomson concludes his report by urging colonial officials if "the trade with [the
Indians be] regulated and set on such a footing that they may be secure from abuse,
there is not the least doubt but the alliance and friendship of the Indians may be
forever secured to the British interest, but should these things be neglected, the
Arms of the French are open to receive them..." (122). Thomson lays the blame for
the perceived problem of drinking among Native Americans squarely at the feet of
colonial traders and, especially, those officials who refuse to do more to control the
abuses of these traders. Native American leaders, Thomson emphasizes, recognize
drinking as a serious problem within their communities. Like Colden's, Thomson's
bottom line in his report is that whites should do more to assist Native Americans in
alleviating the problems drinking has caused in many Native American communities.

James Adair's 1775 *History of the American Indians* is reputed to be the single most detailed study of Native Americans written in colonial times. Drawing upon his forty years' experience as an Indian trader in what is now South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Adair offers his readers extended portraits of his "interesting, as well as amusing" subjects (xxxv), an unevenly detailed description of many of the Native American tribes of the American South (Adair's title is more comprehensive than the actual scope of his work). Not surprisingly, Adair reports many accounts of Native American drinking, associating them especially with what he considers as the irresponsibility of white traders. In fact, the work becomes an expose of what the "upright" trader Adair considers corrupt trading practices; Adair includes much advice about how those commissioned to regulate Indian trade could better perform their jobs.

Adair provides one of the most colorful descriptions of the "drunken Indian": "[Indians are] commonly temperate in eating, but excessively immoderate in drinking. – They often transform themselves by liquor into the likeness of mad foaming bears" (6). Yet this metaphor, which seems taken straight from a captivity narrative, belies the overall portrayal of Native American drinking behavior in the *History*. For while Adair suggests that Native American violence against whites, most notably the Yemassee War, has been at least partially caused by abuses in the liquor trade, the majority of Adair's references to drinking emphasize the destruction done to Native Americans themselves. Of the Chickasaws, Adair writes, "By some fatality, they are much addicted to excessive drinking, and spirituous
liquors distract them so exceedingly, that they will even eat live coals of fire" (235).
The Catawbas "are now reduced to a very few above one hundred fighting men – the
small pox, and intemperate drinking, have contributed however more than their
wars to their great decay" (235). One trader reported that "while he and several
others were drinking spirituous liquors with the Indians, one of the warriors
having drank to excess, reeled into the fire, and burned himself very much" (122).
In fact in one instance when drunken Indians do pose a threat to a white, it is the
white whom Adair chastises:

A white man, on Mobile River, sold spirituous liquors to a couple of
the Chockta, till they were much intoxicated, and unable to
purchase any more; he then strenuously denied to credit them
their usual burning thirst exciting them to drink more; they became
too troublesome for any spirited person to bear with. He took up an
ax, at first in his own defence, but when they endeavored to run off,
he, in the heat of passion pursued and unhappily killed one of them.
(315)

Here is no Hannah Duston, nor even Thomas Brown. Instead this white who
killed an Indian is treated by Adair as a murderer, plain and simple. To Adair's
approval, according to due process, this crooked trader was charged with murder
and condemned.

Adair emphasizes that the rum trader not only destroys the "soul" and dignity
of Native Americans, but even more importantly hinders their effectiveness in
bringing their "product" to market. Adair strenuously objects to the practice of
granting traders general licenses instead of ones which specify exactly where a
trader is allowed to do business with Native Americans:

Formerly each trader had a license for two towns, or villages, but
according to the present unwise plan, two, and even three Arab-like
peddlars skulk about in one of those villages. Several of them also
frequently emigrate into the woods with spirituous liquors, and
cheating trifles, after the Indian hunting camps, in the winter
season, to the great injury of the regular trader, who supplies them with the conveniences of hunting: for as they will sell even their wearing shirts for inebriating liquors, they must be supplied anew in the fall of the year, by the trader. (394)

Finally, Adair's major argument against the liquor traders, and the Native American drinking behavior for which they are responsible, rests upon his vision of the ideal economy in the American south, one which includes a well-regulated traffic between Euramerican traders and their sober Native American partners.

The Vanishing American

Throughout the colonial period, it became a commonplace belief among many Anglo-colonial writers that Euramerican and Native American cultures were incompatible. Though it had been the original stated goal of many of those Euramericans who first brought "civilization" to America to incorporate Native Americans in some way as a part of the "New Society," throughout the colonial period, despite the rhetoric of those like William Bartram, colonists became increasingly convinced that Native Americans were incapable of assimilating into the developing Euramerican civilization. Pearce sums up: "The effort of colonial Americans had mainly been directed toward proving that savage and civilized destiny were one. That effort failed as a matter of course. And Americans after 1775, trying to know their unique destiny, would come to know it in terms of savages who could have no share in it" (Savagism 49).

The Euramerican assumptions about Native American drinking that emerged during the colonial period helped to contribute to this general sense that white and Indian cultures could not mix. As we have seen, a number of Anglo-colonial writers emphasized how "fire-water" had brought about significant declines in the
population of those Native American tribes who had any extensive interaction with whites. By the end of the eighteenth century, there seemed to be a consensus forming among a number of Euramerican writers (in the ethnographic mode at least), that liquor might very well cause Native Americans to become virtually extinct. Thomas Jefferson argued in his Notes on the State of Virginia in response to Query XI regarding the region’s “Aborigines,” that statistical tables clearly showed Virginia’s Native American population had greatly decreased between 1607 and 1669: “the tribes therein enumerated were, in the space of 62 years, reduced to about one-third of their former numbers. Spiritual liquors, the small pox, war . . . committed terrible havock among them” (96). Crevecoeur’s American Farmer writes of the Indians of 1770 Nantucket, reduced to a fraction of their former numbers, “when the Europeans came, [the Indians] caught the smallpox . . . this calamity was succeeded by the use of rum; and these are the two principal causes which so much diminished their numbers, not only here but all over the continent. In some places whole nations have disappeared” (108)

This notion of Indians as “Vanishing Americans,” dying off in droves in large part because of their “addiction” to the white man’s “fire-water,” in fact became incorporated in the rhetoric of the early American temperance movement. We have seen that Puritan sermons had used the image of “the drunken Indian” as a negative example for potential white tipplers. Samuel Danforth, in his 1710 sermon

19 In fact, Jefferson contends in the Notes that his appreciation of Native American culture was demonstrated by the fact that he enjoyed searching for Indian arrowheads and other “artifacts” of “vanished tribes” (97).
upon the execution of two Native Americans who had had been convicted of murdering one of their fellows while they were drunk, exhorts his readers:

Let us not despise, but carefully improve this awful Warning now given us by the Sentence of Death to be this day Executed on these two poor men before us, for taking away unjustly the Lives of two of their own Nation . . . both Murderers and Murdered being over-taken with Drink, at the time when these Murders were committed. Wo unto us if we regard not this Warning now given to us. (33-34)

Yet Danforth was arguing against the sin of drunkenness, the abuse of liquor, and not drinking itself. Drink, even "ardent spirits," was still, as Increase Mather had noted, considered "the good creature of God." Indeed, much colonial legislation attempting to regulate Native American drinking acknowledged that hard liquor could have a positive function, even among Native Americans, as implied by a 1694 New England statute that allowed white settlers to give rum to Native Americans as "an act of charity for relieving any Indian in any sudden exigent of faintness, or sickness" (Kawashima 82).

By the conclusion of the eighteenth century, however, the once-popular notion that liquor was necessary for one's health, to get the blood pumping in the morning and to protect the body from extreme heat and cold, was attacked by, among others, Anthony Benezet and Benjamin Rush, progenitors of the American temperance movement. Rush, who "enjoyed a reputation after the [Revolutionary] war as perhaps the nation's foremost physician" (Lender and Martin 37), was a strong opponent of all hard liquor, claiming that moderate use of such fermented drink as cider, wine, and ale gave the body all the stimulant it needed and that distilled spirits were actually unhealthy. Rush accepted the commonplace that Native Americans were naturally "addicted" to ardent spirits. "Drunkenness is a more general vice among savages than among civilized nations . . . . Indeed, they
glory in their fondness for strong liquors, and consider it as a part of their character” (“Account” 151). He also believed that Native Americans were being destroyed by liquor: at one point he wrote that “The mortality peculiar to those Indian tribes that have mingled with the white people, must be ascribed to the extensive mischief of spirituous liquors” (“Medicine” 280). In “An Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors on the Human Body” (1790), perhaps his most influential piece on the physiological consequences of drinking liquor, Rush combined these two stereotypes to instruct his white readership about the evils of “demon rum”:

It has been remarked that the Indians have diminished everywhere in America since their connections with the Europeans. This has been justly ascribed to the Europeans having introduced spirituous liquors among them. Let those men who are every day turning their backs upon all the benefits of civilized society, to seek habitations in the neighborhood of Indians, consider how far this wandering mode of life is produced by the same cause which has scattered and annihilated so many Indian tribes. (11)

Rush thus helped to establish the rhetorical role of the Native American as Vanishing American, inherited by the nineteenth-century temperance movement that was to so influence the American consciousness about all forms of drinking.

Conclusion

From the advent of Europeans in North America in the early seventeenth century through the end of the eighteenth century, the situation of Native Americans of the east changed from the chief inhabitants of the land virtually to hangers-on. By the end of the eighteenth century, in fact, many of the Native American tribes who had once inhabited the coastal regions had migrated west of the Appalachians, anticipating the 1830s Removal policy. Although as Brian Dippie
notes. exact numbers in the decline in Native American populations throughout the colonial period are difficult to estimate (xiv-xvii), most of the contemporary commentators and modern historians agree that Native American numbers dwindled considerably throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a direct result of the Euramerican presence in North America. Many identify alcohol as a major factor. In his *American Indian Holocaust and Survival*, Russell Thornton echoes such writers as Crevecoeur and Rush when he claims that "many native societies were virtually destroyed by the quest for alcohol" (66).

As Berkhofer convincingly argues in his ambitious study, Euramerican understanding of Native Americans has often been determined by Euramerican preconceptions of "Indian nature." Anglo-American colonists were understandably curious about Native Americans, and, as we have seen, much of the literature they produced to some degree attempted to understand "Indian nature." Many of these colonial writers, with such exceptions as William Bartram, seemed to subscribe to the theory that Native Americans have a natural, even constitutional, inordinate craving for liquor. These writers seem (at least implicitly) to have supported the various acts of colonial legislation designed to curb drinking among Native Americans. Yet instances of drinking among Native Americans in Anglo-colonial literature are given various treatments often according to the individual writer's understanding of Native American-white relations. Virtually all Anglo-colonial literature about Native Americans was (purportedly) non-fiction, drawn from the writer's own face-to-face encounters with Native Americans or at least from such accounts recorded by others. Yet not all emphasized the same kind of Native American-white relationship. I've suggested two different modes of colonial
literature concerning Native Americans: epic and ethnographic. Epic narratives tended to dramatize the Euramerican's struggle to maintain his civilized identity in the New World. In the epic mode, Indian identity is often perceived as antithetical to that of whites. Epic narratives thus portray the Indian as outsider; the narrative necessarily casts the Indian in the role of antagonist, a threat to the white community. In this mode, liquor is depicted to intensify the Indian's already brutal nature. Even when such writers acknowledge the destruction that liquor wreaks upon the Indian himself, the major emphasis is still upon the danger that "the drunken Indian" poses towards the white.

Colonial ethnographic literature generally posits a different relationship between the Native Americans and whites. Works in the ethnographic mode tended to be more interested in exploring the mysterious Indian, often taking a more sympathetic stance than works in the epic mode. "Indian nature" is thus approached often in a more "open-ended" fashion. To be sure, many of these ethnographic writers have less than altruistic motives. Golden wants strong British allies. Adair wants sober trading partners. Gookin wants Christian converts. Yet regardless of specific motive, these ethnographic writers all seem to believe that Native Americans should be the friends of the whites. In the vast majority of accounts of Native American drinking in the ethnographic mode, the emphasis is upon the Native American as a victim of the white man's liquor. Liquor is a potent agent in the general Euramerican destruction of Native Americans.

Native Americans were the primary focus of much American literature throughout the colonial and they became even more of a "staple subject" of American literature in the early nineteenth century. Barnett writes, "After the
Revolution, the impulse of nationalism began to find expression in a demand for both American-authored imaginative literature, including fiction, and native themes (22). There could be no more "American" a theme than the American Indian, as suggested in Charles Brockden Brown's famous preface to his 1799 Edgar Huntly:

The sources of amusement to the fancy and instruction to the heart, that are peculiar to [Americans] are... numerous and inexhaustible. It is the purpose of this work to profit by some of these sources to exhibit a series of adventures, growing out of the condition of the country... incidents of Indian hostility... are far more suitable [than "Gothic castles and chimeras"]; and, for a native of America to overlook these, would admit of no apology (3).

Like their colonial predecessors, nineteenth-century Euramericans who wrote about Native Americans could hardly ignore the established literary stereotypes concerning alcohol and Native Americans
Chapter III
Frontier Romances and Antebellum Ethnographers

By the end of the eighteenth century, Native Americans had become an established feature of American literature. The literature of the new republic generally tended to perpetuate the competing images of Indians as either bloodthirsty savages or noble children of nature—a dichotomous set of images which had characterized much of Anglo-colonial literature. For example, in the late 1790s Philip Freneau published a series of essays in the *Jersey Chronicle* and the *Time-Piece* under the name “Tomo-Cheeki, the Creek Indian in Philadelphia.” Much like Oliver Goldsmith had examined life in eighteenth-century England through the guise of his Oriental “Citizen of the World,” Freneau used his “noble savage” persona to critique aspects of American society. Tomo-Cheeki laments the inevitable passing of his race as an unhappy consequence of the spread of Euramerican civilization. He deplores the Creek treaty-making “that will end in our destruction by bringing us into a more intimate connexion with the white men who have ever proved proud, cruel, base, treacherous” the industrious distributors of those pernicious liquors, the effect of which has already devoted to death more of the original nations of this huge continent than have perished by the sword of a thousand invaders” (22-23). At the other end of the spectrum, Hugh

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Curiously while he admits that many Native Americans have “abused” liquor, converting it from a “good thing . . . to an evil purpose,” in the article “A short talk on Drunkenness” published in the *Time-Piece* in 1797, Freneau’s Tomo-Cheeki
Henry Brackenridge lambasted the image of the Rousseauian noble savage. "These nations are so degenerate from the life of man ... so prone to every vicious excess of passion, so faithless, and so incapable of all civilization, that it is dangerous to the good order of the world that they should exist in it" (37)

Many American writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries mined colonial history for Indian personages they could transform into literary heroes. The time-worn story of Pocahontas's rescue of John Smith and subsequent marriage to John Rolfe was the subject of one early "Indian play" produced in America, performed in Philadelphia on April 5, 1808 (Peavy 71). Popular Indian dramas followed on such subjects as King Philip's War, Pontiac's Rebellion, and other key events in the history of Native American-white relations. Unlike the colonial Indian war and captivity narratives, which for the most part recorded ongoing struggles between Indian "aggressors" and white "victims," the early nineteenth-century Indian dramas were written and performed for audiences for whom Native Americans were no longer seen as a tangible, immediate threat. The early nineteenth-century American stage was filled with romantic Indian characters defying evil white villains and assisting white heroes. "the American dramatists apotheosized the aborigine, creating a bronze god silhouetted against the setting sun of a dying civilization" (Peavy 84). Eugene Jones notes that despite the obvious topicality of those "history-based [Indian] plays" which focussed upon more recent events such as the 1830s Indian Removal, "the staunch tradition of sympathy with the Noble Savage was the soundly entrenched, crowd-pleasing emotional element playwrights strove to purvey" (36). Jones observes that this sympathy did not necessarily correlate with contemporary policy concerning Native Americans.

announces, "Who that has a spirit within him partaking in ever so small a degree of the celestial nature, but will perceive himself becoming a better man by the operation of this divine liquid, the juice of the grape" (47)
"The American theatre audience continued to enjoy . . . admirable [Indian] heroes on the stage and did not allow their enjoyment to be marred by what they knew about the natives they were displacing or the increasingly more stern and repressive government policies toward them" (39).

Images of Indians also figured prominently in American poetry of the period. Like the drama, the poetry consistently tended to portray the Indian as doomed to virtual extinction, receding before the advance of Euramerican civilization. Indeed, Longfellow drew from a long-established narrative pattern when he had his Hiawatha fade into the west at the conclusion of his famous 1855 poem. The Indian "nationalist" abdicating his position as his people's "saviour" to the black-robed priests who offer "Peace of Christ, and joy of Mary." Keiser observes that "Indian deathsongs" constituted a popular subgenre in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He quotes from a note in an 1802 volume of poetry which affords tragic stature to the image of "the dying Indian": "We look upon the fierce and stubborn courage of the dying Indian with a mixture of respect, pity, and horror: and it is to those sensations excited in the mind of the reader, that the Death Song must owe its effect" (28). Philip Freneau and William Cullen Bryant both wrote well-known poems upon the subject of the dying Indian. In Freneau's "The Indian Burying Ground," perhaps his best-known Indian poem, the subject is an Indian grave, symbol of a fast disappearing race. From a perspective of hindsight, eastern Euramericans could well afford to pity the fate of the "Vanishing American."

American poetry and drama in the first half of the nineteenth century frequently featured Indian characters drawn (often rather freely) from annals of white-Native American relations. Yet ultimately the most significant genre that dealt with Native Americans, the one that most fully utilized "historical material.}"
was the frontier romance, which Louise Barnett describes as the "distinct and coherent genre . . . of . . . fiction containing Indian characters and written between 1790 and 1860" (17) While frontier romances were often influenced by the popular notion of the "Vanishing American" and the image of the noble savage, they depended largely upon Indian war and captivity stories for their narrative structures. Thus frontier romances often featured white heroes and heroines combating, fleeing from, or held fast within the clutches of hostile Indians. True to the format of the epic mode, frontier romances predominantly cast Native Americans as antagonists in the whites' struggle to "tame the land."

However, there are a number of significant differences between colonial war and captivity narratives and their nineteenth-century descendants, differences which significantly affected how Native Americans were portrayed. Captivity narratives revolve almost solely around the experience of a white who is held by Native Americans against his or her will. They are typified by the three-part structure—Separation, Transformation, and Return—which Richard VanDerBeets observes is "one of the most fundamental of all archetypal patterns" (50). While frontier romances characteristically involve instances of Indian captivity, and thus to a degree follow the archetypal pattern VanDerBeets notes, they also owe much to the form of conventional English fiction. More often than not, an American frontier romance involves a traditional love story, frequently between white males and females of gentility, in the style of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century English novel. In several frontier romances, Indian characters serve to complicate this plot, not as violent aggressors threatening white lives but as potential rivals to the male or female white lovers. Indeed.

2 See, for instance, Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok* and Catherine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*.
perhaps the most significant difference between the frontier romance and the captivity narrative is that while the captivity narrative almost invariably shows the Native American as alien to Euramericans, many frontier romances contain Indian and white characters who live on the fringes of their respective cultures, partially "Indianized whites" and partially "civilized savages." These types of characters allow the writer of the frontier romance to illustrate the effects of one culture upon the other in more detail (though not necessarily with more accuracy) than narrators of captivity experiences.

Just as there were important changes in the epic mode of portraying Native Americans from early American war and captivity narratives to nineteenth-century frontier romances, so were there significant developments in the ethnographic mode. Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century ethnographic accounts, like their colonial predecessors, were written from a distinctly Euramerican perspective—indeed the three "ethnographers" discussed in this chapter all strenuously sought to assimilate Native Americans into Euramerican culture, striving to convert "heathen Indians" to Christianity as an essential means to this end. Yet the later ethnographic writers sought to record a more "scientific" picture of Native Americans, one purportedly based on a more extensive, objective examination than their predecessors. Affiliated with such organizations as the American Philosophical Society, John Heckewelder, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and Thomas McKenney all wrote of their respective first-hand experiences among Native Americans primarily in an attempt to inform their readers about Native American life and frequently as a means of influencing federal policy. While Schoolcraft, McKenney, and even Heckewelder considered the "savage" lifestyles of Native Americans inferior to that of whites, their methods of writing about Native Americans—relying on detailed, professedly empathic observation—in many
instances created a different set of images than those conveyed in the frontier romance. This difference from the epic novelists is particularly reflected in the many of the ethnographers' statements concerning alcohol and Native Americans

**Indian Liquor Trade Legislation in the New Republic**

The Treaty of Paris concluding the Revolutionary War granted the new United States political sovereignty over territory from the Atlantic coastline to the Mississippi River (excluding present-day Florida and southern portions of Alabama and Mississippi). Though most tribes which had originally inhabited the eastern seaboard had migrated or had been driven inland by the end of the eighteenth century, the middle and especially the western portion of land now designated United States territory contained a considerable population of Native Americans, most of whom had an ambiguous political status vis-a-vis the new country. They were not automatically considered citizens, to whom the Bill of Rights would apply, and yet they certainly were not "foreigners." or at least they could not be treated so in practice, for they were thought "rightfully" to inhabit sections of what was now the United States. After much legal debate, the United States government eventually came to define Native Americans living on U. S. territory virtually as wards of the state, subject to laws of the federal government but entitled only to what rights it chose to grant.

The Articles of Confederation had declared that the federal government had power "to regulate the trade and manage all affairs with the Indians" who were not citizens of any of the States. Advocates of states' rights had vehemently objected to this claim, in a sense anticipating the debate concerning federal versus state "jurisdiction" over Native Americans that was to play so significant a role in the controversy surrounding the removal of the Cherokee in the 1830s. Because of
such complaints, the framers of the Constitution were careful to delineate the relationship between the federal government and Native Americans in such a manner that state legislatures would approve. In the final draft of the Constitution, the federal government was given (slightly) less sweeping authority regarding relations with Native Americans. "Congress was given the specific charge 'To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the 'Indian tribes' " (S. L. Tyler 37).

Acting upon this power, in the 1790s Congress passed a series of four federal Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts designed primarily to protect Native American lands from the encroachment of white settlers. The federal government did not directly address the Indian liquor trade until the next decade, allowing states to handle the matter. Most states did indeed pass legislation modeled after colonial precedents regulating the Indian liquor trade. However, states had no jurisdiction over the western territories not yet fully incorporated into the new country, territory in which most of the trade between whites and Native Americans took place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The March 30, 1802, revision of the Trade and Intercourse Acts was the first explicitly to address the issue of the Indian liquor trade on the federal level. Section 21 stipulated that "the President of the United States [is] authorized to take such measures, from time to time, as to him may appear expedient, to prevent or restrain the vending or distributing of spirituous liquors among all, or any of the said Indian tribes" (Laws appendix 42). Asserting his prerogative, Jefferson soon after urged all territorial governors to restrict traders from selling liquor to Native Americans, purportedly at the request of the Miami chief Little Turtle, who, during his 1801-02 visit to Washington, had asked the president to assist his efforts to urge his people to abstain from drinking.
In 1806, the United States government acted further to regulate trade with Native Americans by setting up a factory system, a series of 28 federally owned and operated trading posts, most of which were located in "Indian country," that is, territory over which the federal government claimed jurisdiction, but which was currently legally occupied by Native American tribes (though there was often an ambiguous border between "Indian" and "civilized" country, which caused problems in enforcing Jefferson's "presidential prohibition"). In an effort to secure Native Americans' loyalty to the United States and to compete with Spanish, French, and British traders, the factory trading posts were designed as storehouses where Native Americans could bring goods to exchange. Ideally this would eliminate the need for traders to enter Native American villages and thus would put an end to whiskey traders peddling liquor from village to village. In order to assist the "presidential prohibition," factors were explicitly ordered not to "carry or sell liquor to the red men" (S. L. Tyler 43).

Yet few U.S. officials believed that these measures were truly effective in curbing the Indian liquor trade. After complying with the president's 1802 request, William Henry Harrison, then governor of Indiana Territory, wrote to Jefferson in October 1803, "It is my opinion that more whiskey has been consumed by the Indians and more fatal consequences ensued from the Use of it since the traders have been prohibited from taking it into Indian Country than there ever was before" (qtd in Prucha, American Indian Policy 104-105). Several factors contributed to the general ineffectiveness of the federal attempts to stop the liquor trade. One was the ultimate failure of the factory system. In 1822, the federal government, recognizing that it had achieved few of its original objectives, abolished the factory system, partly responding to charges that the state-run
factories practically monopolized a legitimate "market," unfairly squeezing out private traders.

Second was that in certain cases territorial governors granted exemptions from the "presidential prohibition." Astor's American Fur Company, the largest of the American fur trading outfits of the period, initially pledged to refrain from trading liquor to Native Americans, reasoning like Adair and Atkin that the most reliable trading partner was a sober one. But the company abandoned this scruple when it decided that British liquor traders were "stealing" its custom with Native Americans along the northern border. As Sheehan observes, at the time it was a generally accepted belief that "no trader would survive without at some time dealing in liquor" (234). In repeated instances, Astor's Company successfully utilized the argument of "national interests" to circumvent the "presidential prohibition." In 1818 Lewis Cass, governor of Michigan Territory, granted the company's petition to be allowed to trade liquor with Indians. In 1827, Thomas McKenney, head of the War Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs, directed Cass to stop the American Fur Company's liquor trade, but in 1831, after McKenney had been dismissed by the Jackson Administration for his insistence that Indian Removal be voluntary, Secretary of War John Eaton "restored to Cass the discretionary power that had been withdrawn in 1827" (Prucha, American Indian Policy 114). As throughout the colonial period, nationalistic trade rivalries kept some American officials from a strict regulation of the Indian liquor trade.

Other significant loopholes in the "presidential prohibition" also functioned to counter its intent. Traders were allowed to transport liquor into Indian country as provisions for boatmen who were crucial to trade on the river. Often there was little government agents could do to verify that liquor claimed as intended for boatmen was not actually sold to Native Americans. Prucha reports of one
expedition successfully using the "boatmen ploy" for bringing liquor into Indian
country that in fact traveled entirely overland—"Any ruse seemed to succeed"
(American Indian Policy 115)

Another important factor explaining the ineffectiveness of the federal
government's policies to prohibit the Indian liquor trade was its method of
enforcing these policies. Violators of trade regulations were tried in territorial
district courts, which were often less than enthusiastic in prosecuting white
traders accused of selling liquor to Native Americans. Prior to 1834, government
agents who, authorized by an 1822 Congressional act, had seized goods from traders
who illegally brought liquor into Indian Country, were liable to personal suits from
the accused traders. Cases involving violations by the powerful American Fur
Company were especially troublesome for federal Indian agents:

the threats of civil action against army officers and Indian agents
were a deterrent to effective enforcement. [Astor's] Company ... had
the support of the local courts and judges, who generally did not take
kindly to the army officers and what the frontiersmen considered
their arbitrary, if not tyrannical, action. It was usually an uneven
match. The government officials were often isolated and ill-
supported by far-off Washington and had little hope of a sympathetic
court. It is no wonder that it seemed a rash maneuver to enforce the
laws against so powerful an enemy. (Prucha, American Indian Policy
134, see also S. L. Tyler 47)

Some of these difficulties in enforcing the prohibition of the Indian liquor
trade were partially rectified in 1832. As a separate article of a law granting the
president power directly to appoint a commissioner of Indian Affairs (power
previously held by the Secretary of War), the 1832 regulation declared that "No
ardent spirits shall be hereafter introduced under any pretence, into the Indian
country" (qtd. in Prucha 127). This article has often been cited by historians as the
beginning of federal prohibition of drinking by Native Americans. The 1834
revision of the Trade and Intercourse Acts added specific penalties for violations.
including fines of five hundred dollars for anyone caught distributing liquor to Native Americans and three hundred dollars for anyone who transported liquor into Indian country, except as military supplies.

These efforts by the federal government to prohibit the Indian liquor trade, evidence of the general Euramerican assumption that "Indians can't hold their liquor," found counterparts within many Native American tribes. Native American leaders' concerns with drinking among their peoples were demonstrated not only by their pleas to white officials to put an end to the liquor supply; they also concentrated on their peoples' perceived desire for liquor. William Johnson notes that a series of "temperance movements" were begun by leaders of a number of Native American tribes throughout the beginning of the nineteenth century, from Tecumseh's brother the "Prophet's" exhortations for Native Americans throughout the Old Northwest to abandon the ways of the white man, especially his "fire-water" (207-10), to the Seneca Handsome Lake's itinerant preaching throughout the Iroquois Confederacy for "total abstinence from the white man's liquor" (212). In the south the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw all took various measures throughout the 1820s and 1830s to prohibit the sale or introduction of liquor among their people. The perception of Native American drinking as a serious problem was thus widely recognized by both Euramerican and Native American leaders.

The problem of regulating trade on the frontier, however, persisted. Despite the strict federal laws regarding the Indian liquor trade, despite Native American leaders' attempts to promote temperance, even abstinence, among their people, reports still proliferated of whiskey traders selling liquor throughout Indian country. In fact, the arguments popular among many whites that liquor was fast destroying "the red man," that "firewater" was a major cause of the Indians' "vanishing," and that the liquor trade could not effectively be stopped, were all used
to support Indian Removal, the most far-reaching federal policy towards Native Americans in the first half of the nineteenth century. Sheehan characterizes many whites' perceptions of Native Americans at this time: "As the model for a disintegrating native society, the drunken Indian presented an unlikely candidate for civilization" (239).

Proposals for removing the eastern Indians had originated at least as early as 1803, when Jefferson (unsuccessfully) moved to allow both Native Americans and whites voluntarily to exchange their property east of the Mississippi River for federal lands in the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase. After the War of 1812, in which the British had persuaded many Native Americans in the northwest to fight against white Americans, proposals for Indian Removal were increasingly supported by those who saw the Native Americans' alliance with Britain as proof of their incorrigibly "savage" nature.

Yet, as Brian Dippie argues, proposals for Indian Removal were entertained not only by those intellectual descendants of Hugh Henry Brackenridge who perceived Native Americans as a hindrance to Euramerican development of the east and expansion westward. Indeed, the federal government's official rhetoric concerning Indian Removal maintained that removal was in fact necessary for the survival of the "vanishing" Native American. President Andrew Jackson defended his removal policy in his second annual message to Congress in December, 1830, with the following "philanthropical" argument: "a speedy removal . . . will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites . . . [and] will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers" (qtd. in Shaw 36). As noted earlier, many Euramericans accepted the theory that Native Americans were disappearing, were indeed fast becoming extinct, due to the propagation of civilization. Commentator after commentator complained that Native Americans
had acquired all the vices of civilization and few or none of its virtues. In his first report as Secretary of War (1831), Lewis Cass summed up the official federal position regarding Indian Removal

If [the Indians] remain, they must decline and eventually disappear... If they remove, they may be comfortably established, and their moral and physical condition meliorated. It is certainly better for them to meet the difficulties of removal, with the probability of an adequate and final reward, than, yielding to their constitutional apathy, to sit still and perish. (qtd in Dippie 67)

Indeed, Cass had written in 1827, when he was still governor of Michigan Territory. “The inordinate indulgence of the Indians in spirituous liquors is one of the most deplorable consequences, which has resulted from their intercourse with civilized men” (qtd in Dippie 35), a rather ironic statement considering his policy towards Astor's American Fur Company liquor trade a few years earlier.

Opponents of Removal argued that Native Americans, once removed past the bounds of civilization, would revert to the savage state of the hunter and thus all hopes of assimilating them into Euramerican culture would be lost. However, the belief that Native Americans were disappearing, unable to survive in close contact with whites, sufficed for the federal government as justification of its Removal policy. While some Native Americans still existed on reservations in the east, by the late 1830s the eastern border of “Indian country” had been officially and practically redefined as west of the Mississippi River.

Though policymakers such as Thomas Hart Benton wanted to push the official western boundary of the United States to the Rocky Mountains (and beyond), many influential whites in the 1820s and 1830s believed that once the country had been fully settled to the eastern shores of the Mississippi River, the mission of “National Completeness” would be fulfilled. Of course, the social and political myth of “Manifest Destiny” would by midcentury push the territorial borders of the United States throughout virtually the entire North American continent south of Canada.
and north of Mexico. Yet the generally accepted belief that the land east of the
Mississippi was sufficient for the new country was significant in determining the
federal policy of Indian Removal in the 1830s. The federal government designated a
block of land in present-day Oklahoma and Kansas as "Indian Territory."
"arranging" with those who inhabited the region—Osages, Pawnees, Kansas, and
other tribes—to share their land with those who would be removed there from the
east, including such diverse tribes as the Delawares, Senecas, Seminoles, and Creeks
Many of the northeastern tribes agreed with little resistance to move west, or settle
for their eastern reservations, islands of Indian territory within land claimed for
Euramerican civilization. Several of the southern Indian nations, the Cherokees of
Georgia in particular, defied the federal government's policy and were forcibly
marched hundreds of miles westward, a "trail of tears" that resulted in the death of
as many as a quarter of the population, many caused by lack of rations which white
contractors had been commissioned to provide. Yet regardless of the consequences,
by the late 1830s the federal government had achieved its objective of removing
most Native American tribes to west of the Mississippi. As the Indian became more
and more popular an image in American literature, Native Americans became less
populous within the expanding borders of Euramerican civilization.

Frontier Romances

The Indian captivity narrative, one of the most prominent early American
literary forms, remained popular throughout the nineteenth century. Anthologies
of "classic" seventeenth- and eighteenth-century captivity narratives were
compiled and repeatedly printed for receptive audiences between 1839 and 1870.
Publisher Samuel Drake issued at least seven editions of collections of captivity
narratives. New captivity accounts also appeared. James Seaver's A Narrative of
the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison was a "bestseller" of the 1820s (Mott 305). Yet by the early nineteenth century, as federal politicians had begun seriously debating whether Native Americans east of the Mississippi should be removed to newly purchased territory in the west, a new genre of "Indian literature" began to be published. The frontier romance soon came to dominate the American literary scene.

While calls for a distinctively "American literature" had begun as early as the seventeenth century, after the War of 1812 they especially proliferated. Now that the United States had successfully withstood two British "invasions," now that it had begun to establish itself as a viable economic and political entity, many intellectuals thought it high time that Americans created a distinguishably "American literature," one which would be constructed largely from recognizably "American" themes. Many of these critics argued what could be more uniquely American than the American Indian? The history of conflict between Anglo-Americans and Native Americans, used by seventeenth-century Puritans to galvanize the elect, was hailed in the early nineteenth century as an especially appropriate "vehicle for nationalism" (Barnett 28).

Several factors influenced how Native Americans were typically portrayed in the frontier romances of James Fenimore Cooper, William Gilmore Simms, Robert Montgomery Bird, and other popular American writers. One was association psychology, in vogue in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Scottish philosopher Archibald Allison, author of Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste (1790), argued that one's taste was determined largely by one's surroundings, the specific "forms, colors, and designs" of the environment in which one was raised would establish one's aesthetic sensibilities. Thus, a distinctly "American aesthetic" would be based on the distinctly unique features of American
life. Robert Streeter sums up a popular contemporary assumption: "The reader's strongest associations are naturally those springing from his own country's history and geography, therefore nationalistic writing is best" (246). Of course, associationist theory could work both ways. Critics could (and did) either demand that American novelists mine the rich material of Anglo-American history in the New World as a source for potential literary triumphs, or they could (and did) deplore the paucity or mediocrity of such material as an explanation for what they perceived as American literary failures.

A number of American writers, whether consciously or not, seem to have drawn from associationist thought in presenting their works. In the introduction to the popular captivity narrative of Mary Jemison (for whom he claimed to have acted as an amanuensis), James Seaver indicated just why he was so confident the book would be well received by the 1824 American reading public:

It is presumed that at this time there are but few native [i.e. white] Americans that have arrived to middle age, who cannot distinctly recollect of sitting in the chimney corner when children, all contracted with fear, and there listening to their parents or visitors, while they related stories of Indian conquests and murders, that would make their flaxen hair nearly stand erect, and almost destroy the power of motion. (vii)

Here Seaver clearly implies just what associations the subject of Indians would have evoked for many Americans in the 1820s. Most probably through their having read or heard one of the hundreds of tales of whites "held captive by Indians."

Perhaps more influential than association psychology in accounting for the rise of the frontier romance was the narrative paradigm popularized by novelist Sir Walter Scott, whose historical romances were throughout the early nineteenth century "the most popular of all American pleasure reading" (Hart 73). Scott's vastly successful Waverley, published in the United States in 1814, served to confirm what many critics had already suspected—that a successful national
literature should draw upon the national past, portraying events of great importance in the history of "the people."

The recent Revolution, the achievement of America's political independence, was an obvious choice of a nationalistic theme, as attested by the spate of novels appearing in the early nineteenth century that were set during the Revolutionary War. Yet some critics thought the Revolution too recent to be the ideal historical subject. They instead looked further back in time for more appropriate material. In his address to the Phi Beta Kappa Society, which was printed in the November 1815 issue of the *North American Review*, William Tudor observed:

> From the close of the 16th to the middle of the 18th century many most interesting events took place on this continent and circumstances have concurred with time in casting a shade of obscurity resembling that of antiquity over the transactions of that period while by the greatest revolutions that have happened, the connexion between those days and our own is interrupted, and they are so disconnected with the present era that no passionate feeling is blended with their consideration; they are now exclusively the domain of history and poetry (133)

Temporal distance was thought to be crucial: it not only created the impression of a "storied and poetical" past, one filled with the kind of "shadowy grandeurs" for which Irving's Geoffrey Crayon had left America to seek in Europe, but it also afforded novelists a certain poetic license in handling their historical materials (for instance, see Cooper's 1850 preface to *The Leatherstocking Tales*).

Indeed, as Tudor argued, such distance was believed to be especially desired when Native Americans were used as literary subjects:

> The degenerate, miserable remains of the Indian nations which have dwindled into insignificance and lingered among us as the tide of civilization has flowed, mere floating deformities on its surface, poor, squalid and enervated with intoxicating liquors, should no more be taken for the representatives of their ancestors who first met the Europeans on the edge of their boundless forests, severe and untamed as the regions they tenanted, than the Greek slaves who now tremble at the frown of a petty Turkish tyrant can be considered the likeness of their immortal progenitors (138)
Tudor believed in the myth of the Vanishing American, that Native Americans were fast becoming extinct—inevitably receding before expanding Euramerican civilization. The idea that "the drunken Indian" was quickly destroying himself with the white man's "firewater" was, according to Tudor and others, proof that civilization had overwhelmed "savagism" morally as well as militarily. Tudor therefore thought that American novelists should write of a time when Native Americans more resembled ancient Greek heroes (see McWilliams 132), a time when white civilization was still contending with Native American "savagism" for mastery of at least the eastern portion of the continent. Sir Walter Scott offered a literary model which was tailor-made to depict such epic struggles between "progressive" and "primitive" forces.

George Dekker suggests that what he calls the "Waverley-model" significantly influenced how Native Americans were typically depicted in the American frontier romance. Scott's romances implicitly illustrated a stadialist model of progress, a model of cultural evolution that had recently been developed by European social philosophers. Dekker observes of stadialist theorists:

According to these philosophical historians, there were four main stages of society resulting from four basic modes of subsistence (1) a "savage" stage based on hunting and fishing, (2) a "barbarian" stage based on herding, (3) a stage considered "civilized" and based mainly on agriculture, (4) a stage based on commerce and manufacturing which was sometimes considered over-civilized.

Romance novelists sought historical moments which illustrated struggles between cultures from different levels of this hierarchy. In "Waverley," for example, Scott, a native of Scotland, dramatized the conflict between the "primitive," feudalistic Jacobites and the progressive, bourgeois Hanoverians, illustrating the

3 As Pearce and Berkhofer both point out, this model served as the foundation of many of the premises held by American ethnographers Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and Lewis Henry Morgan.
inevitable triumph of the progressive forces as Bonnie Prince Charlie’s 1745 rebellion is quelled. Adapting this narrative pattern, American romance novelists turned to American history. “The westering frontier was destined to provide successive generations of American historical romancers with their fairest fields (or bloodiest grounds) for conflicts akin to those in Waverley” (Dekker 40). Authors often depicted the clash of “progressive” Euramericans and what most perceived as the culturally inferior, “primitive” Native Americans, with the necessary defeat of the “savages.” Colonial chronicles of the Indian wars provided much raw material that could easily be utilized for such a purpose.

Yet while the Indian wars offered ideal native material to illustrate the triumph of “civilization” over “savagism,” modern scholars have noted that many frontier romances tend to portray Native Americans in a decidedly more ambivalent manner than the earlier war and captivity narratives. Military conflict and white captivity, hallmarks of the epic mode of portraying Indians in colonial American literature, were likewise the locus of Native American-white relations in frontier romances and as such largely determined the depiction of Native Americans as antagonists (see McWilliams 140). Yet, as Barnett points out, “from a position of far greater physical security and a diminished confidence in man’s ability to fathom God’s plan, the nineteenth-century authors could afford to shed some tears for the aboriginal inhabitants of what was now so firmly their country” (6). (Seaver imagines his contemporary readers as once children within the safety of the family hearth, their imaginations and not their bodies captivated by tales of Indian brutality.) The more secular frontier romancers could not sincerely depict Native Americans as agents of the Devil, sent to challenge the construction of “the city on a hill” (Spencer 107). Rather they were seen as representing an inferior culture inevitably supplanted by a superior one, a major tenet in the secular religion of
Manifest Destiny. For all their poetic license, writers of the frontier romance could not rewrite history; Native Americans had to be portrayed as in the end defeated by whites. But with the triumph of Euramerican civilization assured not only by history but also explained by "science," neither was the writer obliged to depict the Native American as an unmitigatedly brutal savage. Dekker notes that the paradigm of the "Waverley-model" includes an inherent ambivalence in portraying 'primitive' culture: "In historical romances the forces of progress (the future) are often invested with the oppressive characteristics associated with an expanding imperial state, while the retreating forces of reaction (the past) exhibit, along with some negative traits such positive 'heroic' ones as 'nature,' 'freedom,' 'loyalty,' etc." (74) Indeed, many historical romancers implicitly acknowledged that while "in a society undergoing rapid transformation economically, institutionally, and educationally, conflict between the old and the new was inevitable . . . in historical actuality the warring sides could never be 'pure' parties of reaction and progress. For the individuals who composed these groups were themselves deeply mixed and even likely to be members of subgroups with rival agendas" (Dekker 50-51).

While many American frontier romances revolve around a clash between "civilization" and "savagism," this conflict is not always portrayed as between purely progressive whites and purely primitive Native Americans. Indeed pure progressivism is seldom championed over pure primitivism. American frontier romance writers often created characters—both Indian and white—whose individual alliances are divided between two cultures. The most famous example of such a character is James Fenimore Cooper's white hunter Leatherstocking, a character who takes great pride in his racial identity, boasting that he is without a cross of blood, but who sympathizes with "primitive culture" because he himself subsists as a hunter, living in an essentially "savage" state. Yet while Leatherstocking is an
undeniably sympathetic character, often seen as reflecting Cooper’s ambivalence towards American progressivism, many have pointed to the radical isolation of Natty Bumppo from Euramerican society, the forces of progress, as evidence of Cooper’s belief that ultimately “savagism” and “civilization” could not mix. Leatherstocking is “seed scattered by the wayside” (Cooper, “Preface” v), incapable of full assimilation in either Euramerican or Native American cultures.

A prime example of an Indian character who experiences cultural conflict is found in Cooper’s *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* (1829). This novel chronicles the attempts of Puritan immigrant Mark Heathcote to establish a homestead in the seventeenth-century western Connecticut wilderness. After several years of prosperity for Heathcote and his family, Heathcote’s home is besieged by hostile Narragansetts and burned to the ground. Granddaughter Ruth and one of Heathcote’s servants are captured and taken into the wilderness.

When the action of the novel resumes ten years later, in the midst of King Philip’s War. Heathcote’s homestead, which has been rebuilt into a growing village, is again attacked, this time by a party of Wampanoags and Narragansetts led by leaders Philip (Metacom) and Conachet. Philip is portrayed as a bloodthirsty, merciless villain who seeks to destroy all whites; he is lifted almost without alteration from the pages of William Hubbard’s and Increase Mather’s narratives of the 1665-66 conflict between Native Americans and the Euramerican colonists of New England.

Conachet, however, is a new type of Indian character, one who is swayed between his loyalty to his people and to whites. Son of chief Miantoniamoh, he is the natural, recognized leader of the Narragansetts, and as such is expected to help

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4 Though unlike Mather and Hubbard in *Went* Cooper does let Philip have his say regarding his motives for attacking the whites (see 298)
Philip in his war against the colonists. Yet when he was a boy, he was shown kindness both by the Heathcote family and Submission, a Puritan regicide on the run from Restoration officers. In fact, he has married the young white captive Ruth Heathcote, renaming her Narra-mattah. Conachet feels ambivalent towards Philip's cause and, though he initially accompanies the attackers, he finally persuades the Wampanoag chief not to slaughter the Heathcote family. Cooper thus illustrates in Conachet the pull between "savage" and "civilized."

While Conachet's final choice does not establish the paradigm for every "half-civilized" Indian character in the frontier romance, it does suggest one major variation. Conachet refuses to fight alongside Philip any longer, acknowledging his sense of personal allegiance to the whites. However, he also comes to realize that he must return his white wife to her family. Despite the fact that, captured by his people at age ten, she now refuses to leave him, no longer even recognizing her mother. Conachet stands to be killed by the vengeful warrior Uncas, yet ignoring the pleas of his wife, Conachet refuses to take refuge with the whites. Echoing Leatherstocking's speeches about the distinction between "red" and "white gifts," Conachet declares of his marriage to Ruth: "Conachet is a tall and straight hemlock; and the father of Narra-mattah is a tree of the clearing, that bears the red fruit. The Great Spirit was angry when they grew together" (381). Thus the "half-civilized" Narragansett meets his death like a "true Indian": "I am a Sachem, and a warrior among my people" (383). Though Conachet, this character allied to two

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5 Cooper here seems to draw from cases such as Eunice Williams in John Williams's bestselling 1707 captivity narrative. Unlike most of the rest of her family, Eunice was never ransomed from her Mohawk captors. Cooper is playing off the fear expressed by writers such as Crevecoeur that many captives had been transformed into "white Indians."

6 Not to be confused with the character in Cooper's earlier novel The Last of the Mohicans.
cultures, illustrates how an Indian may be influenced by his contact with whites. Ultimately, like the Indians of the earlier war and captivity narratives, the character demonstrates the perceived disparity between Eurameric and Native American cultures.

American frontier romance writers frequently portrayed Indian characters who exhibit both "red" and "white" characteristics, and their novels therefore (at least implicitly) speculated on the prospects of relations between the different cultures. One "civilized" trait often assigned to these Indian characters, one which was often cited by contemporaries as a primary index of how successfully Native Americans could be assimilated into Euramerican civilization, was, of course, drinking—a taste for the white man's "firewater."

James Fenimore Cooper

James Fenimore Cooper was renowned for his portrayal of Native Americans in many of his novels. While some scholars have praised the fidelity of Cooper's depiction of Native Americans, many commentators have echoed Mark Twain's claim that the "Cooper Indian" is far from the "real thing." In the 1850 "Preface to the Leatherstocking Tales," Cooper in fact excused himself from being judged on the accuracy of his characterization of the "red man": "It is the privilege of all writers of fiction, more particularly when their works aspire to the elevation of romances, to present the beau-ideal of their characters to the reader" (vi).

Cooper's firsthand knowledge regarding Native Americans was fairly limited, though it was probably more extensive than that of a majority of his readers. What few Native Americans Cooper himself actually encountered were either in his home state of New York or in Washington, D.C., delegations from the western regions, many of whom had been removed there, travelling east to negotiate treaties with
the federal government (Alpern 28; Beard xix). Cooper wrote in his 1828 *Notions of the Americans*, seemingly echoing William Tudor:

> a few peaceable and half-civilized remains of tribes, that have been permitted to reclaim small portions of land, excepted—an inhabitant of New York is actually as far removed from a savage as an inhabitant of London. The former has to traverse many hundred leagues of territory to enjoy even the sight of an Indian, in a tolerably wild condition... A few degraded descendants of the ancient warlike possessors of this country are indeed seen wandering among the settlements, but the Indian must now be chiefly sought west of the Mississippi, to be found in any of his savage grandeur. *(1. 245)*

Cooper drew largely from printed sources for his portrayals of Native Americans. Daughter Susan Cooper, one of Cooper’s earliest biographers, admits that her father’s “own opportunities of intercourse with the red man had been few” (149), but declares that he had done considerable research on Native Americans before he wrote *The Last of the Mohicans*: “The writer had been at pains to obtain accurate details regarding Indian life and character... the earlier writers on those subjects, Heckewelder, Charlevoix, Penn, Smith, Elliot, and Colden, were examined” (149). Modern scholars have differed in their judgments of how well Cooper used material that was presumably available to him. Paul A. W. Wallace and Arthur C. Parker both fault Cooper for relying too heavily upon Heckewelder’s *History*, from which, they claim, his consistent portrayal of the Delaware as “noble” and the Iroquois as “ignoble savages” is derived. Albert Keiser (103) and more recently James Beard contend that Cooper was notably accurate in describing Native Americans: “the extraordinary assimilation of information displayed in his fiction suggests that his knowledge of Indians was as full and authentic as discriminating study of the printed sources of his time would allow” (Beard xviii).

In addition to what external evidence indicates about Cooper’s use of particular printed sources, the narrative patterns of many of his Indian novels suggest that he relied heavily upon conventions established in Indian war and
captivity tales. As noted, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, the second half of which is set during King Philip's War, features the ten-year captivity of two whites among the Narragansett Indians. Both *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Pathfinder* take place during the last French and Indian War; the plot of *Mohicans* revolves around the successive captures of two white female protagonists by the evil Magua and their rescues by Natty Bumppo and his friends Chingachgook and Uncas. *Wyandotte*, set on the western frontier during the Revolutionary War, includes an extended siege of a white man's home by a curious mixture of Indians and "white rabble." The action of *The Oak Openings* occurs in Michigan Territory at the outbreak of the War of 1812 and it also features two white heroines who, led by a white hero, elude capture by Indians who would either slaughter them or subject them to a "fate worse than death."

Yet Cooper does more than simply rehash the plots and themes of the colonial Indian war and captivity narratives. Although accounts of Indian captivity continued to be published and purchased throughout the nineteenth century, the relationship between Euramerican writers of the east and Native Americans had by the early nineteenth century, changed substantially from the era of the first colonial war and captivity narratives. By 1823, the year Cooper published *The Pioneers*, the first of his Leatherstocking Tales, Indian Removal had already been seriously proposed by the Monroe Administration; by 1848, the year Cooper published *The Oak Openings*, the last of his Indian novels, virtually every Native American group east of the Mississippi had either been removed to the Indian Territory or consigned to reservations in the east. Cooper's Indian novels served a different societal function than their prototypes. While the early captivity narratives were set on the contemporary frontier and chronicled what was perceived as an ongoing struggle between Euramericans and Native Americans for
control of the land. Cooper's Indian novels were set in the historical past. The frontier of the Cooper Indian novel was, with the exception of *The Prairie*, long "secured" by the time of Cooper's writing. Also, by the time Cooper published his Indian novels, many whites had come to accept the myth of the Vanishing American

The notion of a monolithic "Cooper Indian" can easily be "deconstructed" by briefly observing Cooper's portrayal of some of the more prominent Indian characters in his novels. While such characters as Conachet, Chingachgook, Uncas (in *The Last of the Mohicans*), and Hard-Heart have been (rightly) perceived as Cooper's memorial to the once powerful but now defeated, noble Indian warrior, such Cooper Indians as Philip, Le Renard Subtil, Arrowhead, and Mahtoree have been seen as dramatic justifications for such policies as Removal. Illustrations of the essentially savage nature of Native Americans. Cooper's disparate portrayals of Native Americans suggest contradictory assumptions about the character of "the red man." Indeed, the variations between different "Cooper Indians" imply that, despite Leatherstocking's staunchly held beliefs about the differences between "red" and "white gifts," Cooper wrote from no necessarily consistent view of a uniform "Indian nature."

As noted, for all the admiration Cooper heaps upon Natty Bumppo, the "half-Indianized" white man, he makes it clear that Leatherstocking is ultimately a social anomaly, though Leatherstocking's romanticized outlook may be charming, and may help Cooper create "storied and poetical associations" for the new country. Leatherstocking is not a model for Euramerican development in the New World. Similarly, Cooper's Indian characters who are significantly affected by white culture are not portrayed as viable models for cultural amalgamation. Though instances of drinking by Native Americans do not occur with great frequency in
Cooper's Indian novels, drinking is a prominent trait of several of Cooper's most complex Indian characters. It is interesting to note how Cooper characterizes drinking by Native Americans in his novels, particularly since by his day the stereotype of "the drunken Indian" had become so prevalent, as Kay Seymour House observes. "Almost everyone knew, in the first half of the nineteenth century, that smallpox and whiskey were lethal to the Indian; hence both became for Cooper convenient symbols of civilization's silent and corroding destruction of native beauty" (251). While to demonstrate the "corrosion of native beauty" is not the apparent intent of every one of Cooper's portrayals of drinking by Native Americans, still House's point merits attention. An investigation of how Native American drinking behavior figures in several of Cooper's "Indian novels" may help suggest its rhetorical function(s) in the frontier romance as well as how Cooper may have drawn from earlier depictions (and influenced subsequent depictions) of "the drunken Indian" in American literature.

Perhaps the most famous of Cooper's "drunken Indians," and one that best fits House's description, is Old John Mohegan from *The Pioneers*, the first of Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*. In this novel we see Chingachgook at his oldest, a seventy-year-old version of the character Cooper was to portray as the middle-aged, noble warrior in *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Pathfinder* (1840). Old John is the last of his people in the area surrounding Templeton, having resolved not to move west with others of his tribe but to be buried on the lands of his fathers. His habits are described as "a mixture of the civilized and savage states" with "a strong preponderance in favor of the latter" (85). Nevertheless, despite this "strong preponderance," John has become a convert to Christianity, a result of Moravian

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7 Modeled after Cooperstown, Cooper's home town.
missionaries' work after the French and Indian wars, purportedly forsaking the beliefs of his people and embracing the white man's religion.

In the novel, we first see Old John using "Indian medicine" to dress the bullet wound of Oliver Edwards after the young man has been hit by a stray shot from Judge Marmaduke Temple. Temple's wounding of Edwards is broadly symbolic of one of the major concerns in the novel—rights to the land. Judge Temple legally owns much of the land in the area (hence "Templeton"), having bought out his partner Effingham when the Loyalist Effingham was forced to flee the country at the onset of the Revolutionary War. Natty Bumppo openly questions Temple's claim to the land, arguing that the Indians, represented now only by Old John Mohegan and Oliver Edwards (whom many in the novel believe to be the old man's grandson and thus the true "last of the Mohicans") have been unfairly dispossessed. Cooper uses drinking to illustrate one of the major means to this dispossession.

After we first see John drawing upon his "savage" Indian habits in order to aid the wounded Edwards, we are afforded a look at the Mohican in his "civilized state". Later on the same Christmas eve on which the events in the book begin, soon after John has promised Pastor Grant to attend the following day's church ceremony, John is shown at the Bold Dragoon, one of Templeton's taverns, drinking heavily upon the encouragement of several white men. When these whites exhort him to join them in a drinking song, Old John launches into a "wild, melancholy air" sung in his native language which Bumppo recognizes as a song of his old war exploits. Leatherstocking chastises his old friend. "Why do you sing of your battles...when the worst enemy of all is near you and keeps the Young Eagle from his rights?" (165) Though Bumppo here explicitly refers to whites as the enemy that has dispossessed him and his "grandson" Edwards, in the context of the scene, the
"worst enemy" might also be interpreted as liquor, since it is the immediate agent of the old warrior's insensibility.

Bumppo does manage to arouse in his tipsy companion a deep, although momentary, indignation at the whites' dispossession of his people's lands. Yet Leatherstocking's efforts ultimately fail:

[John was not himself. His hand seemed to make a fruitless effort to release his tomahawk, while his eyes gradually became vacant. Richard [Jones, one of the white men who had been encouraging John to drink] at that instant thrusting a mug before him. His features changed to the grin of idiocy, and seizing the vessel with both hands, he sank backward on the bench and drank until satiated, when he made an effort to lay aside the mug with the helplessness of total inebriety. (166)]

Bumppo remarks regretfully, "he is drunk and can do no harm. This is the way with all the savages: give them liquor, and they will make dogs of themselves" (166). Even Cooper's most vocal advocate of Native American rights finally focuses his disgust upon the manner in which his companion succumbs to the white man's "firewater."

This graphic illustration of how liquor has contributed to the downfall of Native Americans is given further force when Cooper allows Old John to comment explicitly on the effects of drinking on his people. The day after his "revelry" in the Bold Dragoon, Old John mourns to young Edwards: "the white man brings old age with him—rum is his tomahawk!" (185). John claims that his people had originally come to the area where Templeton now stands in order to escape just this problem—"They fled before rum" (185)—and John laments that they were not able to keep out the white traders: "The evil spirit was in their jugs, and they let him loose" (185). Oliver Edwards replies, "I should be the last to reproach you. The curses of heaven light on the cupidity that has destroyed such a race" (185-86).

This last remark admits a twofold interpretation. The context does not fully establish whether we are to criticize the cupidity of the white traders or of the
Indians themselves. Again, the implied attitude is ambivalent. Whites are surely to be blamed for pushing liquor on Native Americans, just as the white men who filled and refilled Old John's cups in the Bold Dragoon were considered to be largely responsible for his intoxication. And yet the Indian is criticized as well for so fully indulging his vice, for turning himself into the disgusting "Christian beast" that John denounces himself to Edwards.

Cooper resolves this dilemma of the mixture of "civilized" and "savage" in The Pioneers in a telling fashion. Or we might more accurately conclude that Cooper rather deftly dodges the issue. For at the conclusion of the novel Oliver Edwards, long suspected to be the descendant of Chingachgook, is discovered actually to be the grandson of Major Effingham and the son of Marmaduke Temple's original partner, and thus, like Leatherstocking, without any cross of blood. Oliver Edwards (Effingham) is restored to his rightful ownership of the land (further confirmed by his betrothal to Temple's daughter Elizabeth), yet his claim is not as an Indian but as the descendant of a Loyalist. The "savage" is revealed to be actually "civilized."

As far as Old John—the real "savage"—is concerned, Cooper resolves his problem, like so many other writers in the epic mode, by killing him off—but not before John is allowed to regain his "savage" dignity. Near the conclusion of the novel, Cooper has Old John strongly renounce his conversion to the habits of white civilization. Elizabeth Temple, the Judge's daughter, encounters Old John in the forest, painted in a manner "exhibiting an Indian warrior" (400). He declares to the young woman, "John has lived till all his people have left him for the land of spirits, his time has come and he is ready" (402), and he launches into a description

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8 Though the former interpretation seem best to fit the pattern of this conversation
of the hereafter modeled on a vision of what the land was like before the advent of whites. Elizabeth is horrified at such outright blasphemy: "John! This is not the heaven of a Christian... You now deal in the superstition of your forefathers" (403). Yet the old Indian refuses to resume his "civilized" role, instead chanting the songs of his people in a clear, determined fashion, unlike his earlier subdued performance in The Bold Dragoon.

Meditating upon his past exploits as a "noble" warrior and upon the "happy hunting grounds" which now await him, John refuses to save himself when the fire started by a careless party of searchers for the fugitive Leatherstocking reaches the area of the forest where he and Elizabeth have been conversing. As Bumppo and Edwards arrive on the scene, John orders them to "Save her—leave John to die" (405), following the convention of the noble Indian who sacrifices him or herself for the white hero or heroine which recurs in many frontier romances. John is able to escape the degradation resulting from his contact with whites and to regain his noble stature only by rejecting all aspects of white civilization. Despite Elizabeth Temple's dismay at John's reversion to the "pagan" beliefs of his people, Cooper seems to second Leatherstocking's admiration of Chingachgook's stubborn "Indian resolve" to passively accept his own death. The image of the "Christian beast" is replaced by the stoic, noble pagan, who ironically (and conveniently) is most admirable at his moment of death. The "drunken Indian" redeems himself by reaffirming his "savageness," here not as an enemy but as a martyr, victim of inevitable historical forces.

Cooper drew upon assumptions about alcohol and Native Americans again in the next of his Leatherstocking novels, The Last of the Mohicans. The subject is

9 For example, Lydia Maria Child's Hobomok, Catherine Maria Sedgwick's Hope Leslie, Cooper's The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish.
first introduced in a conversation early in the novel between a younger Natty Bumppo and Chingachgook; here the Indian echoes what Old John Mohegan had told Oliver Edwards. Explaining why his people had migrated to the western part of the country. Chingachgook states:

The Dutch landed, and gave my people the fire-water; they drank until the heavens and the earth seemed to meet, and they foolishly thought they had found the Great Spirit. Then they parted with their land. Foot by foot, they were driven back from the shores, until I, that am a chief and a Sagamore, have never seen the sun shine but through the trees, and have never visited the graves of my fathers.

Yet instead of contributing solely to this image of liquor debasing the noble savage, *The Last of the Mohicans* offers another variation to the range of portrayals of Native American drinking behavior in the frontier romance, one more closely allied to images found in earlier Indian war and captivity narratives. For *Mohicans* draws more obviously than does *The Pioneers* from the traditional colonial epic mode of portraying Native Americans; indeed, Beard muses, "In choosing *A Narrative of 1757* as his subtitle, Cooper undoubtedly intended to associate *The Last of the Mohicans* with the indigenous genre of Indian captivities" (xxxi). Whereas Old John was a virtual anachronism in a plot that dealt essentially with different Euramerican models of developing the country,¹⁰ Native Americans in the second of the Leatherstocking Tales represent a dangerous threat to the Euramerican colonists on the New York frontier.

Set during the French and Indian War, *Mohicans* traces the exploits of the treacherous "Mingo" Le Renard Subtil (alias Magua), who in his pose as a trustworthy guide, has been assigned the duty of escorting British Colonel Munro's

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¹⁰ While unhonored Native American claims to the land are mentioned frequently throughout *The Pioneers*, the novel concentrates most fully upon the rivalry between cousins Judge Marmaduke Temple and Richard Jones in their attempts to control the development of Templeton.
two daughters, Cora and Alice, to Fort William Henry. Before the party arrives at
the fort, however, Magua shows his "true colors" and abducts his charges. In a
notable conversation between this "ignoble savage" and Cora Munro, Cooper
presents a view of "the drunken Indian" quite different from the pathetic Old John
of *The Pioneers*. When Magua orders the Anglo-American soldier Duncan Heyward
to send Cora to him, Heyward advises Cora how she should handle him. Assuming
that Magua will naturally demand some ransom from the colonel's daughter,
Heyward instructs her, "You understand the nature of an Indian's wishes . . . and
must be prodigal of your offers of powder and blankets. Ardent spirits are,
however, the most prized, by such as he" (101).

Cora receives no such demands, however. Instead, the "ignoble savage" first
attempts to entreat her sympathy: "Magua was born a chief and a warrior among
the red Hurons of the lakes; he saw the suns of twenty summers make the snows of
twenty winters run off in the streams, before he saw a pale face, and he was happy!
Then his Canada fathers came into the woods, and taught him to drink the fire-
water, and he became a rascal" (102). The narrator notes that Magua had labored to
"suppress those passions" which arose when he "recalled the recollection of his
supposed injuries" (102, emphasis added). Magua continues, "Was it the fault of Le
Renard that his head was not make of rock? Who gave him the fire-water? Who
made him a villain? 'Twas the pale-faces, the people of your own color" (102).

Here we see vastly different consequences of Indian drinking than in *The
Pioneers*: whereas Old John drops into sedate state of "total inebriety," Magua
declares that drinking makes him more excited, more volatile. Indeed, Magua
recalls a time when, despite Munro's orders, he had stormed into the colonel's
quarters and had "foolishly opened his mouth," as he claims, led by "the hot liquor."
Magua rants against his recollected punishment for this deed: "is it justice to make
evil, and then punish for it? Magua was not himself; it was the fire-water that spoke and acted for him!" (103).

Yet despite Magua’s pointed attack of whites for providing liquor to his people, Cooper clearly undermines Magua’s criticisms. First there are the immediate consequences of drinking to which Magua alludes; though Le Renard himself seems not to have done anything terribly destructive while intoxicated (entering Colonel Munro’s quarters uninvited), still his own description (as well as his own example) of an excited, unpredictable force, spurred on by “fire-water,” is hardly calculated to elicit unmitigated sympathy for the drinking Indian.

More important is the function of Magua in the narrative. Immediately after he absolves himself from responsibility for any of his actions while he was drunk, he demands that Cora live with him as a “concubine.” Cora recoils with horror from such a suggestion, declaring that she far prefers death. As the novel’s repetitive plot twists of capture and rescue proceed, Magua periodically repeats his offer to Cora, until at the climax of the novel, he insists, “the wigwam or the knife of Le Subtil!” (337). When Cora refuses “the wigwam,” one of Magua’s attendants stabs her before she can be rescued by the “good Indian” Uncas. Magua is fully discredited as an Indian spokesman against white wrong-doings; despite the apparent justness of his argument considered in isolation from the novel’s plot, his criticisms of the whites for providing liquor to Native Americans lose much of their persuasive power as Magua is finally portrayed as the ultimate villain, as dangerous as any antagonist found in the colonial war and captivity narratives.

Yet another dimension of Native American drinking behavior is featured in Cooper’s last Indian novel, *The Oak Openings*, which is set at the beginning of the

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11 Thus Cooper saves himself from having to resolve the mutual but safely unconsummated attraction between Cora and “the last of the Mohicans.”
war of 1812. At the outset of the novel the protagonist Ben Boden, a bee-hunter
nick-named Le Bourdon, encounters near his wilderness cabin the Yankee Gershom
Waring, nick-named "Whiskey Centre" because of his thriving liquor trade with
Indians and white soldiers, and because of his own frequent indulgence in his
wares. Though like Leatherstocking, Boden prefers the forests to the Euramerican
settlements, the news of the coming of frontier warfare convinces him to return to
the settlement, on the way stopping with Waring at his cabin. Though no
teetotaller himself, Boden tries to persuade Waring to curb his excessive drinking
in order to save his health; Waring answers Boden's plea, "I know as well as you do,
Bourdon, that sobriety is a good thing, and dissipation a bad thing, but it's hard to
give up, all at once" (59).12

Cooper's sharp contrast of the temperate Boden and the tippling Waring may
have been designed in part to please many temperance reformers of the day: the
novel was published only three years before the (in)famous Maine Law of 1851. Yet
more interesting than his depiction of the sottish Yankee is Cooper's portrayal in
The Oak Openings of drinking by Native Americans. Upon arriving at Whiskey
Centre's shack, at which Waring had left his wife Dolly and sister Margery (with
whom Boden promptly and predictably falls in love), Boden resolves to help Waring
"dry out," hauling Waring's two casks of whiskey away from the cabin and
breaking them open, letting the liquor seep into the ground. When the women
inform the men that a party of Indians had passed by earlier that day and had
certainly spotted the hut, Boden convinces the Warings not to take any chances that

12 Indeed in the "epilogue" that closes the novel, we are informed that soon
after the conclusion of the main events in the story, Waring "had fallen back into
his old habits, and died ere the war of 1812 was ended" (406).
they may return. In fact, not long after the whites abandon the shack, these
Indians do return, showing their hostile intentions.

As Boden and Margery spy from a place of concealment, they notice a
commotion away from Waring's hut where Boden had smashed one of the whiskey
kegs. Boden remarks, "As I live they scent the whiskey! There is a rush toward, and
a pow-wow in and about the shed—yes, of a certainty they smell the liquor! Some of
it has escaped in rolling down the hill, and their noses are too keen to pass over a
fragrance that to them equals that of roses" (75).

Describing these Indians' attempts to make sense of what to them is a great
mystery, Cooper treats the scene as a virtual farce. Boden stealthily approaches
closer to the Indians in order better to assess their strength. Cooper describes their
antics: "All the movements, gestures, and genuflections of the savages were plainly
seen by the bee hunter. We say the genuflections, for nearly all of the Indians got
on their knees and applied their noses to the earth, in order to scent the fragrance
of the beloved whiskey; some out of curiosity, but more because they loved even this
tantalizing indulgence, when no better could be had" (103). Boden is discovered and
captured by this group, whom we soon learn are hostile Potawatomis who have been
called to assemble by Onoah, alias "Scalping Peter," in order to drive all whites from
the continent (thus why some scholars have associated the premise of this novel
with Pontiac's and Tecumseh's "rebellions"). Yet the clever bee hunter bluffs his
way to safety by posing as a "medicine man" who has the power to detect "whiskey
springs." With a mock dousing rod, he leads the Potawatomis to the spot of ground
where the second cask of whiskey had broken, a spot which they had not yet
discovered, and in amazement the Potawatomi warriors again fall to their knees at
the smell of the liquor: one, "not satisfied with gratifying the two senses connected
with the discoveries named [i.e., sight and smell] . . . began to lap with his tongue,
like a dog, to try the effect of taste” (118). Cooper depicts these previously hostile warriors at the nadir of their degradation, literally rooting their noses into the ground for a sniff of liquor.

As in other of Cooper's novels, Native Americans are portrayed here as at the mercy of their uncontrollable desire for liquor; at one point in *The Oak Openings* Cooper comments:

*Whiskey had unfortunately obtained a power over the red men of this continent . . . which can only be likened to that which is supposed to belong to the influence of witchcraft. The Indian is quite as sensible as the white man of the mischief that the "fire-water" produces; but, like the white man, he finds how hard it is to get rid of a master passion, when we have once submitted ourselves to its sway.* (105-06)

Yet unlike Old John in *The Pioneers*, the Indian drunkards in *The Oak Openings* defying Euramerican claims to the land on the contested frontier instead of isolated in an developing Euramerican settlement, are not portrayed as objects of immediate sympathy. Uniting in order to plot the destruction of whites throughout all of North America, a plan which Cooper emphasizes is ultimately futile but which nevertheless within the narrative context poses great danger to the novel's protagonists, Indians are seen less as victims than as aggressors. Cooper describes one especially belligerent chief, Weasel, who, among the Indian leaders that Onoah has assembled, is the most vocal advocate for the destruction of whites: "He was . . . particularly addicted to intemperance; lying, wallowing like a hog, for days at a time, whenever his tribe received any . . . ample contribution of fire-water" (279).

To be sure, the portrayal of Gershom Waring illustrates that whites are not immune to the temptations of liquor. Yet despite Cooper's disdain for the Yankee, unlike the "thirsty" Potawatomis, Waring is never likened to a beast. More importantly, Cooper's characterization of Ben Boden helps point up differences between Native American and white drinking behavior. Boden strongly discourages Waring from
drinking, reminding him that when he is drunk, he is an inadequate protector of Dorothy and Margery, the white heroines. Yet in order to save his neck when he is caught spying on the hostile Potawatomis, Boden capitalizes on his knowledge of Indians' fascination with alcohol, playing the "medicine man" leading gullible Indians to "whiskey springs." In the context of Cooper's narrative—hundreds of hostile Native Americans conspiring to slaughter indiscriminately all whites they encounter—Native American drinking is depicted as an incapacitating weakness that Boden may justifiably exploit.

Perhaps the most intriguing of Cooper's drinking Indians—indeed, perhaps the most intriguing of all of Cooper's Indians—is Saucy Nick, alias Wyandotte, featured in Cooper's 1843 *Wyandotte, or The Huddled Knoll*. House declares, "Of the Indians who exist in casual conjunction with white men, the Tuscarora who gives his name to *Wyandotte* ... embodies most clearly the weaknesses and strengths inherent in Indian temperament" (49).

In *Wyandotte*, a retired British army officer builds a homestead on land on the western frontier of New York awarded him for service in the French and Indian Wars, only to be harassed by Indians and Yankees at the outset of the American Revolution. Pickering (134) supposes that Cooper may have based the novel's plot on the actual experiences of one of his family's old neighbors, Captain William Edmeston, who is in fact mentioned in the novel. Thomas and Marianne Philbrick (xxi) suggest that Cooper borrowed his plot from Anne McVickar Grant's 1808 *Memoirs of an American Lady*, which also includes the story of a British officer's attempts to settle in the western wilds of New York.

There is perhaps less room for speculation where Cooper received (at least part of) the inspiration for the character of Saucy Nick: in the late 1830s Pomroy Jones published newspaper sketches signed by "Osceola" (obviously named after the
famed Seminole who led resistance against the forced removal of his people from Florida), several of which dealt with the exploits of one Saucy Nick, an Indian who had faithfully served as an American scout in the Revolutionary War (Jones 746). One of these pieces collected in Jones's 1831 *Annals and Recollections of Oneida County* recounts how Saucy Nick had killed a cow owned by neighboring whites, thus breaking his tribe's agreement with the whites. Though his tribe willingly agreed to pay for the loss of the cow, Nick refused to forgive a physical insult dealt him as he was taken into custody by a white "posse," later harassing the man who had insulted him (with well-aimed arrows) until the man decided to move back east to Connecticut. Jones comments on Saucy Nick's actions: "It has been said, and very generally believed, that the savage never forgave a real or supposed injury or insult, but carried his resentment to the grave" (879).

While Jones proceeds in the *Annals* next to relate an example of Native American behavior that contradicts this generalization—an anecdote involving an Indian who does forgive an injury inflicted upon him by a white man—Cooper apparently uses Jones's maxim as a guideline for his portrayal of Saucy Nick in *Wyandotte*. In fact it is the operation of this precept (that an Indian never forgets nor forgives an injury) that most dramatically separates Nick from his white companions. At the outset of the novel British Captain Hugh Willoughby decides to retire and build on land granted to him for his service in the French and Indian War. He asks the Tuscarora Saucy Nick, one of his scouts, to find suitable land for his projected wilderness homestead, and Nick replies, in a parody of Euramerican claims to American lands, that he himself has land to sell. When Captain Willoughby interrogates him on the basis for this claim, Nick replies, "How 'e pale face come to own America? Discover him—ha!—Well, Nick discover land down yonder, up dere, over here" (10). Cooper maintains this mildly cynical perspective
of Euramerican rights to the land as he describes how Willoughby's hired surveyor acquires the "title" of his New York homestead from the surrounding Indians; the surveyor "collected a few chiefs of the nearest tribe, dealt out his rum, tobacco, blankets, wampum and gun-powder, got the Indians to make their marks on a bit of deer skin, and returned to his employer with a map, a field book, and a deed by which the Indian title was 'extinguished'" (11).

The major Indian character in Wyandotte drinks heavily and frequently, as did his counterpart in The Pioneers. Saucy Nick, we are informed, "was born a chief, and had made himself an outcast from his tribe more by the excess of ungovernable passions, than from any act of base meanness" (33). Indeed, Nick's major fault is a lack of self-restraint: when he first meets Willoughby's servant, the simple-minded Irish immigrant Mike O'Hearn, who, terrified at Nick's half-black/half-red painted face, takes him for an emissary from Old Nick, Saucy Nick invites the white man to share Santa Cruz rum with him, beginning a friendly drinking spree that recurs several times throughout the novel. Although the Irishman had already been fond of whiskey, Nick seduces Mike into drinking rum, a pointed inversion of the white man debauching the Native American (though we are reminded several times in the novel that Nick always procures his liquor from whites, usually for some service he has rendered). When Nick guides the Captain's son, the dashing young Major Robert Willoughby of the Royal American Army, to the Hutterd Knoll (Captain Willoughby's name for his frontier homestead), he is rewarded with a keg of rum, which he and Mike promptly take to the spring to mix. Cooper informs us, however, that soon afterward the "jug was finished, each man very honestly drinking his pint, and as naturally submitting to its consequences; and this so much the more because the two were so engrossed with the rum that both forgot to pay attention to the spring" (57). Captain Willoughby later complains
about his Indian scout, "The principal mischief he does here is to get Mike . . .
deep in Santa Cruz than I could wish" (97).

Yet Nick does more in the novel than debauch Mike O'Hearn. The "white
rabble" throughout the colonies and especially around the Huttend Knoll have
become increasingly resentful of British rule, and as an ex-officer in the British
Army (and the father of Bob Willoughby, currently a Major in His Majesty's Royal
American forces), Hugh Willoughby is suspected as a Tory by many of his Yankee
employees and tenants, though he maintains a strict neutrality in public and
privately admits his sympathy for the "rebel cause." In this precarious situation
Nick maintains his role as trusty scout, loyal to the Willoughby family, succeeding
in safely escorting Bob Willoughby through the forest to the Huttend Knoll,
protecting him from discovery by the lower-class white "anarchists."

The climax of the novel occurs when a party of "Indians" lays siege to the
Captain's Huttend Knoll. attackers whom Nick later reveals are comprised of 27 actual
Indians (mostly Mohawks) and 47 whites dressed as Indians. The Captain and
Chaplain Woods discuss how they should react to the besieging "savages":

"In this respect, we are at their mercy. If they ask for rum, or
cider, that may bring matters to a head; for, refusing may exasperate
them, and granting either, in any quantity, will certainly cause
them all to get intoxicated."

"Why would not that be good policy, Willoughby?" exclaimed the
chaplain. "If fairly disguised once, our people might steal out upon
them, and take away all their arms. Drunken men sleep very
profoundly."

"It would be a canonical mode of warfare, perhaps, Woods,"
returned the captain, smiling, "but not exactly a military. I think it
safer that they should continue sober, for, as yet, they manifest no
great intentions of hostility." (168-9)

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13 Thomas and Marianne Philbrick claim "Wyandotte is less a novel of the
Revolution than the first of Cooper's fictional treatments of the anti-rent
controversy . . . the book injects the social conflicts of 1843 into the tumults of 1776" [xviii].
Here we see conflicting hypotheses about how liquor affects Native Americans (the Captain is not yet aware that most of the force are white); whereas earlier in the novel drinking has made Nick the boon companion of Mike O'Hearn—the Indian and the white man communing in their drunken revelry—here Willoughby seems to think of liquor as a catalyst for possible Indian violence, one that could further endanger the besieged whites by exacerbating the aggressions of the surrounding “Indians.” Indeed, as the Captain discusses Nick’s loyalty with his Yankee overseer Joel Strides (whom he later learns is in large part responsible for this white “uprising,” planning to seize Willoughby’s territory when the suspected Loyalist is killed or chased off), we are offered another perspective on Nick’s drinking.

Responding to Strides’s suggestion that Nick resents him, the captain states, “If I have had occasion to flog him, a few times, I have also had occasion to give him more rum than has done him good” (253). Strides replies to this:

There I think the captain miscalculates... No man is thankful for rum when the craving is off, sin’ he knows he has been taking an inimy into his stomach, and as for the money, it was much the same as giving the liquor; seein’ that it went for liquor as soon as he could trot down to the mill. A man will seek his revenge for rum, as soon as for any thing else, when he gets to feel injuries uppermost. Besides, I s’pose the captain knows an injury will be remembered, long after a favor is forgotten. (253)

Though the reader already recognizes Strides’s treachery, we are not led to dismiss his reasoning here, for we have also learned that Saucy Nick (like his apparent prototype in Pomroy Jones’s 1838 newspaper sketch) does hold a deep grudge against the Captain for the three times, now many years since, that Willoughby had ordered him to be publicly flogged (recalling in a sense Magua’s resentment of Colonel Munro in The Last of the Mohicans). In fact, Nick’s loyalty to the Willoughby family is deeply divided: though he resents his floggings at the hand of Captain Willoughby, he is grateful to the Captain’s wife for at one time inoculating him against smallpox and thus saving his life. This deep ambivalence
Nick's character is highlighted throughout the novel: we see "ignoble" Nick indulging in drunken debauchery with Mike O'Hearn, and we see "noble" Nick skillfully ushering Major Bob Willoughby through "enemy territory." Indeed, Nick himself emphasizes the great division in himself. After the Captain interrogates Nick during the siege in order to assure himself of Nick's loyalty, he offers Nick a glass of liquor. Nick indignantly refuses, declaring, "Nick always dry—Wyandotte, know no thirst. Nick, beggar—ask for rum—pray for rum—t'ink of rum, talk of rum, laugh for rum, cry for rum. Wyandotte do n't know rum, when he see him. Wyandotte beg not in: no, not his scalp" (246-47).

The Tuscarora describes himself virtually as a split-personality: "Saucy Nick" is degraded by the white man's "fire-water," and has had to submit himself repeatedly to the white man's flogging: "Wyandotte" is a proud chief, immune to the seductions of liquor, and permits no white to lay a hand on him. The line between these two self-conceptions is tested several times throughout the novel, particularly when Captain Willoughby threatens to flog Nick for some perceived transgression and Nick struggles to restrain himself from taking out revenge for the white man's insult. The climax of this strand of the plot occurs when, with Nick's assistance, Captain Hugh Willoughby attempts to rescue his son Bob, who has been captured by the besieging "Indians."

Captain Willoughby had been an English soldier, of the school of the last century. He was naturally a humane and a just man, but he believed in the military axiom that "the most flogging regiments were the best fighting regiments," and perhaps he was not in error, as regards the lower English character. It was a fatal error, however, to make in relation to an American savage: one who had formerly exercised the functions, and who had not lost all the feelings of a chief. Unhappily, at a moment when every thing depended on the fidelity of the Tuscarora, the captain had bethought him of his old expedient for insuring prompt obedience, and by way of a reminder, he made an allusion to his former mode of punishment. (320)
His old resentment resurfacing, Nick fatally stabs the Captain and immediately after, prompted by his sincere devotion to the rest of the Willoughby family, proceeds to help free the murdered man's son. In fact, when, unaware that he has just slain his father, Bob calls him by the name "Wyandotté," the Tuscarora puffs up in great satisfaction: "Wyandotté come—Nick gone away altogether. Nebber see Sassy Nick ag’in" (338). Cooper stresses this curious dichotomy in the Tuscarora's character: "Saucy Nick" is a base drunkard, of whom his alter-ego "Wyandotté" is deeply ashamed, and yet he seems harmless: aside from getting Mike O'Hearn drunk, he poses no threat to the whites of the Huted Knoll. "Wyandotté," on the other hand, is a proud, noble chief, one who commands great respect, but who refuses to suffer the slightest rebuke. He will revenge himself for any "supposed" injury, dramatically illustrated by his slaying of one of the novel's protagonists. Cooper's explains Wyandotté's murder of Captain Willoughby by pointing up the disparity between methods of "Indian justice" and those of whites:

"[Wyandotté] believed that, in curing the sores on his own back in this particular manner, he had done what became a Tuscarora warrior and a chief. Let not the self-styled christians [sic] of civilized society affect horror at this instance of savage justice, so long as they go the whole length of the law of their several communities, in avenging their own fancied wrongs; using the dagger of calumny, instead of the scalping knife, and rending and tearing their victims, by the agency of gold and power, like so many beasts of the field, in all the forms and modes that legal vindictiveness will either justify or tolerate. . . . (349)

Cooper partially justifies Wyandotté's deed because the Tuscarora was only following the "noble" side of his nature. Yet Wyandotté's subsequent actions in the narrative serve to illustrate further just how alien the values of the "noble Indian" are from those of the civilized white man. Wyandotté vigorously defends the Captain's wife and daughter as the surrounding Indians finally invade the Huted Knoll. (Cooper assures us that whites have nothing to do with this part of the
Wyandoté succeeds, however, in saving only adopted daughter Maud14; Mrs. Willoughby, daughter Beulah and her young son Evert are all slain. Yet far from mourning with Maud and Bob, the “noble” Wyandoté smiles in “grim triumph” over the body of an invading Indian he has killed and, pointing to the dead bodies of the white women and child, exalts, “See—all got scalp! Dead, nothin’—Scalp, ebbery t’ing” (357). Later Wyandoté even complains of the mourners at the funeral, “Why you woman?... Save all ‘e scalp!” (360). Cooper again reminds the reader that in prizing the intact scalps over the lives of the Willoughbys, the Tuscarora was only following the values of his people. However, measured against the grief of Bob and Maud, the two surviving white protagonists, Wyandoté’s satisfaction seems eerily foreign to the “civilized” world.

The implications are especially telling. Saucy Nick is closest in spirit to whites when he drinks: his revels with Mike O’Hearn erase, temporarily, all barriers between white and red man (though Cooper does not celebrate this particular display of intercultural communion). Yet when Wyandoté is at his “noblest”—when he renounces his alter-ego Saucy Nick—he demonstrates the great disparity between white and Indian values. Cooper suggests that when he slays Captain Willoughby and when his satisfaction that the Willoughby women and child have not been scalped apparently overpower any grief he may feel at their deaths, Wyandoté is only adhering to his “Indian nature.” Unlike Old John’s reversion to the “ways of his people” at the conclusion of The Pioneers, Wyandoté’s demonstration of his “savage nature” inspires more revulsion than admiration.15

14 Who soon after marries her “adopted brother” Bob Willoughby, consummating the conventional love interest, typical in most of Cooper’s novels, which dominates much of Wyandoté.

15 Though in a tacked-on conclusion set twenty years after the Revolution, one which is greatly incongruous with the bulk of the narrative, Wyandoté
This brief survey of Cooper’s portrayal of drinking by Native Americans in four of his Indian novels indicates that just as there were significant variations among different incarnations of the “Cooper Indian,” so were there differences between Cooper’s several depictions of “the drunken Indian.” This “literary evidence” alone suggests that, despite numerous editorializations concerning how liquor affects Indians that surfaced in early nineteenth-century America, still there was some sense of ambiguity about just exactly what this effect was upon Native American individuals and communities. Cooper’s various depictions—the pathetic Old John, the sinister Magua, the comical Potawatomis at the “Whiskey Spring,” the volatile Saucy Nick/Wyandotte—serve to “deconstruct” any uniform stereotype of Native American drinking.

Yet despite the differences in Cooper’s images of drinking Indians, there seems to be a consistent assumption across these portrayals, one Cooper seems to have shared with many of his contemporaries, that Native Americans in general tend to be “addicted” to liquor and that such an “addiction” was one virtually inevitable result of intercultural contact. In the case of Magua and Weasel, drinking contributes to their feelings of enmity toward whites: as in the early American captivity narratives, here “the drunken Indian” is portrayed as a more formidable foe; interaction with whites has only made these “ignoble savages” more “ignoble.”

Even Cooper’s Indian characters who renounce drinking do so finally to illustrate the disparity between red and white cultures. Old John Mohegan spurns liquor and the ways of the white man only as he anticipates his death and his converts to Christianity, accepting the “white” value of forgiveness. Now overcome with guilt for his slaying of Willoughby, and surprised that Bob refuses to take “an eye for an eye” when he learns how his father was killed, Wyandotte murmurs his last words, “God forgive” (373).
passage into a happy hunting ground completely separate from the white man's heaven. Wyandotté rejects the white man's "firewater" as he disowns his alter-ego Saucy Nick; yet the subsequent actions of the Tuscarora chief prove the incongruity between the values of the "noble Indian" and whites, showing that morally "civilization" transcends "savagism." Unlike colonial epic treatments, which portrayed "the drunken Indian" almost invariably as a threat to whites, Cooper's novels reflect a more ambiguous conception of Native American drinking behavior, drawing from the stereotypes of the Vanishing American as well as the "ignoble savage." Yet just as the thematic conventions of the frontier romance (as well as what Philip Fisher calls the "hard facts" of Native American-white relations in the early nineteenth century) led Cooper consistently to show how white "civilization" must supplant Native American "savagism," so did the widespread contemporary belief that red and white cultures do not mix influence Cooper's various portrayals of drinking by Native Americans.

Barnett generalizes about the depiction of Native Americans in the frontier romance: "Contact with whites only makes bad Indians worse, transforming them into degraded and drunken derelicts on the fringes of a prosperous society, but it operates beneficially on the exceptional Indian" (91). Yet for Saucy Nick/Wyandotté and Old John Mohegan, contact with whites serves mainly to suppress many of their "native virtues" and to encourage the "vice" of intemperance. Though drinking does not make them villainous (indeed, it has nearly the opposite effect), it does illustrate that white society has not "operated beneficially" upon them. Cooper's depictions of Native American drinking thus generally seem to support the accepted and widespread belief, which became federal policy, that for the good of both whites and Native Americans, Native Americans should be removed from all but the most closely supervised contact with "civilization."
Although he wrote fewer Indian novels than Cooper, as a frontier romance writer William Gilmore Simms rivaled Cooper in popularity in the first half of the nineteenth century. Simms seems to have been better acquainted with Native Americans of the south than Cooper was with his northeastern Indian subjects. Simms was raised in Charleston by his maternal grandmother who "kindled his imagination by telling him rousing stories of colonial Charleston, pirates, ghosts, and the Revolutionary War" (Wimsatt 15). In 1824, at age eighteen, Simms journeyed west to visit his father on his Mississippi "plantation." Simms traveled with his father, a veteran of Jackson's campaign against the Creeks, throughout the southeastern "Indian country," visiting villages of Chickasaw, Choctaw, Cherokee, Creek, and other tribes. Unlike Native Americans of the northeast, many of whom had been driven or had migrated westward by the beginning of the nineteenth century, many of the Native Americans of the south refused to give up their land, prompting the federal policy of forced removal in the 1830s. "Simms had an advantage over Cooper, not only in first-hand knowledge of savage life, but in the sense that the Indian problem had not yet been settled" (Howell 59). John McWilliams points out that "As The Yemassee became available for purchase, both the Seminoles and Creeks were at war against whites" (146).

Yet in many ways Simms's depiction of the Yemassee in his 1835 "bestselling" novel The Yemassee seems based less upon his actual encounters with southeastern Native Americans in the 1820s than upon the model Cooper had made famous in The Last of the Mohicans. Like Cooper's story, Simms's is set on the frontier and involves warfare between whites and Indians who are allied to a "foreign" European power rivalling British colonialism, in Simms's case Spain. The Yemassee
takes place in South Carolina in 1715, the year of the "Yemassee uprising" that threatened the Anglo presence in the 45-year-old British colony. In his History of South Carolina, first published in 1840, five years after The Yemassee, Simms wrote of the conflict: "[the Yemassee] had engaged, as allies [of the British], in most of the wars against the Spaniards, the French, and Indian tribes; had done good service, and always proved faithful. But, with the usual caprice of the red men, they suddenly became hostile" (86). In the 1853 preface to his novel based on this "capricious hostility," Simms assumes a different attitude in his depiction of the Yemassee: "the rude portraits of the red man, as given by those who see him in degrading attitudes only, and in humiliating relation with the whites, must not be taken as a just delineation of the same being in his native woods, unsubdued, a fearless hunter, and without any degrading consciousness of inferiority, and still more degrading habits, to make him wretched and ashamed" (22). Indeed, at the outset of his novel Simms announces that the Yemassee of 1715 "were in all their glory. They were politic and brave—a generous and gallant race" (29).

The basis for the growing dispute between the Yemassee and the white Carolinians is dispute over land: a meeting between white negotiators who seek to purchase additional land from the Yemassee and chiefs who are willing to sell the land ostensibly sparks the hostilities which became the foundation of the novel's plot. Yet Simms hints there is something beyond land that is at stake in the tensions between whites and Indians: "Another and stronger ground for jealous dislike arose necessarily in [the Yemassee's] minds with the gradual approach of that consciousness of their inferiority which, while the colony was dependent and weak, they had not so readily perceived" (30).

Simms provides a concrete example of this "inferiority" in the character of Occonestoga, the son of chief Sanutee. A war hero who had formerly proven his
bravery in battle against enemy Coosaws. Occonestoga has now "fallen prey" to the 
white man's rum and thus has become for his father an object of scorn and 
humiliation. In fact, while Sanutee is hunting in the forest, Occonestoga takes his 
place in the council among the chiefs who agree to sell the whites more land. 
When he learns what is transpiring, Sanutee interrupts this meeting, denouncing 
the chiefs as treacherous cowards who will sacrifice Yemassee honor for personal 
profit. Sanutee rushes forward to brain his own son with a tomahawk, protesting 
when one of the white negotiators stops him, "(Occonestoga) is thy slave—he is not 
the son of Sanutee. Thou hast made him a dog with thy poison drink, till he would 
sell his own mother to carry water for thy women" (106).

Occonestoga escapes to the white settlements, deeply mortified by this 
rejection by his father. He briefly considers reforming himself and seeking to 
rejoin his tribe:

... but, unhappily, the seduction of strong drink he had never been able to withstand. He was easily persuaded, and as easily overcome... seeking the fiery poison only, he was almost in daily communication with the lower class of the white settlers, from whom alone liquor could be obtained... the soul was debased within him; and there were moments when he felt how much better it would be to strike the knife to his own heart and lose the deadly and degrading consciousness which made him ashamed to meet the gaze of his people. (162-63)

In fact, the chief's son is brought to such self-loathing that, exiled from his 
own village, he agrees to serve as a spy for the whites, seeking to discover the 
Yemassee plan of attack on the white settlements of South Carolina. Initially 
bristling at the suggestion that he should betray his people, Occonestoga is soon 
persuaded in a rather telling manner, one recalling Cooper's scene of Old John 
Mohegan at the Bold Dragoon:

a strong feeling of nationality in his bosom aroused him into something like the warlike show of an eloquent chief inspiring his 
tribe for the fight. But Granger [a white trader], who had been 
watchful, came forward with a cup of spirits, which, without a word,
he now handed him. The youth seized it hurriedly, drank it off at a single effort, and, in that act, the momentary enthusiasm which had lightened up, with a show of still surviving consciousness and soul, the otherwise desponding and degraded features, passed away, and sinking again into his seat, he replied... "It is good, what the English speaks. Peace is good." (186)

Simms comments upon Occonestoga, "It is certain that the degradation consequent upon his intemperance, had greatly contributed toward blunting that feeling of nationality, which is no small part of the honest boast of every Yemassee warrior" (188). When Occonestoga slinks back into his village, he is soon discovered and captured. His father Sanutee demands that he should suffer worse than death—the tribal totem tattooed on his shoulder should be dug out, thereby depriving him of his tribal identity. But before the terrible rite can be performed, his mother Matiwan succeeds in driving her hatchet into his head: "a shriek of mingled joy and horror from the lips of the mother announced the success of her effort to defeat the doom, the most dreadful in the imagination of the Yemassee" (214).

The implication is clear: liquor debases Native Americans, transforming them into something less than "true Indians." The reader perceives that Occonestoga is not entirely worthless—after all, he does agree to help the cause of the white Carolinians, and in addition he saves the white heroine Bess Matthews from being attacked by a rattlesnake (172). Yet the former war hero cannot rejoin his tribe; he cannot claim the girl to whom he was once engaged (in fact, it is her scream when he encounters her in the forest that gives his away as he returns to spy on his village); he is completely rejected by his own father. Despite his claim that the Yemassee characters in his novel bear little resemblance to the Native Americans of his own day, Simms inserts into the narrative what must have been understood in 1835 as an explicit argument for Removal. Walter Grayson uses the following
argument to try to persuade the foolishly stubborn Puritan Pastor Matthews to seek refuge in the Blockhouse from the coming Yemassee attack:

...it is utterly impossible that the whites and Indians should ever live together and agree ... an obvious superiority in arts and education must soon force upon them the consciousness of their own inferiority ... they must become degraded, and sink into slavery and destitution. A few of them have become so now; they are degraded by brutal habits — and the old chiefs have opened their eyes to the danger among their young men, from the seductive poisons introduced among them by our traders ... the best thing we can do for them is to send them as far as possible from communion with our people. (303; emphasis added)

The bulk of the narrative demonstrates that Native Americans and whites cannot live in proximity. Despite the fact that Simms set his novel 120 years in the past, within the context of the 1830s debate over the white justification for forcing westward migration upon the southern Native American tribes, Grayson's speech, supported by events throughout the novel, echoes (or rather "prefigures") arguments by many proponents of Removal. Even if the dispute over land could be peacefully, plausibly resolved (which the outrage of Sanutee suggests was hardly possible), still the character of Occonestoga, the fallen "noble Indian," implies that Native Americans cannot remain immune to the "white man's vices."

Indeed, Simms explored just this theme in an 1841 sketch, "Oakatibbe, or The Choctaw Sampson," which Shillingsburg notes was revised from his 1828 "Indian Sketch" (102). While the story is not a frontier romance—it reads more like a philosophical essay—it nevertheless seconds Simms's portrayal of drinking by Native Americans in The Yemassee. The narrator of the sketch visits his acquaintance, Colonel Harris on his fledgling plantation in the 1820s old southwest. Not owning enough black slaves to pick his cotton, Harris has experimented with hiring Indians to do the work. The narrator speculates about the dangers of this money-saving scheme: "If the employer, as was the case with Colonel Harris,
refused to furnish [the Indian workers] with whiskey, they required him to pay in money. With this, they soon made their way to one of those moral sinks, called a grog-shop, which English civilization is always ready to plant, as its first, most familiar, and most imposing standard, among the hills and forests of the savage" (180).

The narrator is proven correct when the Indians, once paid, all converge upon the local saloon. Among them is Slim Sampson, alias Oakatibbe, one of the few Indian males who actually worked for Harris, the majority of the Choctaw men having allowed their wives and daughters to earn money for them. At the saloon, Oakatibbe engages in a drunken brawl with the Indian "bum" Loblolly Jack because Jack, as Oakatibbe later explains, had scoffed at Oakatibbe's admiration of whites. In their drunken fight, Oakatibbe kills Jack and subsequently flees to "master" Harris, to whom he confesses: "Me drunk—me fight—me kill Loblolly Jack . . . Me drunk! Me dog fool!—Drink whiskey at liquor shop—hab money—buy whiskey—drunk come. and Loblolly Jack dead!" (197).

Under Choctaw law the relatives of Loblolly Jack claim the life of Oakatibbe. The doomed man arranges to stay the night at Harris's; his people say they will arrive there in the morning for his execution. Rejecting "Indian justice" in this case, both the narrator and Harris encourage Oakatibbe to "act like a white man" and flee westward where he can start a new life, to deny the "barbaric code" that demands his life for what was essentially an accident. After much coaxing, Oakatibbe finally takes the advice of the white men and rides off into the night. Yet shortly after the Choctaws arrive in the morning for Oakatibbe's execution, the convicted man returns. The narrator claims that Oakatibbe had been too strongly indoctrinated into the "backward ways" of his people to shrug off their demands for his death: "He could not withstand the reproaches of a conscience which his own
genius was not equal to overthrow" (203). The narrator claims that Oakatibbe's return proves his theory that Indians cannot be assimilated into Euramerican culture singly—that mass subjugation of whole Indian societies is necessary if Indians are to live near whites. Yet the story also illustrates the thesis that liquor has corrupted the once proud "noble Indian"; even the most admirable Indian character in the sketch, "so noble a specimen of manhood" as Oakatibbe himself, looses his self control and kills a fellow Choctaw in a drunken brawl, ironically defending his admiration of whites in what Simms suggests is a typically "Indian manner."

Robert Montgomery Bird

Robert Montgomery Bird's 1837 novel Nick of the Woods, a "bestseller" of its day (Mott 306), was perceived as a frontier romance of a different stamp from many of Cooper's. Before writing Nick of the Woods, Bird had written works within the "noble savage" tradition of Yamovden, particularly in his 1832 tragedy Oralloosa. Nick of the Woods marked a distinct change. Indeed, if Cooper's Indian characters were perceived to be the "beau ideal" Cooper himself had suggested in his 1850 "Preface to The Leather-Stocking Tales," Bird's Indians in Nick of the Woods were considered by some critics as calumnious distortions; the contemporary critic Harrison Ainsworth, for example, charged Bird with "purposely exaggerating the ferocity of the Indian in order to exculpate the American frontiersman from his treacherous and cruel seizure of Indian land and indeed his extermination of whole tribes" (qtd. in Dahl, "Introduction" 10). Sensitive to such criticism, Bird staunchly defended his portrayals of Native Americans in the preface to the first edition of his novel:

*We owe, perhaps, some apology for the hues we have thrown around the Indian portraits in our picture,—hues darker than are usually
employed by the painters of such figures. But, we confess, the North American savage has never appeared to us the gallant and heroic personage he seems to others. The single fact that he wages war—systematic war—upon beings incapable of resistance or defence,—upon women and children, whom all other races of the world, no matter how barbarous, consent to spare,—has hitherto been, and we suppose, to the end of our days will remain, a stumbling-block to our imagination. (29)

As this statement suggests, in Nick of the Woods Bird unabashedly drew from the colonial tradition of the Indian war and captivity narrative which typically pitted "hostile savages" against "innocent" whites. Bird also claimed he had "researched" his subject thoroughly among more contemporary sources regarding Native Americans. Curtis Dahl writes of the Philadelphia physician, "Throughout his life Bird was interested in the forest and frontier. Whenever he could, he traveled through the backwoods portions of the country—Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky" (Bird 85). Bird supposedly based his Nathan Slaughter, the Quaker Indian killer, on a figure in an anecdote related to him by "his Kentucky friends Black and Grimes" (Dahl, Bird 93). In the 1853 preface to Nick, Bird insists on the "realism" of his Indian characters: "if [the author] drew his Indian portraits with Indian ink, rejecting the brighter pigments which might have yielded more brilliant effects, and added an 'Indian-hater' to the group, it was because he aimed to give, not the appearance of truth, but truth itself" (31).

Yet in several respects, Bird seems to have read his Cooper: the novel's hero and heroine are genteel eastern whites who "outclass" the lowborn, rude pioneers on the Kentucky frontier. The novel follows the fate of the high born Roland Forrester (a misnomer, for our hero is a greenhorn when it comes to life in the woods) and his cousin Edith as, wrongfully denied the estate of their deceased rich uncle, they are forced to emigrate into the Kentucky wilderness.16 Abandoned by

16 Bird also apparently borrowed from James Hall: Hall's 1833 novel Harpe's Head suggests the basic plot of easterners forced through financial difficulties to
their Kentucky Regulator escort, Roland, Edith, their black slave Emperor, and the white girl Telie Doe are attacked by Indians; copying the pattern from the captivity narrative, Bird provides our first glimpse of Indians as dangerous, faceless forces besetting helpless whites. The Forrester party is assisted in hiding and defending themselves by Quaker Nathan Slaughter, whom we later discover is the "Jibbenainosay"—"Nick of the Woods"—who relentlessly slays, scalps, and carves crosses into the chests of Indian foes. Yet after Nathan leaves the hideout to bring reinforcements of Kentucky Regulators, the party is again waylaid by Indians and Roland watches his cousin Edith fall into the hands of the "savages":

pain of body was then, and for many moments after, lost in agony of mind, which could be conceived only by him who, like the young soldier, has been doomed, once in his life, to see a tender female, the nearest and dearest object of his affections, in the hands of enemies, the most heartless, merciless, and brutal of all the races of man. (189)

Indeed, though the novel contains scattered, vague references to Indian objections to the white settlement of Kentucky, the plot of the novel plays down such grounds for intercultural collision. Instead, conflict between white and Indian is almost entirely personal; the Indians who seize Edith and Roland's party are in fact employed by the white man Braxley who had blocked their inheritance of their uncle's estate and who now wants to force Edith into marriage. Bird compounds the white's reasons to loathe and fear Indians by repeatedly providing graphic illustrations of their lust for violence such as in following passage which describes Indians maiming the already slain bodies of the Kentucky Regulators who had unsuccessfully attempted to rescue the captured Forresters:

migrate to the wild frontier, a storyline which is echoed in Nick of the Woods: Hall's 1829 sketch "The Indian Hater," which Melville used in The Confidence Man, perhaps inspired Bird's Nathan Slaughter.

17 We see here Bird's indebtedness to the marriage theme in the eighteenth-century English novel, with Braxley cast in the role of Richardson's Mr B.
The wail became a yell of fury, loud and frightful; and Roland could see them gathering around each corpse, striking the senseless clay repeatedly with their knives and hatchets, each seeking to surpass his fellow in the savage work of mutilation. Such is the red-man of America, whom courage,—an attribute of all lovers of blood, whether man or animal; misfortune,—the destiny, in every quarter of the globe, of every barbarous race, which contact with a civilized none cannot civilize; and the dreams of poets and sentimentalists have invested with a character wholly incompatible with his condition.

In addition to this passion for physical violence inherent in "Indian nature," Bird predictably adds the insatiable lust for liquor. Yet in this case, departing from the common stereotype of the early American Indian captivity narrative, Bird makes use of the predominant belief of his day that liquor incapacitates the Indian. Roland is given as a prisoner to an old Piankeshaw warrior, who relishes the thought of forcing him to run the gauntlet when they arrive at the Piankeshaw village. The old warrior alternates between threatening Roland, upon whom he yearns to revenge the death of his comrades, and contemplating the keg of rum awarded him by Wenonga, the leader of the raiding party. When the Piankeshaw approaches Roland with a knife, one of the younger Indians stops him and "pointing at the same time to the keg of fire-water on the horse's back, the old Indian's grief and rage expired together in a haw-haw, ten times more obstreperous and joyous than any he had indulged in before" (208). In fact, the old warrior cannot keep himself from opening the keg on the road, tippling so heavily that he falls several times from his horse. The volatility of the warrior's temperament, the quickness with which his drunken glee can be transformed into dangerous rage, is also demonstrated: when one of his companions deliberately destroys the cask of liquor that has nearly incapacitated the old warrior, the old Piankeshaw, in an "act of drunken and misdirected ferocity" (213), shoots through the head a horse who had thrown him. Nevertheless as the old Indian begins to sober up and keep a more
watchful eye on Roland, Bird comments that the white man "had lost his best ally in the cask of liquor" (216).

Bird's fictional treatment of Native American drinking is best illustrated during Roland and Nathan's attempt to rescue Edith from the Indian village of Black-Vulture, to which the villain Wenonga has taken the white heroine. After Nathan rescues Roland from the Piankeshaws, the two plot to steal into Wenonga's village and recover the white woman. Luckily for the white men, as they approach Black-Vulture, they discover the inhabitants have just finished a celebration: "when the fire-water is the soul of a feast, the feast only ends with the last drop of liquor" (264). In fact, Nathan finds the chief Wenonga in a drunken stupor, insensible before his wigwam, inside of which Edith is held: "There was little indeed in the appearance of the wretched sleeper, at that moment, to inspire terror; for apart from the condition of helpless impotence to which his ungovernable appetites had reduced him, he seemed to be entirely unarmed" (279-880). Wenonga, however, recovers consciousness before Nathan is able to rescue Edith from the village. After Nathan is apprehended, Wenonga approaches him "with as savage a look as he could infuse into his drunken features" (298), against which Nathan throws back a hideous glare which utterly unnerves the chief. Yet typically the savages do not prevail: the climax of the novel occurs when a group of Kentucky Regulators, white pioneers of the "dark and bloody ground," ride into Black-Vulture, disbursing the hostile but hungover Indians and rescuing the white heroine.

Bird obviously adopts much of the formula of the early American war and captivity narrative in constructing the plot of Nick of the Woods and he draws upon many of the assumptions of "Indian nature" implicit in most of such narratives. Yet liquor is shown for the most part to subdue the Indian, to make him less and not
more aggressive, or at least less capable of executing his hostile designs. Indeed, while the novel titillates the reader with passages of explicit "blood and gore," Bird criticizes virtually every indulgence of the "base passions." Thus just as Indians are shown to indulge their ardor for blood by hacking up already dead white corpses, so do they gratify their taste for liquor by drinking to complete inebriation. While these actions pose different consequences for the whites, they both are consistent with the portrait of the Native American as a being who indulges his passions to excess.

Indeed, though Bird presents Nathan Slaughter, "Nick of the Woods," as a hero of sorts, even he is in the end an "Indianized," dangerous character, obsessed with revenging the destruction of his family by the hands of Indians, an alteration of character made all the more striking by the fact that Nathan was (and still maintains the facade of) a peace-loving Quaker. Unlike Cooper's Leatherstocking, Nathan is unable to avoid absorbing undesirable "red gifts." Even the Kentucky Regulators are portrayed as inordinately enamored of fighting. At the conclusion of the novel, with Roland and Edith restored to their uncle's inheritance, the white protagonists return to eastern civilization, fleeing the violent passions of the wilderness, a rather odd move for a novel that purports to celebrate the settling of Kentucky. From an "eastern" perspective, Native American drinking in Nick of the Woods is one more base passion unleashed and encouraged by life in the wilds; along with the wanton violence portrayed throughout Nick of the Woods, uncontrolled drinking demonstrates the savageness of the "Indian nature."

This brief survey of images of "the drunken Indian" in several prominent frontier romances demonstrates a range of portrayals, a variety of implicit consequences of drinking by Native Americans. In some cases, drinking serves to
exacerbate what is perceived as Native Americans' innate aggression (for instance, Simms's Oakatibbe). In other cases, liquor virtually incapacitates the "red man" (for instance, Cooper's Old John Mohegan). In the case of Bird's old Piankeshaw warrior, drinking is curiously shown to have both effects alternately.

Yet a common assumption that underlies these various images is that contact with whites has a predominantly negative effect upon Native Americans. Excessive drinking is a typical trait which frontier novelists frequently assigned to Indian characters who had any extended intercourse with white culture. Within a general thematic pattern which illustrated epic conflicts between cultures in different "stages of development"—"civilization" against "savagism"—instances of Native American drinking again and again were used to illustrate the belief that the "savage" Native American could neither withstand nor benefit from the influence of the "civilized" Euramerican. Within a narrative context which highlighted frontier skirmishes, with white men forced to protect white women from attacks by hostile savages, liquor sometimes was shown as disabling the Indian warrior, drinking depicted as a weakness to be exploited by white protagonists. Conversely, Indian characters who are friendly towards whites were often described as transformed into pathetic derelicts, ruined by their "addiction" to liquor. In either case, the overall implication seems clear: incidents of Native American drinking in the frontier romance, whatever their immediate consequences, are used to demonstrate the fundamental inferiority of "Indian nature," the ultimate incompatibility of "civilization" and "savagism," a belief which governed federal policy regarding Native Americans throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.
Antebellum Ethnographers

As the Indian became a popular feature of nineteenth-century American poetry, drama, and fiction, some Euramericans began to look more "scientifically" upon Native Americans, exhibiting an increasing interest in observing and recording their beliefs, customs, and other aspects of their cultures. As has been illustrated in Chapter Two, an "ethnographic" mode of writing about Native Americans had begun as early as the seventeenth century, as, among others, William Wood attempted to provide prospective immigrants with some sense of this "new race of people" who were discovered to inhabit North America. By the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, however, as Euramericans had firmly established their control of at least the eastern portion of what had become the United States, efforts to study Native Americans were increasingly afforded a more "official" status. In the name of "disinterested science," learned groups such as the American Philosophical Society assigned themselves the task of gathering and preserving as much information as possible about Native Americans, a goal all the more imperative, they believed, since Native Americans (of the east) were generally thought to be fast becoming extinct. Indeed, the tone of urgency spurred by the myth of the Vanishing American was a commonplace in the rhetoric of ethnographers exhorting colleagues (and especially organizations upon whose financial support they depended) to study Native Americans while they still existed.

Besides the invocations of "disinterested science," there were several distinctly "interested" motives some antebellum ethnographers acknowledged as instrumental in their decisions to study Native Americans. The federal government commissioned a number of fact-finding projects concerning Native American populations, purportedly in order to base its Indian policy on empirically sound
research rather than conventional white lore concerning "Indian nature." Other organizations, considering themselves "Friends of the Indian," believed that efforts to civilize Native Americans could succeed only after white "missionaries of progress" understood much more about Native American cultures than was available in the ethnographic literature of the day. Yet while ethnographic works published in the first half of the nineteenth century still reflect a distinctly ethnocentric perspective on Native Americans, with "civilization" assumed as superior to "savagism" (indeed, some ethnographic writers seem particularly anxious to assimilate Native Americans into Euramerican culture), the overall portrayal of Native Americans by antebellum ethnographers offers some interesting comparisons to the Indian of the frontier romance, particularly regarding depictions of drinking.

**John Heckewelder**

Though he died shortly before the publication of the first of the *Leatherstocking Tales*, John Heckewelder (1743-1823) is believed to have significantly influenced Cooper's portrayal of Native Americans, particularly concerning the longstanding grudge between the Delawares and the Iroquois that Cooper draws upon throughout several of the *Tales*. Modern historians such as Arthur C. Parker charge that Heckewelder's biased championing of the Delaware over the Iroquois has in fact marred the historical accuracy of several of Cooper's Indian novels. To be sure, Heckewelder does repeat the Delaware claim that they were unjustly subjugated by the Iroquois; however, his famous *History* concentrates less on inter-tribal strife than on the general effects that contact with Euramericans has had upon Native Americans as a whole.
John Heckewelder was in a uniquely advantageous position to describe Native Americans of the northeast at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. From 1762 through the first decade of the nineteenth century, Heckewelder, whose father had emigrated to America in 1754 to assist the missionary efforts of the Moravian Church, at various times performed missionary service throughout the northeastern frontier. From 1771 to 1786, Heckewelder preached among the "Moravian Indians," part of the Delaware Nation, who lived mostly in what is now Ohio. When he finally retired to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1810, Heckewelder was considered to know more about Native American cultures than any other Euramerican of his time.

Heckewelder was made a member of the American Philosophical Society in 1797, due in large part to his work in studying Algonquin linguistics; Heckewelder donated at least 24 manuscripts of Native American languages to the Society. Around 1817, Society President Caspar Wistar asked Heckewelder, as part of the Society's mission to collect "correct information on matters connected with the History, Geography, Topography, Antiquities, and Statistics of this Country" (from the "Constitution of the Historical and Literary Committee," qtd. in Greene 389), to report about "everything which throws light upon the nature of the Indians, their manners and customs; their opinions upon all interesting subjects, especially religion and government... in short, every thing relating to them which is interesting to you, will be instructing to the Society" (from a 9 January 1816 letter from Wistar to Heckewelder, qtd. in Greene 389). Heckewelder was asked to produce not a narrative of his experiences, but a descriptive, analytical account of the Native American cultures he had so long observed. In 1819, under the auspices of

18 Though in 1820 Heckewelder did publish a Narrative of the United Brethren among the Delaware and Mohican Indians.
the American Philosophical Society. Heckewelder published his *Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States*, which was considered until long afterward an important ethnographical document.

As its title suggests, Heckewelder's *History* was intended to capture the "essence of the red man" before the arrival of whites. Indeed, as noted, such efforts of recording the ways of Native Americans in the "pristine wilderness" were thought to be a matter of urgency since it was believed by many that Native Americans were fast disappearing or (what some claimed was far worse) quickly degenerating as a result of the increasing westward emigration of whites. In his introduction, Heckewelder himself cites this popular belief concerning the vanishing American:

> I owe [the Indians] a debt of gratitude, which I cannot acquit better than presenting to the world this plain, unadorned picture, which I have drawn in the spirit of candor and truth. Alas! in a few years, perhaps, they will have entirely disappeared from the face of the earth, and all that will be remembered of them will be that they existed and were numbered among the barbarous tribes that once inhabited this vast continent. (xl)

Yet despite his avowed intention to focus on "precontact" Native Americans, 19 Heckewelder also comments, often at length, upon the disastrous effects that white "civilization"—particularly white vices—has had upon native ways of life.

At the outset of his *History*, Heckewelder declares that he has not been influenced by previously published texts concerning Native Americans, emphatically distancing himself from the perceived purposes of the authors of Indian war and captivity narratives:

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19 Heckewelder's *History* includes one of the largest collections of Native American folklore published before Schoolcraft's *Algonquian Researches*. 
I have not written to excite astonishment, but for the information of those who are desirous of knowing the true history of those people, who, for centuries, have been in full possession of the country we now inhabit, but who have since emigrated to a great distance. I can only assure them that I have not taken the information here communicated from the writings of others, but from the mouths of the very people I am going to speak of, and from my own observation of what I have witnessed while living among them. (xxiii)

Heckewelder acknowledges that he is well aware of the popular image of Native Americans promoted by gruesome accounts of Indian torture which characterize so many captivity narratives. Of such stories of scalping and burning, dismembering and drowning, he declares, "Enough of other writers have painted these scenes, with all their disgusting horrors; nor shall I, a Christian, endeavor to excuse or palliate them. But I may be permitted to say, that those dreadful executions are by no means so frequent as is commonly imagined" (217). Of the custom of forcing prisoners to "run the gauntlet," described as a particularly harrowing experience for white captives in many captivity narratives, Heckewelder maintains, "in many instances, it is rather a scene of amusement, than a punishment" (218).

Against these negative images of the Indian as a merciless, violent warrior, Heckewelder attempts to portray throughout his History interracial contact not only from the perspective of a lone white missionary who seeks to convert Native Americans to Christianity, but also from the Native American's perspective (or at least from the perspective of an advocate for Native Americans). "Long and dismal are the complaints which the Indians make of European ingratitude and injustice," Heckewelder writes, "Often have I listened to these descriptions, until I felt ashamed of being a white man" (76). Heckewelder catalogs a long list of Euramerican crimes against Native Americans: Virginians driving Native Americans westward, Dutch grabbing their lands, "Yenghese" pushing Native Americans from New England. He laments that smallpox and other diseases imported from Europe have taken so
many Native American lives. He is particularly incensed by the role he perceives that liquor has played in the decline of Native American populations: "By the introduction of ardent spirits among [the Indians], they have been led into vices which they say were unknown before" (221). Perhaps providing inspiration for the most famous frontier romance—Cooper's The Last of the Mohicans—Heckewelder writes of "The Mahicanni, or Mohicans," "This once great and renowned nation had . . . almost entirely disappeared . . . great numbers have died in consequence of the introduction of spirituous liquors among them" (93).

Heckewelder devotes an entire chapter of his History to "Drunkenness," which he identifies as an unfortunate though inevitable product of civilization:

I am not one of those wild enthusiasts who would persuade mankind that savage life is preferable to a state of civilization; but I leave it to every impartial person to decide, whether the condition of the healthy sober Indian, pursuing his game through forests and plains, is not far superior to that of the gangrened drunken white man, rioting in debauchery and vice? (261)

Heckewelder blames "unprincipled white traders" for encouraging the use of liquor among Native Americans, claiming that many of these whiskey traders have forced liquor upon the Indians initially against the Indians' will, till they could no longer resist it (266). Like many of his contemporaries, Heckewelder commented that Indians "cannot long resist its destructive operation upon their once strong and healthy constitutions" (262).

Instead of characterizing "the drunken Indian" as a dangerous force which poses a threat to whites or as an object of disgust and contempt—perspectives which inform the majority of portrayals of Native American drinking in the frontier

20 Heckewelder's influence on Cooper seems most obvious in the missionary's description of a chief called by the whites "Mohican John" who had emigrated to the Ohio area, a remnant of his broken tribe. Cooper's Chingachgook in The Pioneers seems modeled almost directly from this Indian.
romance—Heckewelder, like many of his early American predecessors who wrote in the ethnographic mode, focuses most upon the dreadful effects "intoxication produces upon the Indians":

> It has been the cause of an infinite number of murders among them, besides biting off noses and otherwise disfiguring each other, which are the least consequences of the quarrels which inebriation produces between them. I cannot say how many have died of colds and other disorders, which they have caught by lying upon the cold ground, and remaining exposed to the elements when drunk. (263)

Moreover, Heckewelder allows Native Americans themselves to testify just how liquor affects them. Heckewelder repeats an anecdote that had been related to him by Cornelius Rosenbaum, an Indian brought up near the Delaware Water Gap, who had killed a fellow Indian nearly fifty years previously when, "under the influence of strong liquor," he had mistaken this friend for an enemy. "He said that the deception was complete, and that while intoxicated, the face of his friend presented to his eyes all the features of the man with whom he was in a state of hostility" (264). Heckewelder notes another instance in which an Indian with whom he had been walking through the woods had mistaken a charred sapling for a black snake. After he had later sobered up, according to Heckewelder, the Indian mused:

> I cannot get over my surprise, that the liquor I drank . . . should so have deceived me! but I think I have now discovered how it happens that Indians so often kill one another when drunk, almost without knowing what they are doing . . . I thought that as I saw this time a living snake in a dead piece of wood, so I might, at another time, take a human being, perhaps one of my own family, for a bear or some other ferocious beast and kill him. Can you, my friend, tell me what is in the _begun_ that confuses one so, and transforms things in that matter? (265)

The effects of drinking by Native Americans here are illustrated not just in terms of the end result of destroyed lives—a census-taker's tabulation of the number

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21 In the 1979 novel _The Death of Jim Loney_ by Blackfeet/Gros Ventre author James Welch, the Native American protagonist fatally shoots his friend after they had been drinking, mistaking the friend for a bear.
of "casualties"—but more intimately, from the consciousness of Native Americans themselves. Heckewelder records a harrowing image of a Native American meditating how drinking robs him of his powers of self control—the Native American as a victim of a force he cannot understand and indeed fears. Outside of the context of the epic drama of white-Indian warfare or of white captivity among Indians (a context which virtually defines the scope of portrayals of Indians in the frontier romance), the drinking Indian is here portrayed as an object of unmitigated pity, prey to "the white man's firewater."

Heckewelder concludes his chapter with an account of a Native American from Susquehannah named Thomas who was chided by a white trader for no longer trading with him but instead dealing only with the Moravians. Thomas explains that whereas the white trader and his colleagues would repeatedly entreat him to drink rum, "for the purpose of cheating me," the Moravians treat him fairly. Heckewelder uses Thomas's testimony to demonstrate that many Native Americans have, far from encouraging traders to sell them liquor, often discouraged such practices. The portrayal of Thomas, unlike the Indian in the frontier romance who cannot refuse a drop of liquor, emphasizes Heckewelder's major assertion that Native American drinking is best understood more as a consequence of unscrupulous white "whiskey traders" than of an inherent "Indian weakness."

Henry Rowe Schoolcraft

Perhaps the most influential American ethnographer of Native American culture in the first half of the nineteenth century was Henry Rowe Schoolcraft. Through the numerous periodical articles and books he published from the 1820s through the 1850s, "he significantly influenced the development of the popular white image of the Native American" (Bremer vii). Like Heckewelder before him,
Schoolcraft had ample opportunity to observe Native Americans at first hand. He had accompanied Lewis Cass in his 1820 expedition beyond the frontier of the old northwest in Cass's failed attempt to discover the source of the Mississippi River (a journey Schoolcraft himself would retrace in the early 1830s in his successful attempt to track the source of the Mississippi to Lake Itasca). In 1822 Schoolcraft was appointed an Indian agent at Sault-St.-Marie for the Lake Superior tribes and a year later married a woman who was part Chippewa. From 1836 to 1841, when the Whigs controlled the administration, Schoolcraft served as Superintendent for Indian Affairs of Michigan Territory. Thus Schoolcraft had years of experience of observing Native Americans on the frontier of white civilization.

Schoolcraft is perhaps best known today among students of American letters as the compiler of *Algic Researches* (1839), a translation/rewriting of Algonquin legends. Schoolcraft was so interested in Native American legends because he believed that by studying them, ethnologists could better understand the "Indian mind." Robert Bieder speculates, though, that "*Algic Researches* sold well, but it is doubtful that the public bought the two-volume set for Schoolcraft's ethnological insights. . . . The discovery of ancient Indian 'bards' in *Algic Researches* piqued America's literary nationalism and created enthusiastic response for the work" (171). In fact, Schoolcraft's work served as one of the major sources for Longfellow's phenomenally successful *Song of Hiawatha*, with which Schoolcraft himself was greatly pleased (Marsden, "Schoolcraft" 174).

In addition to recording Native American language and lore, Schoolcraft was especially engaged with collecting and publishing accurate, "scientific" information about Native American culture, partly as a basis for sound governmental policy concerning Native Americans. Distrusting the oral and written narrative accounts of "Indian nature" that had proliferated into the
nineteenth century, Schoolcraft sought a "quantifiable" understanding of Native Americans, and consequently strove to offer the Euramerican public a more "realistic" view than that afforded by much of the literature of the day. "Schoolcraft, critical of publications in science that were 'founded on an imperfect acquaintance with the country' and rife with 'assumed premises,' believed that scientific investigations had to be based upon empirical observation and that the scientist must perform the tedious tasks of collecting and cataloging data before attempting to spin theories" (Bieder 148).

In the early 1840s Schoolcraft conducted a census of the Iroquois which had remained in New York, not only counting heads but also collecting statistics on population distribution among gender and age groups, yields of particular crops against acres sowed, etc. (see Notes 32-38). Soon after he published his findings in Notes on the Iroquois (1846), Schoolcraft was commissioned by the federal government to compile statistics on all Native American tribes within the United States. Schoolcraft devised a questionnaire including 347 items which Indian agents were expected to take to all Native American villages throughout United States territory (Bremer 296). Despite Schoolcraft's enthusiasm, his project "fell victim to its own grandioseness of conception" (Bremer 318), since Schoolcraft simply required too much of the agents he expected to gather data and from the Native Americans he asked to respond to his questionnaire. Still, Schoolcraft's particular method of attempting to understand the Native American, his reliance on "hard, observable facts" as opposed to the vagaries of popular Euramerican lore, dramatizes the differences between the early nineteenth-century ethnographic mode of writing about Native Americans and the epic mode of the frontier romance.

Too many of his fellow whites, Schoolcraft contended, were ignorant about actual Native Americans, their conceptions having been shaped by the one-
dimensional "bloody savage" of war and captivity narratives. Indeed, in "Personal Incidents and Impressions of the Indian Race, Drawn from Notes of Travel and Residence in Their Territories," Schoolcraft responds to the inquiry "What kind of being is the North American Indian?—Have we judged rightly of him?":

My earlier impressions of the Indian race, were drawn from the fireside rehearsals of incidents which had happened during the perilous times of the American revolution, in which my father was a zealous actor, and were all inseparably connected with the fearful ideas of the Indian yell, the tomahawk, the scalping knife, and the fire brand. In these recitals, the Indian was depicted as the very impersonation of evil—a sort of wild demon, who delighted in nothing so much as blood and murder. Whether he had mind, was governed by any reasons, or even had any soul, nobody inquired, and nobody cared. It was always represented as a meritorious act in old revolutionary reminiscences, to have killed one of them in the border wars, and thus aided in ridding the land of a cruel and unnatural race, in whom all feelings of pity, justice, and mercy, were supposed to be obliterated. These early ideas were sustained by printed narratives of captivity and hair-breadth escapes of men and women from their clutches, which, from time to time, fell into my hands, so that long before I was ten years old, I had a most definite and terrific idea impressed on my imagination of what was sometimes called in my native precincts, "the bow and arrow race." (Indian 64)

Schoolcraft claims that he seeks another, "truer" way describing Native Americans, one based on extensive, first-hand "impartial" observation: "I had, from my early youth, felt pleased with the study of natural history, and I thought the Indian...might be studied with something of the same mode of exactitude" (Indian 66). Subscribing to the stadialist model of cultural development, Schoolcraft thus pronounces in this same essay that the Native American acts "as other men would act, if placed exactly in his condition, prepared with the education the forest has given him, and surrounded by the same wants, temptations and dangers" (Indian 66).

Yet in addition to his avowed stance as a naturalist impartially observing and recording Native American culture, Schoolcraft was also a deeply religious man who believed strongly in the spiritual conversion of the "heathen Indians."
Indeed, as biographer Richard Bremer suggests, Schoolcraft often vacillated between the "scientific" position that Native Americans were pagans because they lived a savage lifestyle and the belief that because they were pagans, they maintained their savage lifestyle (247). Nevertheless, despite the intellectual disparity between these two perspectives of Native Americans, still both fueled Schoolcraft's desire to assimilate Native Americans into Euramerican civilization. One set of strategies of such a mission involved encouraging Native Americans to emulate what many whites contended were the positive features of civilization, the foremost being cultivation of the land. Another set of strategies involved discouraging Native Americans from incurring the "vices" of civilization, particularly that of drinking.

Schoolcraft prided himself on his own temperate habits. In his *Narrative of an Expedition through the Upper Mississippi to Itasca Lake*, throughout which he had recorded several instances of drinking by Native Americans, Schoolcraft boasted that as far as his own expeditionary crew was concerned, the entire trip was made "from beginning to end, without the use of so much as a drop of ardent spirits, of any kind" (74). Chase and Stellanova Osborn point out that Schoolcraft's "attitude toward the giving of liquor to Indians was not fixed at the beginning" (487): in 1820, he gave whiskey as a gift to a group of Fox who were expected in turn to point him to their lead diggings. As a government-employed Indian agent, however, Schoolcraft deplored the sale of alcohol to Native Americans. In 1825 he wrote of the use of "ardent spirits" among Native Americans, "its baneful current is spreading deeper and wider every hour, carrying want, disease, crime and depopulation in its course, and threatening to sweep before it the enfeebled remains of this once mighty people" (qtd. in Osborn and Osborn 489). Refusing placidly to observe the exemptions from the presidential prohibition that Governor
of Michigan Territory Lewis Cass routinely granted to American fur traders. Schoolcraft "rigidly enforced what liquor laws there were and threw all his influence into the scale to pass even stricter regulations" (Osborn and Osborn 491).

While serving as Indian agent at Sault-St.-Marie, in Michigan Territory, Schoolcraft helped to organize a temperance society. In an address before this Chippewa County Temperance Society dated 8 May 1832, Schoolcraft explicitly addressed the issue of "The Influence of Ardent Spirits on the Condition of the North American Indians." Beginning with some of the standard rhetorical flourishes common to the temperance movement within Euramerican culture—e.g., images of children weeping over the grave of their drunkard father—Schoolcraft proceeds to consider the effects of drinking among a "savage population":

Stupefying [the Indian's] mind, and enervating his body, [the vice of intemperance] leaves him neither the vigor to provide for his temporary wants, nor the disposition to inquire into those which regard eternity. His natural affections are blunted, and all the sterner and nobler qualities of the Indian mind prostrated. His family are neglected. They first become objects of pity to our citizens, and then of disgust. The want of wholesome food and comfortable clothing produce disease. He falls at last himself, the victim of disease, superinduced from drinking. (Indian 364)

Schoolcraft blames white fur traders for the spread of drinking among Native Americans: "Nobody will deem it too much to say, that wherever the current of the fur trade set, the nations were intoxicated, demoralized, depopulated" (Indian 362). In fact, Schoolcraft argues that white traders have so degraded the frontier native populations that the only hope of civilizing them is first to remove them from the influence of such traders and then to teach them the virtues of an agrarian lifestyle. Thus Schoolcraft became a strong proponent of Indian Removal; he vigorously defended the federal government's policy in an 1844 essay first published in the Democratic Review. 22 Once beyond the influence of the "baser
sort of whites," Schoolcraft argued, Native Americans would be free to be taught only the virtuous aspects of civilization.

Schoolcraft claims he is optimistic about the prospects for civilizing Native Americans on the western plains. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Schoolcraft expresses confidence that just as Native Americans can renounce intemperance, so can they reverse their declines in population; counter to the assumptions in many contemporary works in the epic mode, for Schoolcraft the Vanishing American may be only a temporary phenomenon.

**Thomas McKenney**

Thomas McKenney, superintendent of the ill-fated federal Indian factory system from 1816 till 1822, served as Head of the Office of Indian Affairs from 1824 till 1831, when he was dismissed by Andrew Jackson for his refusal to support the administration’s policy of involuntary removal of the southern Indians. At the Office of Indian Affairs, McKenney created a federal "archive" of material which he thought "not only would ... be an invaluable aid for the administration of Indian affairs ... but the accumulated information could be 'preserved there for the inspection of the curious, and the information of future generations...’" (Viola 237). Among items such as artifacts and books that he collected at the government's expense, McKenney gathered 130 portraits of Native American dignitaries, most painted by artists who had traveled west to record on canvas the exact features of individual "chiefs." Along with James Hall, McKenney published a three-volume *History of the Indian Tribes* (1836, 1838, 1844) consisting mostly of reproductions of the portraits in the federal gallery and biographies of the Native American

22 Bremer suggests that this essay may have been part of Schoolcraft's campaign to court the favor of the current administration in his unsuccessful bid for reinstatement in the Office in Indian Affairs.
subjects, the whole intended to provide the public with a more accurate picture of the "red man."

In his capacity as Head of the Indian Office, McKenney had strongly opposed the use of liquor in the Indian trade, ordering territorial governors to make no exceptions in the presidential order to prohibit such traffic. Like Schoolcraft, McKenney sought to integrate Native Americans within Euramerican civilization and he viewed the liquor trade a major hindrance to this goal. Also like Schoolcraft, despite initial reservations, McKenney came to support the general idea of Indian Removal, considering it "not as an alternative to civilization but as a prerequisite. On a permanent reservation west of the Mississippi River, undisturbed and isolated from the degenerating influence of the whites, the Indians could learn a new way of life" (Viola 200).

Much of McKenney's 1846 *Memoirs, Official and Personal* deals with his experiences with the Native Americans he had encountered throughout his official travels; indeed, the second volume of the *Memoirs* is a collection of lectures McKenney originally delivered in the early 1840s about conditions among contemporary Native American tribes. Accounting for the decline in Native American populations since the appearance of Europeans in the New World, McKenney declared:

> Plagues more fatal than those which were scattered from the box of Pandora, were to be let loose among them; and foremost in the train, the most unrelenting and most murderous, was the "fire-water," so called by the natives, but which is known among us by the scarcely

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23 Though as Herman Viola notes, itemized lists of expenditures McKenney submitted suggest that McKenney himself apparently countenanced the use of liquor in many of the nearly 40 treaty negotiations conducted during his tenure at the Indian Office.

24 Though he opposed the forced migration of the Cherokees, Creeks, and other southern Indians who actively resisted the federal policy.
less consuming names of brandy, rum, and whiskey. And as king among these plagues, avarice that monster of inordinate appetite, was destined to mount the throne, and by the aid of superior skill, and the tempting influence of liquid fire, the blight and mildew were made to fall upon the race of the red man; and this it is, in connexion with the anomalous relations which they have always borne, and yet bear, with us, which we now see, and which had for over two hundred years been so perishing to the happiness, the hopes, and the lives of the Indians. (II: 48-49)

In that part of his Memoirs which chronicles his trips along the western frontier, McKenney notes several instances he had witnessed of drinking by Native Americans, particularly emphasizing the devastation caused by liquor traders. For instance, McKenney records an incident of a Native American man who stabbed his own mother-in-law several times when the elderly lady tried to stop him from trading goods received as annuity payment from the federal government to a whiskey trader who profited by following after the payments of such annuities (I: 88). Events like these led McKenney to conclude, although somewhat more reluctantly than Schoolcraft, that it was necessary first to segregate Native Americans from whites, to isolate Native Americans from white vices, in order to "civilize" them.

McKenney also suggests that some Native Americans have turned to drinking as a result of whites' rejections of their attempts at assimilation. This theme is indicated most strongly in McKenney's account of the career of his Choctaw ward, James Lawrence McDonald. When McKenney was chief of the Office of Indian Affairs, his friend Philip Thomas recommended McDonald, then a fourteen years old, into his care. McKenney willingly accepted the youth into his family, sending him to the same school he sent his own son, who was about the same age. When McDonald approached the age of majority, McKenney recommended that he be sent to study law with an Ohio judge. Well-liked, thought to be articulate and intelligent, the young man was reported to have excelled in his studies. Equipped by his
schooling in law, he played an instrumental role when his tribe came to negotiate a treaty with the U.S. government.

Yet the young man was bothered by a stigma he felt among the Euramericans. "The spectre, I found, yet haunted him. A conflict between his Indian caste and his hope of overcoming it, and rising above its effects upon his prospects, shook him from his balance, and he fell before the strife, into habits of intemperance—the too usual resort of the unwary to drown sorrow, and clear away from the present the clouds of a dreaded destiny" (II: 116). The young Choctaw McDonald addressed his benefactor McKenney on his cause for despair, "I have lost that sweet home, and its endearments; the veil that was so kindly placed between me and my Indian caste, has since been torn away. I have been made to see since, that I cannot, whilst such anomalous relations exist as do exist, between the red and the white race, be other than a degraded outcast" (II: 116-17). McKenney reports that not long after this young man opened a law office in Jackson, Mississippi, he proposed to a white lady and when turned down, the thought of his degradation overpowering him, he jumped off a cliff into the river, killing himself (II: 118-19).

Neither Schoolcraft nor McKenney contradict the popular assumption that Native Americans have a harmful propensity to drink, an assumption illustrated in much American literature of the day. Yet while both Schoolcraft and McKenney sought to persuade Native Americans to abandon their "savage" ways and embrace Euramerican civilization, both perceiving drinking among Native Americans as a major barrier to this necessary cultural development, both were also greatly encouraged by their confident beliefs that Native Americans could be civilized. They interpreted the prevalence of drinking among Native Americans as a sign of white civilization "putting its worst foot forward." Drinking was a great obstacle to the desirable cultural assimilation, yet it told more of the "degenerate nature" of
those whites who sought quick profits in the Indian liquor trade than of the Native Americans themselves.

Conclusion

There are some notable similarities between the ways in which the frontier romance writers and the ethnographers discussed in this chapter—exemplars of the epic and ethnographic modes in the first half of the nineteenth century—portray Native Americans. In general, both the frontier romancers and the ethnographers believe that as a "race," Native Americans have an "abnormal" propensity to drink excessively. And, despite significant variations and exceptions (particularly within frontier romances), both the novelists and the ethnographers share the assumption that drinking essentially serves to incapacitate Native Americans, even to the point of contributing to the decline of native populations.

For the frontier romances, this last assumption marks a significant break with many of their epic antecedents—the early American war and captivity narratives—which tended to portray the drinking Indian as a more violent and therefore more dangerous threat to white protagonists. By the early nineteenth century, the pervasive myth of the Vanishing American seemed to be in some way acknowledged by virtually every white American who wrote about Native Americans. This difference between the colonial and early nineteenth-century epic works also undoubtedly reflects differences in the relative military strength of Euramericans and Native Americans in the respective periods. While there was significant fighting between whites and Native Americans in the early nineteenth century—including the War of 1812, Black Hawk's War, the Seminole War—the nineteenth-century citizens of the new republic did not consider their "successful existence" on the continent to be jeopardized by Native Americans. The differences between
the colonial and early nineteenth-century epic portrayals of Native American drinking may also suggest the greater incidence of Native American drinking in the early nineteenth century (though, as noted in Chapter One, the history of the prevalence of drinking among Native Americans is difficult to determine). At the very least, however, the extent of the similarities between the early nineteenth-century epic and ethnographic portrayals of Native American drinking behavior suggest to what degree the stereotype of the incapacitated "drunken Indian" had become a commonplace within the Euramerican imagination.

Yet there are also significant differences in the portrayals of Native American drinking behavior between the frontier romance and the ethnographic works discussed in this chapter, differences that are in part a consequence of the different modes in which the authors wrote. Like the colonial war and captivity narrative, the frontier romance almost invariably cast the Indian in the role of antagonist. To be sure, Cooper and other romance writers often gave their white male protagonists a friendly Indian sidekick, a Chingachgook or an Uncas. Yet Native American culture was not the primary focus. The writers of the frontier romance generally drew upon the assumption that civilization was destroying the savage, and that liquor played a role in this destruction. Yet in the frontier romance, Indian drinking is used either as a device to bring about the defeat of an Indian antagonist, a weakness that may be justly exploited (as in Bird's *Nick of the Woods*), or as proof that white civilization only degrades and never improves the Indian (as in Cooper's *The Pioneers* and *Wyandotte*). Ultimately, depictions of Indian drinking in the frontier romance serve as dramatic testimony of the fundamental incompatibility of "savage" and "civilized."

The antebellum ethnographers were freed from the literary conventions that had cast Native Americans as antagonists; indeed, they frequently objected that
white stereotypes of "savage Indians" adversely affected the behavior of whites
toward actual Native Americans. McKenney complains of obstacles which hinder
white projects of "benevolence":

> Which of us has not listened with sensations of horror to the nursery stories that are told of the Indian and his cruelties...[we have been] hushed, that we might hear the last sigh of the expiring infant—and then we have had disclosed to us the scene of carnage; and the Indian striding amidst the bodies of the slain; or beheld him seated over some favorite victim, with his fingers dripping with blood, and his face disclosing a ferocious smile, as he enjoyed the sight of the quivering limbs, and the agonies of the dying! (I: 233).

The ethnographers saw drinking as a a serious problem among Native
American peoples; Schoolcraft and McKenney even suggested that the destructive
influence of "firewater" was a humane argument for Indian Removal. Yet their
emphasis is finally not so much upon what the perceived Native American
"drinking problem" reveals about "Indian nature" but rather upon what it reveals
about Euramerican policy. Heckewelder, Schoolcraft, and McKenney certainly
depicted drinking as a barrier to Native American assimilation into white culture—
their ultimate goal—but it was a barrier which they believed was surmountable,
contingent upon the actions of white traders and government officials. Whereas
the frontier romance writers tended to portray the propensity to drink
"inordinately" as an ingrained, salient characteristic of Indians, the ethnographers
treated drinking as a more malleable trait, one which could be altered, not a "fatal
flaw" signalling Native Americans' inevitable decline.
Chapter IV

Literary Travel Narratives, Frontier Dime Novels, and Lewis Henry Morgan

By the 1830s, as Native American tribes throughout the eastern portion of the United States had been either circumscribed within isolated areas in the east or involuntarily escorted west to the recently established "Indian Territory," federal officials generally believed they had found a satisfactory solution to their "Indian problem." The policy of concentrating "troublesome Indians" in an area west of the territory settled by whites, along with the comprehensive Trade and Intercourse Act of 1832, was thought to be sufficient to insure peaceable—i.e., limited and structured—interaction between Euramericans and Native Americans. The argument went thus: away from the "pernicious influences" of the "baser segments" of white society, Native Americans would gradually learn the ways of civilization, taught by upstanding (and temperate) whites to become self-sufficient farmers, disciples of the American work ethic.

Yet if accounts by contemporary observers are to be credited, this ideal of a dry Indian Territory was never truly fulfilled. Stein suggests that white travellers to the Territory frequently commented upon the "intemperance" of the Native Americans they encountered. For example, "Charles Dickens noted in 1842 that while the government had wisely forbidden the sale of liquor on Indian lands, the prohibition was 'quite ineffectacious, for the Indians never fail to procure liquor of a worse kind, at a dearer price, from traveling peddlers' " (Stein 115). Indeed, as
Edwin Bearss documents, Native Americans were able to purchase liquor from white traders even as they were being ushered from their eastern homes to the purportedly "uncontaminated" Indian Territory. The problem of policing the frontier for liquor traders, difficult enough before Removal, was in many ways compounded as many Native Americans were driven further from the centers of Euramerican society.

Events in the 1840s soon proved how short-sighted was the federal government's belief that the establishment of an Indian Territory would effectually eliminate land disputes between whites and Native Americans. Many white easterners, frustrated by the economic crises of the late 1830s, migrated westward, lured by the prospect of vast expanses of "unoccupied" arable land. John Fremont's Report (1845), describing Fremont's exploring expeditions in the Rocky Mountains and along the Oregon Trail, struck the imagination of many readers, becoming a bestseller of the day. The population of Oregon alone grew from only 100 whites in 1840 to an 1846 total of 4000. California, not yet officially U. S. territory, also experienced a great influx of Euramerican immigrants from the east, a trend which accelerated considerably after the discovery of gold in the late 1840s.

Native Americans of the great plains, whose previous relations with Euramericans had generally been limited to traders and trappers, were substantially affected by this westward migration. As more and more eastern whites began their treks along the Oregon and California trails, the federal government increased the numbers of soldiers assigned to western forts, claiming that white pioneers needed protection from "bewildered" Plains Indians. The extension of railroad networks into the American west throughout the 1850s not only greatly facilitated westward travel, but, along with such innovations in agricultural technology as McCormick's mechanical reaper, made Euramerican
settlement and farming on the prairie and plains more feasible and profitable. As increasing numbers of Euramericans settled on western lands, it became increasingly clear to the federal government that Removal had been a more temporary solution to the "Indian problem" than first imagined. "Settlers were moving onto tribal lands faster than tribes could be removed. By the late 1840s and early 1850s it was apparent that the government's removal policy and the idea of a permanent Indian frontier was bankrupt" (Bieder 184).

The reservation system soon succeeded. S. L. Tyler writes that beginning in California, "the removal of Indians from inhabited areas and their concentration in an 'Indian Country' gradually gave way to their placement on reserved 'islands' of land usually within the larger areas they once possessed" (73). In fact, in 1854 the federal government acceded to demands that the Indian Territory be opened for railroad construction; less than 25 years after its establishment as a permanent reserve for Native Americans who had been displaced from eastern portions of the United States, the Indian Territory was cut in half, with the northern part opened for Euramerican settlement as the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. Not surprisingly, this process of carving up western lands into separate sections for Euramericans and Native Americans often occasioned disputes over boundaries, compounded by ambiguities about just what territory was legally considered "Indian country" and thus subject to the Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts.

Michael Heaston offers a particularly insightful case study of how the manner of Anglo migration to New Mexico at mid-century complicated attempts by the federal government to enforce its "Indian prohibition." Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), New Mexico was ceded to the United States; in 1851 Congress extended the provisions of the 1834 Trade and Intercourse Act to this newly acquired territory. Territorial governor James Calhoun, responsible for
enforcing the prohibition of the Indian liquor trade, ordered government officers John Jones and James H. Carleton to put the territory's "whiskey merchants" out of business. Yet these agents encountered unexpected difficulties. After Carleton had seized "contraband," several traders sued him for what they claimed was illegal arrest of their property. A local jury found Carleton guilty and fined him five hundred dollars. Frustrated by this turn of events, Superintendent of Indian Affairs David Meriwether wrote to Commissioner George Manypenny of the problems in enforcing the Trade and Intercourse Act in the west, pointing out that "the intercourse laws were only confined to the offenses committed within Indian Territory, while at the same time the district court of New Mexico took the position that there was no Indian Territory in the Territory of New Mexico" (Heaston 477). Heaston remarks, "Evidence indicates that the initial actions taken by Calhoun and others were not deterring either the traders or distillers of whiskey" (475).

Meriwether believed that once definite reservations could be legally established, the "Indian prohibition" could be effectively enforced. Consequently, he asked for authorization to negotiate treaties with the Native American tribes in New Mexico. Within several years, he received such authorization: in July 1854, when Congress finally established the Office of Surveyor General for the Territory of New Mexico, empowered to grant land to white male citizens of the Territory. Meriwether began negotiating land settlements with New Mexican tribes, a process he had concluded by 1855. Yet, pressured by Euramerican settlers and land speculators who wanted much of the land they argued that Meriwether had "given away," the Senate refused to ratify Meriwether's treaties, further deferring the Native American's land claims and the Indian Superintendent's capabilities of

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1 In several respects this episode is reminiscent of the successful attempts by the local authorities in the old northwest to thwart federal agents' efforts to prosecute similar offences committed by Astor's American Fur Company.
enforcing the Trade and Intercourse laws in New Mexico territory. As Native American claims to the land were held in limbo, more and more land was, legally and illegally, claimed by Euramericans, leaving less and less available for reservations. "The result of encroachments and the traffic in arms and liquor finally led to war" (Heaston 483), a situation which existed in New Mexico until after the Civil War, when the federal government concentrated its efforts to bring "peace" to the west.

By the 1860s it was apparent to many that the 1832 Trade and Intercourse Act, established to suit the conditions of the newly-established Indian Territory and the small reservations in the east, required significant revision in order adequately to address the situations of Native Americans of the west. The Trade and Intercourse Act was based on the facility of distinguishing a determinate "Indian Territory" and, as Heaston illustrates, with burgeoning Euramerican westward migration, much western land was treated, in practice if not in principle, as "loose fish." Consequently, "Congress, by Act of February 13, 1862, made it a crime punishable by fine and imprisonment to sell liquors to Indians under the care of a superintendent or an agent, whether on or off the reservation" (W. Johnson 227), eliminating the troublesome geographical factor.

Yet agents and travellers continued to report that drinking seemed to remain a major problem among many Native American tribes. The celebrated Peace Commission of 1867, established to analyze and propose resolutions for the continuing hostility between many Native Americans and Euramericans throughout the western plains, declared that Native American populations were decreasing at an alarming rate. The Commission listed the Indians' "inveterate intemperance" as a significant factor in their perceived decline (S. L. Tyler 76), suggesting the inefficacy of the "Indian prohibition." Uncontrolled Euramerican
migration was cited as the major cause of friction between whites and Native Americans; the Peace Commission argued that the Office of Indian Affairs should better control the intercourse between Euramericans and Native Americans on the reservations, recommending that since many superintendents and agents were believed to be corrupt or incompetent (or both), all should be replaced.

By the 1870s, the federal government had established a "dual policy" regarding Native Americans of the western plains. Those on reservations were considered to be under the management of the Office of Indian Affairs, within the Department of the Interior since the Department's inception in 1849. Those outside of their reservations without permission of their superintendent were considered as "trespassers" and were thus subject to chastisement from the Army. The resistance of many Native American tribes to being penned up on reservations assigned to them by the federal government and the Army's determination to "protect" the lands claimed for Euramerican settlement resulted in repeated series of skirmishes, together commonly known as the Plains Indians Wars. Graphic accounts of these "wars" filled newspapers of the day, undoubtedly influencing many Euramericans' conceptions of "Indian nature."

The Euramerican debate about how best to deal with Native Americans continued throughout the 1870s and 1880s. In 1871, the federal government discontinued its practice of treaty-making, reasoning that such a practice only reinforced communalist tribal structures that were considered to be primitivistic, distinctly "un-American"; thereafter, the government treated all Native Americans both in fact and in principle as wards of the state. Yet there was growing disagreement among many Euramerican officials about the most effective means of

2 The Peace Commission strongly opposed the War Department's bid to control all Indian affairs.
"Americanizing" the Native American. All agreed, publicly at least, that the federal government should support efforts to assimilate Native Americans into Euramerican culture, or at the very least "teach" them to appreciate capitalistic "American" values such as individual ownership of property. Disagreements revolved around how such a goal was to be accomplished. Francis Walker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the early 1870s, argued that such assimilation must necessarily be gradual, in many ways echoing the arguments of many advocates for Removal forty years earlier. A strong opponent of the federal decision to abandon treaty-making, Walker held that Native Americans should be allowed to maintain their own tribal structures on their reservations since, he believed, in many cases only their own "traditional values" could prevent individuals from becoming "vagabonds." In The Indian Question, Walker wrote:

The very men who bear themselves most loftily, according to the native standards of virtue, are quite as likely to fall, under exposure to white contact, as are the weakest of the tribe. Their familiar attractions are all broken, their immemorial traditions rudely dispelled, their natural leadership destroyed, the members of a wild tribe, strong and weak together, become the easy prey of the rascally influences of civilized society. (139)

In his 1874 public account of the conditions of many Native American tribes, Walker notes how liquor has affected the tribes. For example, Walker lamented what he considered the failure of many Oneidas to "keep pace with the progress of the tribe . . . principally from that fatal curse of the Indian, the passion for intoxicating liquor, which is especially developed among those members of the tribe who are engaged in lumbering" (163). Walker complained of the Quapaws within the southern Indian Territory: "Their proximity to the border towns of Kansas, and the facilities thereby afforded for obtaining whiskey, have tended to retard their progress" (199). To Walker, the lesson was clear: direct sustained contact with Euramerican society led to degradation for Native Americans. Their
only hope was to be allowed to continue to live on their reservations under whatever social structure they wished.

Yet as the debate progressed, Walker and others who believed as he did began more and more to be minority voices. Others argued that Native American tribes should be completely disbanded and that reservation land should be divided among individual Native Americans, with the excess, of course, available for use by whites. As one means to this end, in 1875 individual Native Americans were allowed to claim land under the Homestead Act with the provision that they abandon their tribal alliance. There was a strong movement in Congress for the allotment in severalty of all Native American lands, for the complete apportionment of all reservations. Ohio's Senator Pendleton declared in 1881:

> in order that [Native Americans] may change their modes of life, we must change our policy; we must give them, and 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. (qtd. in S. L. Tyler 99)

The growing popularity of this kind of argument helped bring about in 1877 the General Allotment or Dawes Act, which radically altered the reservation system.

**Literary Travel Narratives**

The growth in Euramerican migration westward prompted a demand for "travel accounts, journals of western exploration, or anything that might provide information, however impressionistic, about the climate, terrain, pasture and water of the Overland Trails" (Fender 38). As more and more attention was concentrated westward, eastern critics who continued to call for an American "national literature" increasingly encouraged Euramerican writers to turn to western settings and themes. "As seen from the East, the unsettled West was a natural backdrop on which the still unfulfilled hopes of American society could be
projected" (Fender 4). Scholars have suggested that it was just this attitude that led famed American author Washington Irving to switch his focus from "storied and poetical" European subjects such as those he had explored in The Sketch Book, Bracebridge Hall, and The Alhambra, to the newly "opened" American west. When Irving returned to the United States in 1832 after 17 years abroad, "He felt it was his 'patriotic duty' to write on an American subject, an American 'idea,' and the West was clearly a promising topic" (Hough 27).

Not all the writers who published literary travel narratives about their respective "tours on the prairies" (or in Thoreau's case "tours to the north") unequivocally shared their country's enthusiasm for the promises of "manifest destiny," the epic vision which celebrated the "taming" of the continent. Yet Irving, Margaret Fuller, Francis Parkman, and Henry David Thoreau all did share a fascination with the process by which Euramerican civilization claimed more and more of the western frontier. In some of their most noted works, these authors inspected the "wilderness" in a perceived state of transition. Not surprisingly, each shared an interest in how civilization seemed to have affected the native inhabitants of the (previously) "untamed" land, and each records telling observations concerning alcohol and Native Americans.

While these writers were freed from the narrative conventions of the frontier romance, whose portrayals of Native Americans were, as we saw in Chapter 3, in certain ways overdetermined, they were not necessarily free from all "generic constraints." Robert Edson Lee suggests that many Euramerican writers "who traveled into a new country, who responded in some way to the particular quality of the West... were unable, for a variety of reasons, to transform the first-hand experience of history into a literature of their own" (10). Fender describes this phenomenon, "the more plotless the landscape, the more plotted the writing." (8).
Just as descriptions of the landscape of the prairies and plains were often cast "in terms of the sublime or picturesque" (7), so too were descriptions of Native Americans often borrowed from established tropes from the "noble" or "ignoble savage" traditions. While Irving, Fuller, and Thoreau all expressed sympathy for the Indian (Parkman was more ambivalent), and while all purportedly attempted to describe Native Americans of the west as they truly lived, in "their native form," they seldom developed innovative perspectives from which to view their subjects. For the most part, images of Native Americans in their literary travel narratives, including images of drinking, reinforced existing stereotypes of "the red man."

**Washington Irving**

Although Washington Irving is perhaps best known today as the author of "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleep Hollow"—European folktales reshaped into "instant" American lore—the writer whose popularity "rivaled ... and outlasted" Cooper (Hart 82) also wrote several books which included extensive descriptions of and commentary about Native Americans. Littlefield points out that the bulk of Irving's "Indian works" consistently laments the destruction of Native Americans' cultural traditions which necessarily resulted from the loss of their lands (152), an "enlightened" view for his time. Yet many other aspects of Irving's portrayal of Native Americans are not so consistent. For ultimately Irving was concerned more with helping to create and define a national literature than he was with informing his contemporaries about the condition of Native Americans of his day, and this emphasis is reflected in his strikingly unreflective depictions of Native American drinking behavior.

Some of Irving's earliest published works concerning Native Americans suggest that they had been much maligned in American literature. Both "Traits of
Indian Character” and “Philip of Pokanoket,” which first appeared in 1814 in the
Analectic Magazine
\(^3\) attempt to counter the prevailing image of the Indian Irving
believed had been stamped upon the Euramerican imagination by the “bigoted and
interested writers” (“Traits” 225) of Indian war and captivity narratives. From a
“disinterested examination” of these early accounts, Irving claims that the
contemporary reader can perceive much to admire about the Indian: “Facts are
occasionally to be met with in the rude annals of the eastern provinces, which,
though recorded with the coloring of prejudice and bigotry, yet speak for
themselves, and will be dwelt on with applause and sympathy when prejudice shall
have passed away” (“Traits” 231). In the sketch “Philip of Pokanoket,” Irving refers
disparagingly to Increase Mather’s depictions of Native Americans, and quotes from
Hubbard’s Narrative, all in an effort to establish the “truly noble nature” of Philip
from “data” recorded by those who claimed the Wampanoag chief was an agent of
evil.

Irving also objected to those whom he thought falsely generalized from their
contact with Native Americans living along the fringes of Euramerican settlements,
whom Irving believes are “mere wrecks and remnants of once powerful tribes who
have . . . sunk into precarious and vagabond existence . . . They become drunken,
indolent, feeble, thievish, and pusillanimous” (“Traits” 226). Irving apparently
subscribed fully to the myth of the Vanishing American: “[Indians] will vanish like
a vapor in forgetfulness, and ‘the places that now know them will know them no
more forever.’ Or if, perchance, some dubious memorial of them should survive, it
may be in the romantic dreams of the poet, to people in imagination his glades and
groves, like the fauns and satyrs and sylvan deities of antiquity” (“Traits” 233).

\(^3\) Both essays were republished in a slightly revised form in 1819 in The
Sketch Book.
Perhaps the most consistent feature of Irving's perspective of Native Americans is that they are ideal "material" for the Euramerican author in search of an American subject.

While Irving's most developed portrayals of Native Americans are found in his later "frontier works"—A Tour on the Prairies, Astoria, and The Adventures of Captain Bonneville—his A History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker suggests a rather interesting perspective towards Native American-white relations, one which in a sense anticipates his later works. Like the writers of the frontier romance, in the History Irving turned to the past, dramatizing contact between white and Native American cultures. Yet Irving's particular technique of chronicling the seventeenth-century Dutch colonization of New Netherlands casts his Indians in a rather peculiar light. Irving's (or rather his narrator Knickerbocker's) sense of what constitutes his true subject seems to change so dramatically throughout the book that it is debatable just how he wished his readers to view the Native Americans of Hudson Bay. As Knickerbocker vacillates between mock-heroic, mock-pedantic, farce, and political satire, the Dutch colonists are alternately objects of praise and satire, first caricatured as land-hungry imperialists and then as lazy, good-natured, harmless souls, ancestors of the "junto" before Nicholas Vedder's inn in "Rip Van Winkle." Likewise Indians are sometimes victims of Dutch imperialism and at other times benefactors of Dutch goodwill. Throughout the History, Irving executes a series of satiric jabs, a string of "one-liners" that are themselves often effective satire, but which do not necessarily add up to a consistent portrait of Native American-white relations.

Indians are first referred to in Book I, in which Knickerbocker spoofs scholarly reasoning and pedantry in much the same way Swift does throughout A Tale of a Tub. In Chapters IV and V, Knickerbocker examines the claims by which
Euramericans have deemed themselves rightful owners of New World lands. As he satirizes different Euramerican justifications such as "right by discovery" and "right by cultivation," Irving’s narrator seems completely sympathetic to Native Americans’ complaints that land has been wrongfully taken from them. In this vein, Knickerbocker suggests how liquor contributed to the dispossession of Native Americans:

All the world knows the lamentable state in which these poor savages were found. Not only deficient in the comforts of life, but what is still worse, most piteously and unfortunately blind to the miseries of their situation. But no sooner did the benevolent inhabitants of Europe behold their sad condition than they immediately went to work to ameliorate and improve it. They introduced among them rum, gin, brandy, and the other comforts of life—and it is astonishing to read how soon the poor savages learned to estimate these blessings... they acquired a thousand wants, of which they had before been ignorant. (44-45)

As Knickerbocker recounts in the second book of the History the early contact between Dutch colonists and Native Americans, he maintains his satiric tone, criticizing Dutch traders for using liquor to cheat Indians: "Our benevolent forefathers endeavored as much as possible to meliorate [the Indians’] situation, by giving them gin, rum, and glass beads, in exchange for their peltries; for it seems the kind-hearted Dutchmen had conceived a great friendship for their savage neighbors, on account of their being... little skilled in the art of making a bargain" (87). Knickerbocker even plays upon the stereotype of the Indian as "devilish threat" to the white community, parodying the perspective of the captivity narrative:

Now and then a crew of these half-human sons of the forest would make their appearance in the streets of New Amsterdam... inflamed with liquor, swaggering and whooping and yelling about the town like so many fiends, to the great dismay of all the good wives, who would hurry their children into the house, fasten the door and throw water on the enemy from the garret windows. (87-88)
However, as Knickerbocker proceeds to the third book of the History, chronicling the conflicts between New Netherlands and New Sweden and between the Dutch and the English colonies to the north and south, the concerns of the Indians nearly disappear. This is especially evident as Knickerbocker begins Book III, which covers the "reign" of Governor Wouter Van Twiller. Whereas the Dutch settlement had been portrayed in Book II as being built up by grubbing traders who debauch Indians for their own gain, in Book III, New Netherlands is characterized as a sleepy, lazy, small, unambitious and certainly "unimperialistic" colony, victimized by the aggressive Yankees. Once the Dutch are portrayed as persecuted by the belligerent English the theme of Euramerican victimization of Indians all but vanishes; the immediate narrative context preempts any consistent perspective towards Native Americans.

As suggested, Irving's best known "Indian works" describe life beyond the contemporary frontier. After his return to the United States in 1832 from a 17 year absence, Irving embarked on a trip west of the Mississippi, through what is now Arkansas and Oklahoma, accompanying newly-appointed member of the Stokes Commission Henry Ellsworth on his mission to insure peaceful relations between the recently removed Native Americans and those indigenous to the area. Irving hoped to get a glimpse of the Pawnee on their hunting grounds. He wrote his brother, "I should have an opportunity of seeing the remnants of those great Indian tribes which are now about to disappear as independent nations, or to be amalgamated under some new form of government" (qtd. in Fender 20). Though he was disappointed in his goal to see a Pawnee, Irving did have an opportunity to observe native Osages and Creeks who had recently been removed to the area.

A few years after this trip, Irving was persuaded to rework the journal he had kept into a book. *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835) was one of Irving's most warmly
received works: contemporary reviews "were most concerned with the book as an 
expression of America" (Dula 70). Martha Dula quotes one reviewer for the North 
American Review who "thanked Irving for turning these poor barbarous steppes 
into a classical land . . . [and] breathing life and fire into a circle of imagery, which
was not known before to exist, for the purposes of the imagination" (70). Modern 
critics for the most part have not shared this appreciation. Robert Thacker asserts 
that "Literary conventions colored everything Irving saw on the prairie . . . even 
before Irving embarked on his tour he had already adapted the prairie to his 
preconceptions" (70). Lee claims that Irving attempted to compensate for "the 
absence of castles in America . . . in his published Tour by inserting references to 
Europe: Telemachus, Nestor, Gil Blas, Adonis, Napoleon, the hero of La Manche, 
Lycurgus, Draco, Robin Hood, Claude Lorraine, Scaramouch, Pantaloon, nomads, 
gypsies, knights-errant, banditti, and Moorish castles" (66-67).

Fender makes a similar charge concerning Irving's depiction of Indians: "To 
Irving the Indians embodied a purity of type" (22). As in his earlier "Indian 
sketches," in A Tour, Irving contrasts his perception of Native Americans with what 
he views as the popular literary image:

> the Indians that I have had an opportunity of seeing in real life are 
> quite different from those described in poetry. They are by no 
> means the stoics that they are represented; taciturn, unbending, 
> without a tear or smile. . . . As far as I can judge, the Indian of poetical 
> fiction is like the shepherd of pastoral romance, a mere 
> personification of imaginary attributes. (43-44)

Unlike his earlier writings, in ATour Irving writes from first-hand 
observation, not required to sift the "true Indian" from the "bigoted" accounts of 
the early Euramerican writers about whom he had complained so strongly. Yet 
Irving develops no innovative perspectives, instead falling back on stereotypical 
descriptions of the "noble red man." For instance, throughout ATour Irving 
compares the Osage he encounters to ancient statuary: "They had fine Roman
countenances, and broad deep chests; and, as they generally wore their blankets wrapped round their loins, as to leave the bust and arms bare, they looked like so many noble bronze figures" (21-22). Indeed, Irving celebrates "the glorious independence of man in a savage state . . . in the absence of artificial wants, possessed [of] the great secret of personal freedom" (34). The "noble savage" is idealized. "savagism" here extolled over the constraints associated with "civilization."

Fender writes that "Irving's Tour had sold so well in Europe and America that he must have felt there was still a bit more to exploit of the western theme" (41). Continuing with his newly-found interest in American themes, in his next two works Irving drew from the notes of others to chronicle the fur trade of the far west in the early nineteenth century. Astoria (1836), a series of highly anecdotal intertwined narratives concerning John Jacob Astor's ill-fated attempt to extend his fur-trading empire to the Pacific Northwest, and The Adventures of Captain Bonneville (1837), the story of the U.S. army officer who took a leave to explore the Rocky Mountain area and dabble in the fur trade, were both written by Irving extracting from manuscripts and interviews of those men involved in the various western expeditions. Peter Antelyes writes that in Astoria, "Irving is attempting to commemorate the 'spirit of enterprize' itself as it is embodied in Astor and the bravest and most loyal of his workers" (159). Hugh Egan claims, though, that despite Irving's efforts to shape a coherent epic celebration of the spread of civilization and commerce to the Pacific northwest. Astoria is finally a "crazy quilt of misadventures" (259): "the view of history he presents in Astoria is entropic; structures fall apart from within" (260).

Much the same might be said about Irving's attempts to provide a detailed, consistent portrait of Native Americans of the far west. Both Astoria and Bonneville
do catalog in some detail the different traits of individual Native American tribes in the western plains and the Pacific northwest. Yet Irving apparently was strongly influenced by his sources in making assessments of different tribes. For example, whereas in Astoria the Nez Perce are depicted as hostile thieves, the "enemy," in Bonneville they are presented as a mild, gentle group, "friends of the white man."

Despite Irving's acknowledgment of the differences between individual tribes, he seems to subscribe to the popular assumptions that Native Americans are generally addicted to alcohol and that liquor unleashes the Indian's "savage nature." Irving writes of the "half breed" Pierre Dorion who served as a guide for an overland party sent west to Astoria: "The domestic affairs of old Dorion were conducted on the true Indian plan. Father and sons would occasionally get drunk together, and then the cabin was a scene of ruffian brawl and fighting" (Astoria 98; emphasis added). As for Pierre, "He had proven himself faithful and serviceable while sober, but the love of liquor in which he had been nurtured and brought up, would occasionally break out, and with it the savage side of his character" (98).

Irving does record that some Native Americans have decidedly rejected liquor. In Astoria, Irving praises the Chinooks for their abstinence from ardent spirits and the abhorrence and disgust with which they regarded a drunkard. On one occasion a son of Comcomly [a Chinook chief] had been induced to drink freely at the factory, and went home in a state of intoxication, playing all kinds of mad pranks, until he sank into a stupor, in which he remained for two days. The old chieftain repaired to his friend M'Dougall [one of Astor's leaders at Astoria] with indignation flaming in his countenance and bitterly reproached him for having permitted his son to degrade himself into a beast and to render himself an object of scorn and laughter to his slaves. (244)

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4 Irving theorizes that many of these observed differences are due to the particularities of a certain tribe's habitat, echoing the stadialist model of cultural development.
In spite of his description here of the Chinooks' abstinence and in spite of the fact that he reports few actual instances of drinking by Native Americans throughout Tour, Astoria, and Bonneville, Irving insinuates that as a "race" Native Americans have a general tendency to drunkenness. For all his purported disdain of the "poetical" and "savage Indian" he thought was prevalent in earlier and contemporary American literature, and for all his professions of providing in his western books truthful accounts of Native Americans unlike those found elsewhere, many of Irving's descriptions seem to draw upon established tropes involving alcohol and Native Americans. For example, Irving writes of the behavior of several Native American guides who had accompanied Stuart, one of Astor's top men, on his journey east from Astoria:

These half civilized Indians retained some of their good and many of the evil qualities of their original stock. They were first rate hunters and dextrous in the management of their canoe. They could undergo great privations and were admirable for the service of the rivers, lakes and forests provided they could be kept sober and in proper subordination; but once inflamed with liquor, to which they were madly addicted, all the dormant passions inherent in their nature were prone to break forth, and to hurry them into the most vindictive and bloody acts of violence. (Astoria 82-83)

Irving here suggests to what degree the belief that Native Americans were addicted to liquor and that drinking turned Native Americans into "dangerous, violent beasts" had become popular "truism"s. Irving generally avoided the traditional epic mode of characterizing Indians, which often cast them in the conventional role of killers of babies, abductors of women, and foes of white heroes, and thus he provided his readers with one of the most balanced and perhaps accurate depictions of Native Americans written by a popular Euramerican author in the first half of the nineteenth century. Yet ultimately Irving was most concerned with entertaining his Euramerican audience and consequently did not comment upon or explore in much depth the social and political implications of his
portraits of Native Americans. Nor was he apparently much concerned about how
the contradictory perspectives he provided of drinking among Native Americans—
from the cheated, debauched Indians of Manhattan; to the teetotalling Chinooks; to
the violent, volatile Pierre Dorion—seemed to correspond with sweeping
pronouncements concerning "the drunken Indian." While he sharply criticized
those whom he claimed perpetuated conventional, unchallenged images of Native
Americans, Irving himself seems to have accepted and endorsed several
conventional assumptions concerning alcohol and Native Americans.

**Margaret Fuller**

On May 25, 1843, Margaret Fuller, Sarah Freeman Clarke and Sarah's brother
James left Boston for Buffalo, beginning a nearly four month tour by train, boat,
and wagon through the old northwest—primarily Illinois and Wisconsin—"a middle
west undergoing rapid expansion and even more rapid change" (Kolodny 112). The
trip included extended stays in Chicago and Milwaukee and wagon journeys
throughout the surrounding countryside, recently settled by immigrants from not
only the eastern United States but also throughout western Europe. For several
years prior to her trip, Fuller had expressed an interest in seeing the "west," and
when James Freeman Clarke decided to visit his brother William, who had
established a drug store in Chicago, Fuller enthusiastically agreed to accompany the
Clarkes. Before leaving the east, Fuller researched what she might expect to find in
the west, particularly concentrating on texts about Native Americans:
"Schoolcraft's Algic Researches, the works of M'Kenney, Murray and Adair, Carver
and Catlin . . . all were read and absorbed" (Stern xii-xiii).

Allen praises what she considers Fuller's far-seeing criticism of how
Euramericans treated Native Americans in the old northwest. "Very few others in
her time saw so clearly and condemned so fearlessly the crimes done to the Indians in the name of civilization" (117). Indeed, throughout Summer on the Lakes in 1843, her book chronicling her trip to the "frontier," Fuller remarks how Native Americans had been distressed as a result of Euramerican westward migration. Fuller particularly criticizes those writers whom she believed had helped perpetuate false images of Native Americans; she quotes the first Mrs. Schoolcraft, herself part Chippewa, "Why will people look only on one side? They either exalt the Red man into a Demigod or degrade him into a beast" (175). Although she felt informed by what she read, Fuller was in the main disappointed by what she considered major inadequacies in many of the "Indian books" she consulted for her trip and her subsequent travel narrative. Of such "inventions" as Cooper's Uncas, Fuller complains, "It is a white man's view of a savage hero, who would be far finer in his natural proportions" (32). Fuller criticizes Irving's popular western books, "with the exception of the Tour to the Prairies" (32), for their "stereotype, second-hand air. They lack the breath, the glow, the charming minute traits of living presence . . . [Irving's] Indians are academic figures only" (33). For Fuller, Irving's major problem in Astoria and Bonneville was his reliance on the testimony of others: "He would have made the best of pictures, if he could have used his own eyes for studies and sketches" (33). While Fuller praises attempts in Algic Researches to recreate "the mythological or hunting stories of the Indians," she objects to Schoolcraft's poetic paraphrases of Native American legends: "the phraseology in which they were expressed has been entirely set aside, and the flimsy graces, common to the style of annuals and souvenirs, substituted for the

5 Fuller gained admittance to the Harvard College Library after her return to Boston in the fall of 1843 in order to reread several sources on Native Americans before completing her own book, which is replete with extended quotes from these sources.
Spartan brevity and sinewy grasp of Indian speech" (31-32). Fuller charges many of the writers she consulted with overly distanc- ing themselves from their subjects, of seeing and writing about Native Americans through distorting lenses.

Yet despite her apparent resolution to describe Native Americans as she saw them, free of any motive to titillate her Euramerican audience, Fuller is characteristically ambivalent about her ultimate goal in portraying contemporary Native American life. As Blanchard notes, Fuller "saw the people she met . . . with a Transcendentalist's eye" (198). Fuller is concerned with the material facts of existence in the midwest, for both whites and Native Americans; she sharply deplores the manners in which both Native Americans and white frontier women have been forced to live, lives filled with drudgery and unrewarding toil, degradation and despair, "domestic captivity—even in Eden" (Kolodny 126). Yet the strategies she suggests to improve these lives transcend the merely material. For example, Fuller laments the lot of the white frontier wife: "The women can rarely find any aid in domestic labor. All its various and careful tasks must often be performed, sick or well, by the daughters, to whom a city education had neither imparted the strength nor the skill now demanded" (61). A partial solution to this problem, Fuller suggests, would be for women to demand domestic help from their husbands. Yet anticipating her famous statement in Woman in the Nineteenth Century—"If principles could be established, particulars would adjust themselves right" (33)—Fuller emphasizes that frontier women should change the way they conceive of life on the prairie, adjust their "habits of thought" to their new environment. "Everywhere the fatal spirit of imitation, of reference to European standards, penetrates, and threatens to blight whatever of original growth might adorn the soil" (62). Ultimately the source of women's "freedom" lies within themselves, as they come to participate sincerely and wholeheartedly in their
husbands' endeavors to create a new society of "true Americans." Though also portrayed as degraded, Native Americans are offered no similar hope for participating in what Fuller sees as the west's promising future. Or rather Fuller offers them a different kind of "transcendental" role.

One of Fuller's greatest charges against Euramericans is how they have used liquor to destroy Native American tribes. Writing of the Chippewas and Ottowas who arrived at Mackinaw Island in late August of 1843 to collect their annuities from federal agents, Fuller laments, "The men of these subjugated tribes, now accustomed to drunkenness and every way degraded, bear but a faint impress of the lost grandeur of the race" (182). For Fuller, the practice of selling liquor to Native Americans has virtually negated whatever measures whites may have attempted to improve their lives:

Our people and our government have sinned alike against the first-born of the soil... Worst of all, when they invoke the holy power only to mask their iniquity; when the felon trader, who, all the week, had been besotted and degrading the Indian with rum mixed with red pepper... kneels with him on Sunday before a common altar, to tell the rosary which recalls the thought of him crucified for love of suffering men, and to listen to sermons in praise of 'purity'!! (184)

Yet while she deplores how liquor has "besotted" Native Americans, dramatically altering their lives, Fuller emphasizes most how this degradation, for which she unequivocally faults whites, has reinforced Euramericans' prejudice against Native Americans, tarnishing the image of "the noble savage." Fuller objects to how whites have used "the drunken Indian" stereotype to distance themselves further from Native Americans: she writes of many white women's reactions. "All [Indians'] claims, all their sorrows quite forgot, in abhorrence of their dirt, their tawny skins, and the vices whites have taught them" (183). Fuller records the following incident recounted to her by her white guide while travelling the outskirts of Milwaukee:
This same gentleman told of his travelling through the wilderness with an Indian guide. He had with him a bottle of spirit which he meant to give him in small quantities, but the Indian, once excited, wanted the whole at once. I would not, said Mr. S., give it him, for I thought if he got really drunk, there was an end to his services as a guide. But he persisted, and at last tried to take it from me. I was not armed; he was, and twice as strong as I. But I knew an Indian could not resist the look of a white man, and I fixed my eye steadily on his. He bore it for a moment, then his eye fell; he let go the bottle. I took his gun and threw it a distance... From that moment he was quite obedient, even servile... This gentleman, though in other respects of most kindly and liberal heart, showed the aversion that the white man soon learns to feel for the Indian on whom he encroaches, the aversion of the injurer for him his has degraded.

Against what she considers such slander, such skewed Euramerican perceptions of Native Americans, Fuller attempts to create a more positive picture. She does not contradict the contemporary belief that Native Americans are as a "race" addicted to liquor. Indeed, though Fuller does not directly address this accepted belief about "Indian character," neither confirming nor refuting it outright, her repeated lamentations of the untold degradation liquor has brought to Native Americans, her concentrated focus upon white whiskey sellers as unconscionable purveyors of destruction, suggests that she shares the notion that Native Americans are constitutionally attracted to alcohol. Yet to counter the popular conception that Native American life is an unbroken scene of debauchery, Fuller describes, for example, the encampment at Mackinaw: "It was a scene of ideal loveliness, and these wild forms adorned it, as looking so at home in it. All seemed happy, and they were happy that day, for they had no firewater to madden them, as it was Sunday, and the shops were shut" (174). Declaring at one point that "the Indian cannot be looked at truly except by a poetic eye" (31), Fuller claims to discern a grandeur even among these Native Americans' now "degraded forms." Again she describes the Chippewa and Ottawa men at Mackinaw: "They are no longer strong, tall, or finely proportioned. Yet as you see them stealing along a
height, or striding boldly forward, they remind you of what was majestic in the red
man" (182). Later, Fuller muses, "I feel acquainted with the soul of this race: I read
its nobler thought in their defaced figures" (251).

Here is where Fuller's "Transcendentalist's eye" hinders her from finally
treating at any length or with any extended commitment what she considers the
ravages of liquor among Native Americans. Fuller certainly did not share the belief
that contemporary Euramerican policies promoted Native Americans' best interests:
Allen writes "Contrary to myth, [Fuller] discovered that the white man had no desire
to make the red owner of the land his fellow citizen there, but to intoxicate,
plunder, and then destroy and exile him" (120). Yet, as in her advice to white
frontier women to change their own attitudes, to embrace their roles in settling the
west, after noting how whites have reduced Native Americans to intolerable living
conditions, Fuller again takes the "poetic view." Whereas Fuller could exhort white
women to participate in their husbands' vision of "civilizing" the country, to
"poetize" their own perspectives of the west, she could offer Native Americans no
such consolation.

At best Native Americans could hope to contribute to the lore, "American lore,"
developing on the prairie. That is, only if whites were prepared to "rightly
perceive" the "noble Indian." Even if she didn't consider the "passing of the red
man" as an auspicious omen of white "manifest destiny," Fuller subscribed to the
myth of the Vanishing American. She admits at one point in Summer on the Lakes,
"I have no hope of liberalizing the missionary, of humanizing the sharks of trade,
of infusing the conscientious drop into the flinty bosom of policy, of saving the
Indian from immediate degeneration, and speedy death" (196). Indeed for all her
complaints of the overly romanticized Indian prevalent in contemporary American
literature, as Irving had suggested in "Traits of Indian Character," Fuller asserts
that the only justice the Indian can realistically expect is a "truer" romantic portrait: "ere they depart, I wish there might be some masterly attempt to reproduce, in art or literature, what is proper to them, a kind of beauty and grandeur, which few of every-day crowd have hearts to feel, yet which ought to leave in the world its monuments, to inspire the thought of genius through the ages" (196). As Allen observes, "Fuller did not argue with fate or history in Summer. She mainly wished to dispel the stereotypes of the Indians as bloodthirsty, ignorant savages" (119). Yet by means of countering popular negative stereotypes, Fuller suggested that only the "noble, pure Indian" be remembered, implying that even her own brief, but pointed glimpses of drinking by Native Americans should be downplayed in the "white imagination." Fuller's "realistic" portrayals of drinking among Native Americans in the old northwest are overshadowed by her desire to project for her readers the vision of a "transcendental" Native American.

Francis Parkman, Jr.

Like Fuller, fellow Bostonian Francis Parkman was intrigued by Native Americans. Parkman undertook a westward journey in the 1840s in large part to afford himself a first-hand glance at peoples he had read so much about, as he put it, to disprove what had been written about "the red man." Parkman chronicled his "tour on the plains" in a popular travel narrative, The Oregon Trial (1849), aimed at an eastern audience who, like himself, was fascinated with the newly "opened" west. While Parkman came to much different conclusions about the innate "nobility" of "Indian nature," like Fuller he ultimately downplayed the role of

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6 Quotations are from the 1849 rather than the revised 1872 edition of The Oregon Trail since, as David Levin writes, "students of American literature and of the Westward Movement will prefer to see how the young man wrote, and what he believed, at the time his book might have had an immediate influence" (30).
liquor in changing the lifestyles of Native Americans, instead reinforcing
stereotypical notions about "the drunken Indian."

Russel Nye notes that Parkman had devoted considerable time in his youth to
collecting information about Native Americans. "[Parkman] spent his summers
visiting Indian settlements, examining collections of artifacts, and observing tribal
remnants in New England and Canada. By the time of his graduation [from Harvard]
in 1846 he had seen most of the Indian tribes east of the Mississippi . . . He had also,
apparently, exhausted the library resources of Cambridge and Boston" ("Parkman"
152-53). Parkman was skeptical about many literary treatments of Native
Americans. In an 1852 North American Review essay on the "Author's Revised
Edition" of The Works of James Fenimore Cooper, Parkman praises Cooper generally
for "the power of breathing into his creations the breath of life" (148). Yet he
objects that Cooper's "Indian characters . . . are for the most part either
superficially or falsely drawn" (150), and especially that "they have been eagerly
copied by a legion of the smaller poets and novel writers . . . Cooper is responsible
for the fathering of those aboriginal heroes, lovers, and sages, who have long
formed a petty nuisance in our literature" (150). In the introductory chapter of his
History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac (1851), Parkman similarly carps:

Of the Indian character, much has been written foolishly, and
credulously believed. By the rhapsodies of poets, the cant of
sentimentalists, and the extravagance of some who should have
known better, a counterfeit image has been tricked out, which might
seek in vain for its likeness through every corner of the habitable
earth . . . The shadows of his wilderness home, and the darker mantle
of his own inscrutable reserve, have made the Indian warrior a
wonder and a mystery. Yet to the eye of rational observation there is
nothing unintelligible in him. (35-36)

Both of these assessments appeared after The Oregon Trail was published and
might very well reflect beliefs about "Indian nature" Parkman developed
throughout the course of his "tour on the plains." Yet if we may judge from
Parkman's statements concerning "aboriginal character" throughout *The Oregon Trail*, and if we compare Parkman's expectations about what he would find among the Plains Indians to his final appraisal, it seems likely that Parkman's criticisms of the "noble savage" in the literature of his day might have been substantially the same despite his westward travels. L. Hugh Moore concludes that "contrary to the author's intention, *The Oregon Trail* is not a serious study of the West but rather a drama of cultural confrontation in which little is learned, no real insights gained" (185).

Shortly after his graduation from Harvard, Francis Parkman and his cousin Quincy Shaw set out on what was to be a sporting expedition on the western American plains. Journeying by railroad and steamboat to St. Louis, Parkman and Shaw, along with a small party of British sportsmen they had met, travelled westward on horseback along the Missouri River to Fort Leavenworth, where they followed the North Fork of the Platte River to Fort Laramie. It was 1846, "the year of decision," and Parkman encountered scores of easterners migrating to the Oregon and California territories.

Yet Parkman was less interested in his fellow countrymen's westward journeys than in the indigenous peoples he had purportedly come to observe. Parkman declares at one point in *The Oregon Trail*:

> I had come into the country almost exclusively with a view of observing the Indian character. Having from childhood felt a curiosity on this subject, and having failed completely to gratify it by reading, I resolved to have recourse to observation. I wished to satisfy myself with regard to the position of the Indians among the races of men; the vices and virtues that have sprung from their innate character and from their modes of life. (168)

For this purpose Parkman resolves that he must obtain a much closer view of Native American life than most Euramerican writers had previously done: "it was necessary to live in the midst of them, and become, as it were, one of them. I
proposed to join a village, and make myself an inmate of one of their lodges" (168).

When Parkman hears a rumor that a group of Sioux is preparing to go to war against a Snake tribe, an event feared by Euramerican traders and travellers alike, he is overjoyed by what he considers an ideal opportunity to observe Indians at their "noblest": "War is the breath of their nostrils . . . It is chiefly this that saves them from lethargy and utter abasement" (200), a statement suggesting that Parkman may not have been as immune to romantic stereotypes as he had claimed.

He consequently joins a band of Ogallala Sioux, for three weeks anticipating their decision to go "on the warpath," through his interpreter continually asking individuals when the band will attack their Snake enemies. Yet Parkman is ultimately disappointed when no great battle materializes and his wish to observe the Indian warrior in action is apparently thwarted; he candidly admits, "I was vexed at the possibility that after all I might lose the rare opportunity of seeing the formidable ceremonies of war" (184).

For all his complaints about what he considered to be romanticized, distorted depictions of Native Americans in contemporary American literature, Parkman himself is curiously ambivalent in his assessment of the Plains Indians he encountered—not so much in his judgement that the Indian is "plainly a savage," which he maintains consistently throughout The Oregon Trail, but rather in his own relation towards Native Americans. Parkman apparently subscribed to the stadialist model of social development, declaring of the Platte Valley, for example, "Here society is reduced to its original elements . . . men find themselves suddenly brought back to the wants and resources of their original natures" (106). Yet far from shrinking from the "degenerating" influences of the plains, Parkman consciously cultivates the "wild" within himself, so much so that Kim Townsend characterizes The Oregon Trail as "one of the American male's most authoritative
texts on going west to prove one's manhood" (106). In a sense anticipating Thoreau's famous mission of "fronting facts," Parkman celebrates what he considered his successful attempt to "reduce life to its lowest terms": "We had seen life under a new aspect: the human biped had been reduced to his primitive condition... Our idea of what is indispensable to human existence and enjoyment had been wonderfully curtailed, and a horse, a rifle, and a knife seemed to make up the whole of life's necessities" (355).

Yet for all his declarations about opening himself to the influences of the western "wilds," of abandoning the "artificial" comforts of eastern civilization for the "bare essentials" required for survival, Parkman draws a distinct line between those who consciously choose to test themselves against nature and those whom he sees as unconscious products of nature. Richard Vitzthum notes:

It was as a challenge to the moral strength and technical skill of the civilized man that Parkman seems to have valued the wilderness most highly... The process of mastering the wilderness usually implies for Parkman a process of self-toughening and self-improvement... not only to clear one's brain of the cobwebs of civilization but to strengthen one's moral fiber. (97)

While Parkman goes through the motions of living in an "Indian camp," priding himself for recording a rare, close-up account of Native American life, he concludes:

For the most part, a civilized white man can discover but very few points of sympathy between his own nature and that of an Indian. With every disposition to do justice to their good qualities, he must be conscious that an impassable gulf lies between him and his red brethren of the prairie. Nay so alien to himself do they appear, they having breathed for a few months, or a few weeks the air of this region, he begins to look upon them as a troublesome and dangerous species of wild beast, and if expedient, he could shoot them with as little compunction as they themselves would experience after performing the same office upon him. (336-37)

Parkman thus reinforces many of the negative stereotypes of his day concerning Native Americans. Few instances of drinking by Native Americans are
recorded in the original published text of *The Oregon Trail*, partly for the same reason that there are relatively few instances in Irving's western books throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, liquor was a precious commodity on the western plains and not all western Native American tribes traded extensively with Euramericans. However the few references Parkman does record essentially reinforce contemporary Euramerican beliefs regarding alcohol and Native Americans. Parkman writes of one group of white emigrants heading for California (some of whom would later perish in the infamous Donner Pass) who discovered that they had brought too great a supply of liquor and decided, once they reached Richard's Fort, to trade the bulk of it. Parkman reports about what he was told occurred subsequently:

> Finding themselves unable to drink the whole, [the emigrants] had sold the residue to the Indians, and it needed no prophet to foretell the results: a spark dropped into a powder-magazine would not have produced a quicker effect. Instantly the old jealousies and rivalries and smothered feuds that exist in an Indian village broke out into furious quarrels. . . . They seemed like ungoverned children inflamed with the fiercest passions of men. Several of them were stabbed in the drunken tumult (184-85)

Although not an eyewitness to this event, having left the Fort just prior to the "general debauch," Parkman nevertheless writes with apparent authority of liquor's effects upon Native Americans. While not explicitly stating that the reported incident at Richard's Fort as typical, phrases like "it needed no prophet to foretell the results" imply that the incident conforms to a long conceived pattern of Native American drinking: that Indians drink uncontrollably till intoxicated. A "drunken Indian" is a violent beast: liquor operates as "a spark dropped in a powder magazine," exacerbating his latent savagery. Parkman's manner of describing this event he did not witness signals his prejudices concerning Native Americans prejudices he had vowed to avoid through, as he elsewhere wrote, his "eye of rational observation." Indeed, elsewhere Parkman similarly generalizes about the
effects of drinking among Native Americans; in his opening chapter of *Pontiac*, in which he provides an overall "introduction" to "Indian character," Parkman asserts, "In his feasts and his drinking bouts we find none of that robust and full-toned mirth which reigned at the rude carousals of our barbaric ancestry. He is never jovial in his cups... maniacal rage is the sole result of his potations" (37-38).

In *The Oregon Trail*, Parkman invokes the contemporary commonplace concerning the Vanishing American: "The Indians will soon be... abased by whisky and overawed by military posts, so that within a few years the traveller may pass in tolerable security through their country" (252). Parkman registers a hint of regret at such a conjectured fate, though not for the sake of Native Americans themselves; rather the inevitable disappearance of "the red man" will make the plains much tamer, much less a challenge for the "slumming" white man.

When Native Americans have left the western plains, Parkman muses, "Its danger and its charm will have disappeared altogether" (252). As Moore finally notes, "In *The Oregon Trail* there is no initiation, no change, no real growth. It is the drama of a young man who plunges into other cultures, into nature, and into history, and who remains amazingly unchanged" (197).

**Henry David Thoreau**

Throughout much of his writing, Thoreau indicated his intense fascination with Native Americans; references to Indians are scattered liberally throughout many of his works, including *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, *Walden*, *Cape Cod*, as well as various essays. Keiser notes that about 200 passages in Thoreau's *Journal* are devoted to thoughts concerning Native Americans (209). By far the most telling testimony to Thoreau's interest is his compilation of "Indian
Notebooks," a series of 11 commonplace books\(^7\) comprised almost entirely of quotations from texts about Native Americans, including captivity narratives, travel accounts, and fur traders' journals. Sometime around 1847, during his stay at Walden Pond, Thoreau began to record passages from his reading in a book which he entitled "Extracts Concerning the Indians." Over the course of the next 13 or so years, Thoreau filled at least 11 volumes with quotes from his extensive reading. Richard Fleck contends, "These eleven volumes contain 2,800 handwritten pages or over 500,000 words which constitute, probably, the largest body of knowledge on American Indian culture in the nineteenth century" (\textit{Indians} 3). Following conventional classificatory schemes, Thoreau arranged his notes under such headings as "Physique," "Dwellings," "Marriage Customs," "Woodcraft," and "Treatment of Captives."

Apart from his selection and arrangement of the quoted material, scholars note that Thoreau's own contribution to his "Indian notebooks" is minimal. Keiser observes, "Compared with the quoted matter . . . the original material . . . is negligible in quantity, consisting of some occasional remarks" (216). Several scholars believe that had Thoreau lived longer, he would have transformed his impressive research into an "original" work on Native Americans. Fleck speculates that "an important part of Thoreau's purpose in writing his 2,800 handwritten pages of the Indian books was to write a book or series of essays on North American Indians which would correct the myopic view of nineteenth-century Euro-American historians" (\textit{Thoreau} 19). Sayre, however, disagrees, noting not only that Thoreau "did not write [this monumental 'Indian book']" but also that "no evidence has so far turned up of his explicitly stating he intended to" (103). Moreover, Sayre

\(^7\) Robert Sayre argues that actually there were 12 such notebooks (see his Appendix "On Name and Number of the Indian Books").
suggests, even if Thoreau had written this "Indian book," it very well may have disappointed Fleck's expectations. For while the diversity of information that Thoreau copied itself may have illustrated contradictions within conventional "savagist" assumptions about "Indian nature," still, despite his professed and probably sincere sympathy for Native Americans, Thoreau subscribed to many "savagist" beliefs about "the red man."

Thoreau's direct contact with Native Americans was arguably more extensive than some of his famous contemporary travel writers. "Unlike other nineteenth-century literary visitors to Indian country—Washington Irving, Francis Parkman, and Margaret Fuller, to name three—Thoreau kept going back" (Sayre 155-56). On three separate occasions—in 1846, 1853, and 1857—Thoreau took to the Maine wilderness, each time hiking and canoeing through or around what is now Baxter State Park. Part of Thoreau's avowed motive for these excursions recalls his reasoning for "burrowing" at Walden Pond: he went to the wilderness in order to "front facts," to explore his relationship with nature. Even more so than the secluded Walden Pond, the Maine woods offered a relatively "untouched" natural environment.8 Whereas in the mid-nineteenth century, most Native Americans had long since migrated westward from Massachusetts, in Maine there still existed a (small) population of indigenous peoples. Like Irving's, Fuller's, and Parkman's western tours, Thoreau's excursions to Maine offered him an opportunity to conduct research on Native Americans in person: "On the three trips to Maine . . . Thoreau had his longest and closest contacts with real people, as opposed to the savagist

8 Though in each of his essays on the Maine woods Thoreau notes the progressively unmistakable presence of the lumbermen who leave their mark even in the northern "wilds."
Indians he read about and the improved Transcendental or poetic Indians of his imagination” (Sayre 155).

Indeed, at the beginning of each of his three essays on his separate northern excursions. Thoreau describes his attempts to hire a Native American guide: in "Chesuncook" Thoreau explains, “we had employed an Indian mainly that I might have an opportunity to study his ways” (128). Though Thoreau actually succeeded in hiring Native American guides only on his second and third trips, each of the three essays which together comprise the posthumously published volume The Maine Woods (1864) contains extended reflections concerning American Indians. While we may note apparent differences in his attitude between the three trips, in several significant respects, Thoreau’s perspective towards Native Americans on the whole remains fairly consistent, or at least consistently ambivalent.

Thoreau seems to waver about the degree to which Euramericans have affected the Indians he encounters in the Maine woods. He repeatedly registers his mild disappointment with the "specimens" he employs as guides: Joe Polis and Joe Atteon are in certain distinct ways "tainted" by their contact with Euramerican civilization. They now shoot moose not primarily for food but in order to sell their hides to whites. Though Thoreau writes that he had been intrigued to observe Native American hunting practices—"I had been willing to learn how the Indian manoevred" (160)—he laments after Joe Aitteon actually succeeds in shooting a moose. "The afternoon’s tragedy . . . as it affected the innocence, destroyed the pleasure of my adventure" (160). Thoreau abhors the manner in which the Euramerican economy has changed native ways of life. "This afternoon’s experience suggested to me how base or coarse are the motives which commonly

9 Which Sayre interprets as signs of Thoreau beginning to evolve beyond his "savagist" assumptions.
carry men into the wilderness... What a coarse and imperfect use Indians and
hunters make of Nature! No wonder their race is so soon exterminated" (161-62).

Thoreau also notes how white idioms have affected the speech of his Native American guides. Paddling on the Penobscot River, Thoreau writes, "I was surprised to hear [Joe Aitteen] whistling 'Oh, Suzanna,' and several other such airs.

... Once he said, 'Yes, sir-ee.' His common word was 'Sartain.' " (144). Thoreau is more interested, though, in the native language of his guides. At the end of "Chesuncook," Thoreau queries Joe Aitteen and the St Francis Indian Tahmunt Swasen about the meaning of the Indian names of lakes and streams in the area. He is amused by some of the replies: "They never analyzed these words before" (197). Yet rather than concentrating on the (in)accuracy of their translations, Thoreau is mesmerized merely listening to the speech of Joe Aitteen and Swasen: We may suspect change and deterioration in almost every other particular but the language which is so wholly unintelligible to us it took me by surprise... and convinced me that the Indian was not the invention of historians and poets... I felt that I stood, or rather lay, as near to the primitive man of America that night as any of its discoverers ever did (185).

When Joe Polis sings a song taught to his people by Jesuits many years ago, Thoreau writes, "it carried me back to the period of the discovery of America, to San Salvador and the Incas, when Europeans first discovered the simple faith of the Indians" (244). Like Fuller, Thoreau succeeds in discerning within the Native Americans he meets potent vestiges of the "grand noble savage." Thoreau seems most to appreciate Native Americans ultimately for the romantic visions they inspire in him.

10 Indeed, Thoreau notes discrepancies between the "etymologies" of several Indian place names in Appendix VII of The Maine Woods, which lists the Indian meanings of certain words and Thoreau's sources for these words.
This pattern is evident even in "Ktaadn," the essay in which Thoreau experiences the least contact with Native Americans. Indeed, Thoreau's descriptions of Native Americans in the essay, conform most closely with contemporary popular notions of the "degraded savage." Leaving Oldtown by ferry, Thoreau describes an Native American who had apparently just come from the island reservation on the Penobscot.

I observed a short, shabby, washerwoman-looking Indian—they commonly have the wobegone look of the girl that cried for spilt milk—just from 'up river'—land on the Oldtown side near a grocery, and, drawing up his canoe, take out a bundle of skins in one hand, and an empty keg or half-barrel in the other, and scramble up the bank with them. This picture will do to put before the Indian's history, that its, the history of his extinction. In 1837, there were three hundred and sixty-two souls left of this tribe. The island seemed deserted to-day . . . (6)

This passage more than hints at the role of liquor for the Vanishing American.

Below Mattawamkeag, Thoreau and his companion visit one of the "Indian islands" and arrange with two Native Americans to act as guides for their trip to Mount Katahdin, agreeing to meet them within a couple of days along the West Branch. Thoreau records his conversation with the Indian Louis Neptune: "He said, 'Me sure get some moose,' and when I asked if he thought Pamola would let us go up, he answered that we must plant one bottle of rum on the top. he had planted good many, and when he looked again the rum was all gone" (11). Here Thoreau does not speculate about where Neptune's rum had gone to, instead congratulating himself and his companion, 'thinking ourselves lucky to have secured such guides and companions' (11).

11 Which was originally published four years after Fuller's Summer and one year after Parkman's The Oregon Trail
Thoreau is disappointed, however, when the two fail to show up at the appointed time—"a kind of miniature of a 'broken treaty'" (Sayre 162). Unwilling to "bushwhack" in the unfamiliar wilderness, Thoreau decides to hire two white residents and consoles himself that he is better off since "[the Indian] is, for the most part, less to be relied on, and more disposed to sulks and whims" (41). Thoreau comments no more about the absence of Neptune and associate until he meets the two on his return journey from the mountain. Encountering the Native Americans on Millinocket stream, Thoreau remarks on their modern, Euramericn dress: "They might have been taken for Quakers" (104). Thoreau is by no means impressed with these two "specimens": "Met face to face, these Indians in their native woods looked like the sinister and slouching fellows whom you meet picking up strings and paper in the streets of a city" (105). Thoreau soon discovers why Neptune and the other Penobscot failed to show up when expected: "We thought Indians had some honor before. But... They had in fact been delayed so long by a drunken frolic... and they had not yet recovered from its effects" (105). Thoreau subsequently implies that because they are now drunk (or hungover), Neptune and associate are not in fact "real Indians": "There is, in fact, a remarkable and unexpected resemblance between the degraded savage and the lowest classes in a great city. The one is no more a child of nature than the other. In the process of degradation the distinction of races is soon lost" (105). Thoreau here apparently conforms to the "savagist" assumption that "once an Indian had been corrupted by whiskey and white ways... he could never be the same. The only real and true Indians, still living in their 'natural state,' were those beyond the range of civilization" (Sayre 7-8).

Yet after registering his disgust at these "drunken Indians," dressed like Quakers. Thoreau writes of living in the wilderness. "Thus man shall live his life
away here on the edge of the wilderness, on Indian Millinocket stream, in a new world, far in the dark of a continent" (105-06). Giving way to his charged imagination, Thoreau speculates, "Why read history, then, if the ages and the generations are now? He lives three thousand years deep into time, an age not yet described by poets" (106). Thoreau continues:

Can you well go further back in history then this? Ay! ay! — for there turns up but now into the mouth of the Millinocket stream a still more ancient and primitive man [referring to Neptune and friend] . . . He is but dim and misty to me, obscured by the aeons that lie between the bark canoe and the batteau. He builds no house of logs, but a wigwam of skins. He eats no hot bread and sweet cake, but musquash and moose meat and the fat of bears. He glides up the Millinocket and is lost my my sight, as a more distant and misty cloud is seen flitting by behind a nearer, and is lost in space. So he goes about his destiny, the red face of man. (106)

Sayre suggests that the "red face of man" is a pun on Neptune and his friend's state of intoxication (162). Yet, even so, in his revery on the "primitive" and "natural man," Thoreau succeeds in conjuring from the two partially "acculturated" Penobscots a vision of Native Americans before the advent of whites. In a manner similar to Fuller, Thoreau downplays the effect of liquor upon Native Americans, apparently disregarding his vexation at being stood up by the Penobscot guides, instead concentrating upon the "red man's" nobly primitive, mysterious, romantic qualities. From the proper distance, with the necessary application of the imagination, even "the drunken Indian" can be an object of wonder for one who wishes to appreciate the "noble savage."

Frontier and Western Dime Novels

"Pulp fiction" was popular in the United States as early as the 1830s, first appearing in the format of five- or six-cent story newspapers which often contained several serialized stories. Pamphlet novels, which appeared in the 1840s,
sold well until rising postal rates made them unprofitable for publishers. In 1860, however, the New York publishing house of Beadle and Adams virtually revolutionized the "pulp fiction" industry with its celebrated series of "Dime Novels," a term which was first used to describe the 100-page pamphlets it produced (for the original series, every other week for 25 years) but which came to be "applied ... to any sensational detective or blood-and-thunder novel in pamphlet form" (Johannsen 1: 3). Beadle soon began issuing other series of pamphlet fiction (in all, publishing 25 series) and the public responded enthusiastically. "Beadle and Adams had published four million dime novels by 1865: sales of individual titles ranged from 35,000 to 80,000" (Denning 11). In an 1864 critical notice for the North American Review, William Everett marvelled at the popular reception of "Beadle's Dime Books." Dime Novels were reported to have been so in demand that masses of them were shipped to Union soldiers during the Civil War (Johannsen 1: 39).

A glance at the titles in the first series of Beadle's Dime Novels suggests their typical subjects: "Maleaska, the Indian Wife of the White Hunter"; "A Forest Romance"; "The Backwoods Bride"; "A Romance of Kentucky Ranger's Life"; "A Tale of the Early Settlements"—many of the early titles reflect dime novelists' (and presumably their readers') fascination with stories set on the American frontier. Michael Denning cautions against simply assuming that all cheap sensational fiction of the nineteenth century were frontier stories:

[Beadle and Adams'] success with tales of pioneers and the frontier must be balanced against the wider range of fiction—aristocratic costume romances, detective tales, working-girl stories, tales of the American Revolution, mysteries of the city, outlaw stories—which was published in the story papers, cheap libraries, and pamphlet novels, both before and after the heyday of Beadle's Dime Books. (15)

12 See Denning Chapter One.
According to both Denning and Cox, the pervasive and longstanding American interest in frontier and western themes, shared by many scholars and collectors alike, has not only greatly influenced the kind of scholarly work done on the dime novel but perhaps more importantly, has often determined the types of dime novels that have been preserved. Both factors have contributed to the somewhat skewed notion that "dime novel" necessarily means "frontier story."

Yet notwithstanding, it is true that many of the original Beadle Dime Novels were set on the western frontier and that much of their mass appeal may be attributable to Euramerican readers' long-established attraction to wilderness themes. Henry Nash Smith characterizes these early dime novels as "an objectified mass dream... The individual writer abandons his own personality and identifies himself with the reveries of his readers" (91). Even moreso than the frontier romances from which they were obviously derived, many frontier dime novels conformed to a typical formula: almost invariably they presented a white hero poised against the "savage forces" of the forest, or the plains, or the mountains, forces represented most often by Indians or "white renegades" in the vein of archvillain Simon Girty. Daryl Jones emphasizes to what degree many frontier dime novels reflected (and presumably helped stimulate) enthusiasm for westward expansion. "Each act of individual heroism becomes an integral part of a grand historical process in which mankind is moving irrepressibly westward, conquering the wilderness and raising in its place a thriving civilization" (19). Though for nearly thirty years most eastern Native American tribes had been removed or had been "assigned" to small reservations in the east, thus posing no tangible threat to most readers of dime novels, reports of increasing conflict on the plains (where many of the later dime novels were set) undoubtedly roused many whites' wish to see Indians receive their "due," if only in fiction. Berkhofer speculates, "the last
battles with the Plains Indians after the Civil War did not harm sales or improve the image of the Indian in dime novels" (99).

Johannsen observes that many of the writers of the first frontier dime novels, "if not themselves pioneers, were often familiar with Indian, hunter, and trapper adventures from tales told by the older men of their communities, and their stories had all the earmarks of verisimilitude" (14). Yet Daryl Jones is probably nearer the mark when he writes that "In setting their novels on the frontier, that constantly moving imaginary line between wilderness and civilization, dime novelists were merely following the trail that Cooper had blazed a generation earlier" (23). Indeed, a comparison of the typical plot line of the frontier dime novel—"nothing more than a fast-paced, loosely connected sequence of fistfights, gunplay, and hairbreadth escapes strung out interminably and tied together by a happy ending" (D. Jones 135)—and that of the earlier frontier romance suggests just how derivative many dime novelists often were. A typical western by Edward Sylvester Ellis, perhaps the most popular dime novelist of his day, reads much like a Reader's Digest version of Cooper. A white maiden, either a settler's or soldier's daughter, is abducted by Indians and carried off into the "trackless wilderness." A young white hero, sometimes accompanied by an older, wiser Leatherstocking-like character, leads the pursuit through the wilderness, single-mindedly determined to rescue the white woman from the savages. After the inevitable rescue, the protagonist leads his precious charge back to civilization, inevitably pursued by Indians. After numerous close escapes, the party arrives at a white settlement, where the protagonist marries the heroine and both anticipate a long, prosperous life in the newly settled west. Jones associates this typical pattern not only with the frontier romance of Cooper, but also with "both religious and secular versions of the Indian captivity narrative" (137). The Indian captivity experience, or rather its
threat, is treated as an epic challenge which glorifies "the frontier experience": through defeating the Indian, the white pioneer "earns" the land, claiming it in the name of civilization.

Yet in its spare form, concentrating almost entirely as it does on the action of the protagonist, the frontier dime novel perhaps more resembles the colonial Indian war narrative than the romanticized stories of Cooper or even the Indian captivity narrative. We have seen how Cooper's frontier tales, while chronicling the inevitable defeat of the Indian by the white man, typically focus at some length on "Indian character," purportedly illustrating its strengths and weaknesses. Cooper's frontier romances often acknowledge a regret for the passing of the "red man" while (equivocally) celebrating the westward movement of Euramerican civilization—portraying the clash of higher and lower cultures on the stadialist spectrum of social development. This theme of cultural clash is emphasized particularly through Leatherstocking's recurrent discussions of "red" and "white gifts."

Very little of this type of "balanced" perspective is evident in most frontier dime novels. As Nichols notes, "Surprisingly few [dime novel] westerns paid much attention to the Indians, and those which did rarely offered new ways to depict them" (49). Few dime novelists shared Cooper's apparent skepticism towards American progressivism. Daryl Jones writes, "The integrity of the ubi sunt as an artistic device in the Leatherstocking Tales . . . depends on its irony and balance. Yet dime novelists commonly sacrificed this balance . . . the death of an Indian frequently triggers a panegyric to the superiority of the white race and to the glorious progress of civilization" (48). In many dime novels, "the Indian is both an obstacle in the path of the questing hero and a real and imminent threat to the advance of civilization toward the utopian society of the future. As a result, the
dime novel Indian is most often a cunning and brutal, innately evil savage” (D. Jones 140).

Within this general epic framework which cast the Indian primarily as an enemy of Eurameric migration westward, dime novelists were also, somewhat paradoxically, free to assign a range of traits to any individual Indian character. For, as suggested, for the most part frontier dime novels were unconsidered celebrations of progress rather than measured apologies for “manifest destiny.” Tracing, indeed paring down, established popular epic narrative patterns, dime novels tended merely to reinforce rather than to explore white conceptions of the western frontier and its inhabitants. At about the time when ethnologists such as Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and Lewis Henry Morgan were collecting previously unrecorded information about Native Americans and calling for revisions of established assumptions about “Indian nature,” Nichols notes, “Dime novels tended to popularize existing views of Indians, fastening such stereotypes upon readers who lacked their own ideas about the tribesman, and perpetuating the resulting attitudes on much of American society for several generations” (50). Indeed, virtually every major mid-century Eurameric stereotype concerning Native Americans probably, at one time or another, found its way into a frontier dime novel. Nichols concludes, “dime novelists reflected the confused, contradictory and even contrite ideas which white Americans held about Indian Americans” (54). Among these confused ideas were, predictably, those concerning alcohol and Native Americans.

Edward Sylvester Ellis

Edward S. Ellis began his career as a dime novelist when, in 1860, the 19-year-old New Jersey schoolteacher sent the manuscript of Seth Jones to the young
publishing house of Beadle and Adams. The book was an immediate success, selling over 600,000 copies (Johannsen 133), and launched Ellis's long and prolific career as a writer not only of dime novels but later of popular non-fiction and children's stories; indeed, in 1898 Ellis published a six-volume *People's Standard History of the United States* 13 Because Ellis used at least 14 different pseudonyms—including the provocative "Captain James Fenimore Cooper Adams"—it is difficult to estimate the total number of his books that were published. It is known, however, that "Between 1860 and 1865 Ellis wrote fifteen dime novels... for Beadle & Co." (Rogers 74); in his 1864 *North American Review* notice, Everett declared: "Ellis's novels are favorites, and deserve to be" (308).

Most of the Indian characters in Ellis's early dime novels are unequivocal villains who have an obvious penchant for abducting white women; trapper Tom Langdon remarks in *Nathan Todd*, "I know them reds ar' desprit on cotchin' sich poor critters" (28). On the whole, Ellis does little to speculate on the reasons for the antagonism which his Indians display towards whites. Of course, simply to rehash the narrative patterns long since established by the colonial Indian war and captivity narratives neither requires nor invites much exploration of Indian motives. Earlier works had settled that matter, or had done quite well without such speculation, leaving Ellis and fellow dime novelists to imitate the exciting, "tried and true" storylines. In some instances, Indian aggression toward white settlers is attributed to the influence of a foreign enemy; Ellis writes in *Seth Jones*, "The mother country, failing in her work of subjugation, continued to incite the Indians to revolting barbarities upon the unoffending inhabitants" (12). In other

13 Johannsen notes that many Beadle dime novelists wrote other kinds of texts as well (see biographies of Beadle writers in Volume II of *The House of Beadle and Adams*).
instances brutal Indians are spurred on by inexplicably evil white renegades, such as Tom McGable in *The Frontier Angel* and the legendary Simon Girty in *The Riflemen of the Miami*. Disputed land claims implicitly lie at the heart of most of the conflicts between Indians and whites: the captured white woman is usually the daughter of a settler who has built his homestead beyond the fringes of the white settlements, as a vanguard of civilization in the "virgin land." Yet whereas Cooper's frontier romances often included pointed debates over rights to the land between white and Indian characters, Ellis's frontier dime novels, casting intercultural conflict almost solely as violent, physical struggle, generally take for granted hostility between "red" and "white."

As a consequence, Indian characters are seldom focused upon at any length. The following passage from *The Riflemen of the Miami*, a typical description of combat in Ellis's dime novels, suggests the essential facelessness of the Indian foe:

The Riflemen, prototypes of the Kentucky Rangers, are confronting a group of Shawnee who have captured a white woman:

> the manner in which the Indians shifted to the opposite side of the trees could but attract the notice of the hunters. It was simultaneous on the part of all, and resembled that of automata, moved by machinery. First every copper-colored body was exposed to full view; and in the next minute six gleaming rifle barrels only showed where they had sheltered themselves from the fire of the whites. (15)

As in Hubbard's and the Mathers' seventeenth-century war narratives, Indians in Ellis's dime novels are characterized primarily by the destruction they leave behind, as exemplified in the following passage from *Seth Jones* in which the protagonist encounters an unknown victim of Indian cruelty:

> Some wretched human being was bound to a tree and had been burned to death. He was painted black as death, his scalped head drooped forward ... every vestige of flesh was burnt off to the knees, and the bones, white and glistening, dangled to the crisp and blackened members above! The hands, tied behind, had passed
through the fire unscathed, but every other part of the body was literally roasted! (67-68)

Not surprisingly, then, most of Ellis's frontier dime novels do not speculate much about the influence of intercultural contact upon Native Americans. Indeed, within the epic narrative context most contact between whites and Native Americans occurs as violent wilderness skirmishes. Yet in several cases Ellis does provide glimpses of another kind of Indian-white interaction, glimpses which indicate curious, though by no means innovative, assumptions about Native American drinking behavior.

Appropriately imitating Cooper's practice of assigning white protagonists an Indian "sidekick," in several of his novels Ellis creates a friendly Indian ally for his besieged whites. Perhaps the most intriguing of these characters, one who most fully suggests the prospects of Native American "acculturation," is Oonomoo, the Huron. The last of his tribe, Oonomoo helps white settlers along the Ohio Valley in the late eighteenth century resist the attacks of his sworn enemies, the Shawnees. Oonomoo is introduced in The Riflemen of the Miami (1862) as a lone Indian who helps thwart Shawnee attempts to recapture white heroine Edith Sudbury, whom the Riflemen have rescued. Oonomoo professes great devotion to the whites, boasting of himself, "I love all white folks—love the gals—clever to him and feed him when hungry" (87). Yet despite Oonomoo's allegiance to whites, Ellis reminds us of the essential savagery of his nature as one white settler proclaims, "Injin is Injin!... you can't change his nature. The missionaries have a hold of him, and made him an honorable red-skin, but they can't get that hankering after scalps out of him" (93). Indeed, we are told that "The next time the Riflemen encountered the Huron, it was upon the war trail, and full a dozen more scalp-locks hung at his girdle!" (93).
Our next look at Oonomoo, however, highlights a different aspect of his imperfect assimilation into Euramerican culture. At the outset of *The Hunter's Cabin*, white heroine Annie has been left alone in her home by her father Sylvester Stanton, who had recently built his cabin beyond the settlements and who has now gone off hunting. As she spins, Oonomoo comes to her door, "an intoxicated Indian, steadying himself as best he could, and glaring in with a drunken leer upon her" (14). In conventional Pidgin English, the Indian, daubed in war paint and wearing Indian scalps in his waistband, announces to Annie that he is going on the warpath, and threatens her: "Come from good ways—on warpath—got plenty scalp—take yours mebbe" (14). Annie resolves not to show her fear: "if she was kind and considerate, intoxicated as he was, he would never fail to remember the kindness, and unless actuated by some grievance at the hands of the whites, he would prove a firm and faithful friend" (15). Thus Annie admits Oonomoo into the cabin.

When she asks him what he wants, he replies, "Dry—want drink—want fire—water. rum, whisky—die if don't get it. Got any for Oonomoo? Take scalp if you don't give him some" (15). Though there is some wine in the cabin, Annie decides to tell him she has nothing, reasoning, "He was already drunk, and the wine would only render him crazy" (15). She instead offers him food, a kindness which wins him over. Curious about his attraction to liquor, Annie asks Oonomoo: "Do you like the drink that takes away your senses?" (16). Oonomoo's answer: "Hate him—like drunk come, dough—stir debbil up in Oonomoo—feel queer—like to scalp white girl" (16). The implication is similar to that in the earlier Indian war and captivity narratives: liquor "unleashes" the latent hostility in "Indian nature." Indeed, Annie's fiance George Ferrington later remarks of Oonomoo, "I know him well and a truer friend to the whites never lived. He has but one failing—that of loving strong drink, at which times he is apt to be morose and dangerous" (28).
After sleeping off the effects of the liquor, in the morning Oonomoo seems completely transformed. Touched by Annie’s kindness, he warns her of the coming Shawnee attack and vows that she has inspired him to swear off drinking. Echoing Cooper’s Saucy Nick, he declares, “Drunk Injun come here last night—no Oonomoo—dis am Oonomoo! . . . Nebber see Oonomoo drunk ag’in” (21). Ellis assures us that Oonomoo in fact fulfills this pledge. When Oonomoo announces his change to Stanton, whom he later encounters in the forest, Stanton congratulates him: “If your skin be red your heart is white” (39). “Sober and steadfast,” Oonomoo later succeeds in rescuing Annie, Ferrington, and comic buffoon Hans Vanderbum, who are besieged in Stanton’s cabin by savage Shawnee, and leads them all to the settlement where we are told within two years time, after General Anthony Wayne has cleared the land of Indians, “Peace again reigned along the frontier” (94).

In the sequel Oonomoo, the Huron, published just five months after The Hunter’s Cabin, Oonomoo’s assimilation is carried one step further. In the later novel, Oonomoo assists white protagonist Canfield in rescuing his beloved Mary Prescott from a Shawnee village. We are told that even though Oonomoo has never scalped a white man, he still retains the savage trait of scalping his Indian enemies. Responding to the pleas of his Christianized wife Fluellina, he agrees to try to renounce this habit and to practice the Christian virtue of loving one’s enemies. Indeed, at the conclusion of the novel, dying from wounds incurred while unsuccessfully defending his wife from the attack of Shawnee warriors, Oonomoo lives up to his word, claiming to forgive the very Shawnees who have slain his wife and himself, charging his son, “never take the scalp of a foe . . . live and die a Christian” (111). Mary says of Oonomoo, “He has been with those holy men, the Moravians, and he is, what is so rarely seen, a Christian Indian” (95).
The "Oonomoo saga" offers an interesting paradigm of Native American assimilation. The partially assimilated Indian is prone to outbursts of violence; for example, he still has a predilection for scalping his foe. He seems to be addicted to liquor, which serves as a catalyst for the release of his latent aggression, as Ellis illustrates in the opening scene of The Hunter's Cabin. Yet the fully assimilated Indian—that is, the fully Christianized Indian—has succeeded in subduing his innate violence, as we note at the conclusion of Oonomoo, the Huron that the ministrations of the Moravian missionary have brought Oonomoo actually to proclaim love for his Shawnee enemies. Product of an "incomplete" process of assimilation, the "drunken Indian" is a dangerous, volatile force, but individually he can be "tamed" through complete conversion to Christianity.

In The Phantom Horseman or, The Mad Hunter of the Mohawk—the last half of which bears more than a passing resemblance to Irving's The Legend of Sleepy Hollow—Ellis creates Mintu, the Seneca, a character quite similar to Oonomoo. Like Oonomoo, Mintu is in many ways closer to whites than to Indians. Also like Oonomoo, this association had not been completely beneficial for him: "For a dozen years [Mintu] had lived in the settlement of Milville, acquiring, as is always the case with his race, all the vices of the whites... He was very fond of liquor, and for days at a time, rolled around the village, the most pitiable of objects" (13; emphasis added). Indeed, drawing undoubtedly on rhetoric of the temperance movement, Ellis proceeds:

It is a well-known peculiarity of this violent craving which permeates a man's system, that, like the deadly virus, the rabies, it lies so latent for a time, that the victim is unconscious of its presence, or believes it has passed away, when, in the midst of his fancied safety, it seizes him with such a fury that he is as helpless in its hands as is the infant in the grasp of a giant (13)
Yet despite his "hankering" for liquor, luckily for the white protagonists of this novel, Mintu does not always remain drunk. Indeed, after one of Mintu's debauches, Ellis writes, "would follow weeks in which he never touched a drop of the maddening fluid, and was one of the keenest witted of men" (13). When he is needed for their protection, Mintu never disappoints his white friends. The novel begins with a combined Tory and Iroquois invasion of the Mohawk valley during the Revolutionary War, though Ellis characteristically describes only the attacking Iroquois. The American colonists who live there have been surprised in this invasion and they are forced to stand their ground as best they can. But they have a valuable ally in the sober Mintu, who, masquerading as "Owangah," an enemy of all whites, sabotages the efforts of several "savage" Iroquois to injure white colonists. Contact with whites has necessarily brought about Mintu's degradation through liquor, yet it has also instilled in Mintu a deep dedication to the whites of Milville, a sense of loyalty which helps redeem him from being considered simply a "drunken Indian."

A similar variation on this pattern occurs in the 1864 Ellis novel Indian Jim. Subtitled A Tale of the Minnesota Massacre, the novel is set in the newly-admitted state of Minnesota in late August of 1862. at the outset of the Sioux uprising. Indian Jim is remarkable not only for its portrayal of drinking by Native Americans, but also for its apparent reflection of contemporary popular attitudes concerning the infamous "Minnesota Massacre."

On August 17, 1862, a group of Santee Sioux rose against Euramerican settlers in Minnesota. The Sioux had been complaining for several years about overdue annuities and other signs of the federal government's neglect of them. Robert M. Utley writes, "Minnesota in the 1850s afforded a classic example of the corruption of the federal Indian system... Critics... cried in vain for reform. In 1860 Bishop
Henry B. Whipple warned that 'A nation which sowed robbery would reap a harvest of blood' " (78). There was, however, no expectation that this unrest would lead to an armed revolt: "Readers of the St. Paul newspapers just before the outbreak found no stories of impending trouble with the Sioux" (Blegen 259). Skirmishes lasted for several weeks, the final battle taking place on September 23. Nearly five hundred Euramericans were estimated to have been killed and "the close of hostilities was followed by statewide demands for vengeance... The newspapers of the state called for quick and extreme punishment" (Blegen 278-79). As punishment for their uprising, by the spring of 1863 the federal government ordered the Minnesota Sioux (and the Winnebagos, who had taken no part in the uprising) to be removed westward to the Missouri Valley near Fort Randall, beyond the fringes of the Euramerican settlements.

Ellis's Tale of the Minnesota Massacre was published on April 1, 1864, and no doubt readers' memories of the recent incident was still sharp. Consequently, Indian Jim is perhaps the most self-reflexive of Ellis's frontier dime novels in its depiction of Native Americans. The novel begins "on a burning day in August 1862" with aristocratic eastern artist Adolphus Halleck travelling by steamboat to settler Uncle John Brainerd's home in Minnesota. He is accompanied by his cousin Marian, who has already spent several months in the area. Halleck has come west to paint the landscape and especially its indigenous inhabitants. The following exchange between Halleck and Marian establishes their respective points of view towards Native Americans:

"Just yonder is quite a passable landscape. I have seen poorer ones at the Academy. If there were only a group of Indians to fill up the background, it would make quite a picture."

"You still retain your admiration for the savages?"

"Fully. I have admired them ever since, when a boy, I pored over the enchanting pages of the Leatherstocking Tales; and I have longed to see them, 'face to face,' in their native wilds, in the majestic
loneliness of the mountains and forests, where they are uncontaminated by contact with the white man."
"You will have abundant opportunity to witness the pure redman himself. But let me say, coz, that these poetical ideas of yours will disappear as rapidly as the snow-flake upon the river." (10)

Marian scoffs at all sentimental conceptions of the "noble savage." When Halleck mentions Longfellow's Hiawatha, she replies, "I presume this is the country to which he refers. What a pity that he did not visit it before he wrote that poem!" (14). Marian does, however, add one qualification to her otherwise unmitigated denunciation of the "red man": "The Christian Indians are somewhat different. They have laid aside their savage dress, manners, and customs, and adopted those of civilization, and are passable beings" (15). She refers to Christian Jim, who has especially impressed her.

Halleck is intrigued by Marian's description of this Indian and later asks about him of Maggie Brainerd, Uncle John's pious daughter. Maggie tells Halleck, "Some years ago, before he was converted, father saved him from an injury, when he was in a drunken quarrel, and he has never forgotten it" (25). Maggie proceeds in further detail:

When father first met him, he was a very bad man. He was drunken and quarrelsome, and it has been said that he murdered more than one white man. . . . I believe he literally considers himself another person. You see he has taken a Christian name. A few years ago, I suppose his greatest passion was for strong drink. To obtain that, he would sell his blanket from his back. Since then, he has been subject to the strongest kind of temptation, but has never yielded, and declares that he has no taste at all for any such thing (26).

Halleck challenges Maggie with his exalted view of the "red man"—"Then you'll admit . . . that I am not entirely mistaken in my estimate of Indian character?" (26). Her response is telling: "It is not the Indian that is thus, but the Christian" (26). Like Oonomoo, before becoming fully "acculturated," Jim was a "drunken Indian," prone to violent outbursts. But upon full conversion, he is transformed into a virtual teetotaller, loyal to whites. In the novel, Jim allies
himself with the white settlers against his "savage brethren." Indeed, it is Jim who tips off the Brainerd family about an impending Sioux attack, helping to lead the family away from the immediate danger and to conceal them from the "riotous savages."

Throughout the course of the novel, Halleck's admiration for the Indian, originally inspired by his reading, is repeatedly tried. Initially Halleck insists that "These aggressors must be some of the offscourings and vagabonds of the tribes. The Indian himself is a noble creature, and I admire him from the bottom of my heart" (46). Halleck continually holds up Jim as an exemplar of his race, proof of the Indian's innate nobility. Yet as Sioux destruction is described repeatedly throughout the novel, noted earlier as a typical strategy of establishing "Indian character" in frontier dime novels, Halleck's perspective begins to alter. The following is a representative example of Ellis's rendering of Sioux ravages: "The ghastly, swollen corpses of animals and men, disfigured by all manners of mutilation—infants torn limb from limb, and females so brutally torn and outraged, as to be too repulsive for description—all these caused [the fleeing Brainerd party] to shudder to their very souls" (80). When Maggie, with whom Halleck has fallen in love, is fatally stabbed by an attacking Sioux, "Infuriated beyond all measure, by the treacherous murder he had witnessed, Halleck discharged his revolver directly into the breast of the savage; and after he had fallen, as rapidly as he could pull the trigger, dispatched the other five into the same dark bosom of sin and crime" (97). By the conclusion of Ellis's tale, Halleck's attitude towards the "typical" Indian, his sense of "Indian nature," becomes inverted, and he is prevented from becoming another Nick of the Woods only by his new-found devotion to the ministry.

More than in most frontier dime novels, in Indian Jim Ellis (at least partially) acknowledges Indian grievances against whites. Yet within the context of the
typical frontier dime novel plot, these grievances, never more than mouthed by
whites, are virtually negated. Note the following speech by Will Brainerd:

It is true that [the Sioux] have been badly treated. From my own
personal knowledge, I know that they have been swindled and
abused by the traders and agents. When they demanded nothing but
their simple rights, and what had been promised them, they were
met with curses and kicks; and I know, too, of instances of starvation,
when there were hundreds of dollars due them.... But can
oppression, however, great, excuse the massacre of innocent women
and children, and of good and true men, who have been their
friends? (72)

Regardless of any injustices the Sioux may have suffered (injustices which
incidentally are never dramatized in the novel, only briefly mentioned), they are
inevitably discounted by Sioux attacks against white settlers.

Similarly, we must ultimately see Ellis's portrayals of Oonomoo, Mintu, and
Indian Jim within the context of Ellis's depiction of the majority of his Indian
characters. Oonomoo, Mintu, and Jim are in a sense anomalies, perhaps best
explained as carryovers from the "Indian sidekick" convention in the frontier
romance. Their acts of turning from their people and allying themselves with
whites is atypical for Indians in the frontier dime novel. The majority of Indian
characters are not depicted as having any significant relation with white society:
as noted, instances of drinking by Native Americans in Ellis's novels are relatively
scarce. The faceless forest savage is portrayed as innately aggressive, even evil.
Such characterizations were doubtless encouraged by and in turn helped to fuel
many whites' hostility toward the western tribes who resisted being penned in on
reservations in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Yet, despite (or perhaps because of) their unique status, the characters of
Oonomoo and Indian Jim, in particular, suggest an intriguing perspective towards
alcohol and Native Americans. For both characters, liquor had served to unleash
their innate violence, exacerbating their savage predilections. Drinking.
necessarily a sign of some contact with whites, makes these Indians more dangerous because it weakens whatever self-control they may have possessed. Liquor certainly is not shown to play any role in the myth of the Vanishing American. Yet while a little contact with white civilization results in unwanted consequences, closer contact not only "dries" these Indians out, but transforms them into upstanding Christians. The model Indian is one who has finally turned completely from "his kind" and has learned to emulate the values of the model white.

In his 1870 The Red Outlaw or, The Young Ranger's Bride (Beadle Dime Novel #199), Charles Dunning Clark illustrates an interesting variation on this depiction of Native American drinking. Whereas Ellis's "drunken Indians" had been redeemed by their association with "good," devoutly Christian white characters, Clark creates a situation in which an Indian character falls in with "bad" white characters, and experiences a much different fate from either Oonoomoo, Mintu, or Indian Jim. Metawan, alias Captain Tom, was once a Mohawk chief, but he had been banished from his tribe; he explains, "The fire-water of the white men has been my ruin. I came into a council of the Mohawks after drinking deeply of the fiery flood. I was as one mad, and I spoke treason against the great nation. The chiefs rose as one man and drove me out from among them" (68). Metawan has fallen in with one Gabriel Senter, whom we later learn is actually Gabriel Le Fosset, onetime Jesuit agent among the Iroquois and now a French spy plotting the destruction of an Anglo-American village in the Hudson River Valley.

14 Indeed, reference to the myth itself is conspicuously absent from frontier dime novels, not surprising since in a sense it may deflate the epic grandeur of the struggle when one of the parties is necessarily "doomed to extinction."

15 This pattern was also used by Cooper in his depictions of Magua and Saucy Nick.
We first meet Metawan and Senter in the tavern of Hans Touter. Senter plying Metawan with alcohol:

His vis-à-vis was an Indian of the Mohawk nation, but one who had wandered from the right path, as any one could see who witnessed the avidity with which he clutched the bottle and poured out the brimming glass of the fiery liquor, while the young man opposite [Senter] looked on with a queer smile, and incited the Indian to drink more. (16)

Protagonist Sam Tacker, playing the role of a Yankee pedlar but actually an American captain sent to capture the French spy, attempts to take the liquor from Metawan, and the Mohawk violently objects: "the maddening liquors of the white man had debased him until he has lost all self-respect, retaining only the ferocity of the Indian" (20) Metawan demands of the barmaid, "Give me drink or I will kill you" (22), and is only with great effort subdued by Tacker and other whites. After a public punishment, Metawan is banished from the village.

Desiring revenge, and spurred on by Senter, Metawan conspires to attack and burn the village with his band of Indian renegades, all outcasts from their respective tribes. Indeed, Metawan argues that a successful attack upon the Americans should allow the outcasts to return to their tribes with honor. But first Metawan renounces liquor: "I will drink no more fire-water...These snakes in the grass have too long kept the soul of Metawan captive with their fiery drinks. I will be a man...I have wandered away from the graves of my fathers, seduced by the strong drinks of the white man: but, I will follow them no more" (60). Indeed, Metawan nearly explodes with fury when Senter subsequently pulls out a flask in front of him, commanding, "Away with it...Would you drive me mad? Throw it into the water...While you carry it in your pocket my heart is crying out for drink, drink, drink! I am crazy for it. Throw it over, I say, or I will kill you" (63).

Despite this great temptation, Metawan succeeds in his vows of abstinence. Yet his attack is foiled, not so much by the defence of the villagers as by the
weaknesses of his own band. When they break into Hans's tavern, Metawan's outcast Indians "now turned their attention to the liquor, and in spite of the entreaties and threats of their leaders, drank freely, until driven nearly mad" (89). These "drunken Indians" give up all desire to combat the white villagers, and after they have drunk themselves into a state of complete intoxication, are easily rounded up and imprisoned.

Though the two contain nearly opposite scenarios, the conclusion of Clark's novel resembles in some ways the climax of Nick of the Woods: in Bird's novel a group of whites infiltrate an Indian village and in The Red Outlaw Indians attack a white village, but in both cases whites are able to defeat their antagonists because the Indians have become at least partially incapacitated through their drinking. Yet while Bird's Indian enemies are portrayed as fairly typical, even representative Indians, Clark emphasizes that all the members of Metawan's band had been cast out of their tribes. Thus while Ellis's "drunken Indians" become loyal to white protagonists, and Clark's do not, still there is a similar assumption in both Ellis and Clark that drinking makes a Native American less "Indian"—perhaps a reflection of one "savagist" concept that "real Indians" are those who have remained untouched, untainted (and/or "unblessed") by contact with whites. In both Ellis's and Clark's dime novels, liquor similarly affects those Indians who do drink. Indians are powerfully drawn, even addicted, to liquor and drinking unleashes their latent savage impulses—both assumptions which characterized the earliest Euramerican epic portrayals of Native Americans. Drinking is illustrated as an inevitable consequence of interaction between Native Americans and Euramericans, sign of an imperfect assimilation which is only complete when the Indian has fully rejected allegiance to his people and mimics Euramerican values, especially Euramerican religion.
Lewis Henry Morgan

Lewis Henry Morgan, who became the foremost Euramerican ethnologist of the nineteenth century, first developed his lasting interest in Native American cultures when he was a law student at Union College in Schenectady, New York, in the late 1830s and early 1840s. Morgan was a member of a literary and social club called "The Gordian Knot," which later changed its name to the "Grand Order of the Iroquois," an organization which branched out in several chapters located throughout the state; in fact, Schoolcraft was at one point made an honorary member. Curious about the political organization of the original Iroquois "nations" which the young college-men wished to style themselves after, Morgan and others began to study the "ancient league." Yet Morgan felt singularly unenlightened by what he was able to glean from published texts concerning the Iroquois. He scorned works on the Iroquois that merely depicted the lives of war chiefs or focused only on battles. He considered these works superficial and distortions of the real nature and history of the Iroquois (Bieder 201). He was especially disappointed by the fact that the sources he turned to, such as William L. Stone's Life of Joseph Brant, contained little information about the political and social structures of the Iroquois and thus soon decided that the only truly adequate source of information would be the Iroquois themselves, who by that time lived primarily on small reservations in upstate New York.

16 This was, of course, still several years before Schoolcraft's Notes.

17 Trautman notes that Morgan was later to "pillory Stone's inaccuracies" (46).
As part of an attempt to learn more about the Iroquois, the Order granted young Ely Parker\textsuperscript{18} honorary membership, inviting him to speak before a meeting of the group. "Within a few weeks the 'warriors' listened to the boy describe in fluent English the troubles of his people. The images of noble savages stalking the forest was replaced by the picture of hundreds of families driven from their farms and facing the prospect of trekking across half a continent to pitch tents on the blistered soil of Kansas" (Resek 30). At this time the Ogden Company, a group of land speculators, sought to lure the Seneca into relinquishing their lands, which sparked a controversy reminiscent of that over the removal of the Cherokees from Georgia. Morgan enlisted himself in the cause of the Iroquois, writing, "Not only have every principle of humanity, every Christian precept been violated by this company, in their eager artifices to despoil the Senecas; but the darkest frauds, the basest bribery, and the most execrable intrigues which soulless avarice could suggest, have been practiced, in open day, upon this defenceless and much injured people" (qtd in L. White 3-4). Among other acts on behalf of the Seneca, Morgan testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs that Ogden Land Company purchases of the Tonawanda Reservation should be nullified. In gratitude for his efforts to help protect their land, the Iroquois "adopted" Morgan in 1847.

Morgan's close association with the Iroquois prompted him to even further study of their society. He wrote a series of "Letters on the Iroquois," published in the \textit{American Review}, addressed to the president of the New York Historical Society and sent several reports for its museum in Albany. In 1851, Morgan collected much of this material, supplemented with his further research on the Iroquois, and

\textsuperscript{18} Who later served as federal Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1869-71.
published *The League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois*. Trautman remarks on the structure of the book:

Two illustrious close contemporaries with ethnological interests suggest the range of possibilities to Morgan. Herman Melville's adventures among the Marquesan Islanders takes the form of a travel book in *Typee*. Francis Parkman's obsession with the American wilderness and its inhabitants takes the form of narrative history (in his multi-volume *France and England in North America*). Morgan chose neither the first-person travel-adventure form nor the historical narrative, but instead devised a largely synchronic, structuralist account of which the conceptual core was the sociopolitical structure (Book I, "Structure of the League"), with the satellite chapters devoted to other topics (Books II and III, "Spirit of the League" and "Incident to the League"), notably religion and material culture. (37)

Morgan's structural principle, while not freeing him from ethnocentric bias in his account of Iroquois culture, still allowed him at least the semblance of an "objectivity" that, as has been remarked throughout this study, was notably absent in the majority of contemporary accounts of Native Americans. Berkhofer notes that Morgan's *League* is "often hailed as the first modern ethnographic monograph" (52).

Morgan's primary purpose in the *League* is to describe the Iroquois's ancient political organization, their loose federation, which he claims allowed the Iroquois before the advent of Europeans to gain supremacy over native peoples throughout much of the northeastern portion of North America. In fact, the "general features" of the political amalgamation of the Five Nations—features which Morgan proclaimed as "beautiful... the triumph of Indian legislation" (1: 71)—prompted Morgan to speculate that over time the Iroquois may have developed an even more "civilized" political structure and consequent lifestyle, though "Centuries... might have been requisite to effect the change" (1: 135). All possibilities for this change,

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19 I. e., Seneca, Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga, Mohawk.
however, were ended with the appearance of Europeans. Morgan shared his contemporaries' belief that Euramerican civilization was fundamentally incompatible with Native American social structures, however developed, and that Euramerican domination of the continent would radically disturb Native American cultures.

In his preface to the *League*, Morgan declares that his work is in part designed to "encourage a kinder feeling towards the Indian, founded upon a truer knowledge of his civil and domestic institutions" (I: ix). Morgan proclaimed that a more "scientific" perspective toward the Iroquois was necessary: "The time has come in which it is befitting to cast away all ancient antipathies, all inherited opinions; and having taken a nearer view of their social life, condition and wants, to study anew our duty concerning them" (I: x). One of the most damnable sources of cultural destruction Euramericans had brought to Native Americans, Morgan believed, was alcohol: "It is well understood, that the decline of the Iroquois commenced with their first intercourse with Europeans. . . . the introduction of ardent spirits among them, with its train of frightful excesses, and their incessant conflicts with the French, and with Indian nations, were calculated to waste them away with great rapidity" (I: 24). Indeed, one of Morgan's apparent motives in the *League* was to encourage white officials to control more effectively the liquor trade with the Iroquois.

A "temperance man," Morgan in fact opposed drinking not only among Native Americans but among Euramericans as well. In the summer of 1842, Morgan delivered temperance lectures in several locations throughout New York, proclaiming, "Misery and wretchedness, and the folly and crimes in society are, in the great proportion of cases, either directly or indirectly the consequence of intemperance" (qtd. in Resek 14). Morgan even associated what he believed was
excessive drinking throughout Euramerican society with the national economic crises of the late 1830s, asserting that the fate of the nation rested on its acceptance of temperance principles. It is not surprising, then, that when he turned his attention to the Iroquois, he would particularly emphasize the effects of liquor on the people. And these effects, as has been suggested, Morgan saw as virtually devastating.

The introduction of ardent spirits among them . . . has changed the face of Indian society, and proved the fruitful source of all their calamities . . . The power of self-control, in this particular, was much weaker with the red man than the white; and the consequences of indulgence more lamentable and destructive. The "fire-water," as they have fitly termed it, has been a more invincible and devouring enemy than civilization itself, to both of which causes, about in equal degrees, they owe their displacement. . . . If there is any one act in our past intercourse with the Iroquois for which we are more reprehensible than another, it was . . . this most nefarious and inhuman traffic (I: 325)

Here Morgan seems to echo many contemporary Euramerican observers of Native Americans: liquor is the "bane and curse" of "the red race," one of the chief agents in the white destruction of native peoples. Against the temptations of alcohol, which Morgan deprecates for any people, Native Americans have proven especially vulnerable. Morgan exploits the established image of the greedy white whiskey trader who picks the Native American clean.

In addition to repeating standard ethnographical lore about how alcohol has harmed Native Americans, Morgan provides a look at how some Native Americans have responded to the danger they perceive that liquor poses for their people. In a section in Book II "The Spirit of the League"—which focuses on cultural manifestations such as dances, games, religion—Morgan devotes a chapter to "The New Religion." Morgan is particularly impressed by this movement begun in the 1790s by Handsome Lake, who preached the regeneration of the Iroquois. One of
the self-proclaimed prophet's major tenets held that his people must renounce liquor, the white man's "fire-water." Morgan writes:

At this period [the outset of the nineteenth century] and for a century preceding, the prevailing intemperance of the Iroquois had been the fruitful source of those domestic disorders which, in connection with their political disasters, seemed then to threaten the speedy extinction of the race. A temperance reformation, universal and radical, was the principal and the ultimate object of the mission which [Handsome Lake] assumed, and the one upon which he chiefly employed his influence and his eloquence, through the residue of his life . . . . Numbers, it is said, abandoned their dissolute habits, and became sober and moral men; discord and contention gave place to harmony and disorder, and vagrancy and sloth to ambition and industry. (1:219)

Morgan credits Handsome Lake's success in preaching the values of temperance with the very preservation of the Iroquois, noting that Handsome Lake's teaching "had been extremely salutary and preservative, without the restraints of which, the fears of Ga-ne-o-di-yo [i.e. Handsome Lake] might have been realized ere this, in the rapid decline, if not extinction of the race" (1:222).

Indeed, Morgan shows that Handsome Lake's message was in the mid nineteenth century still being actively taught among the Iroquois. He includes in the League what purports to be a verbatim transcription of a recent speech delivered by Sose-ha-wa, grandson and successor of Handsome Lake. Sose-ha-wa declares that Handsome Lake speaks through him, telling him of a vision that he has had "from above," a vision afforded him by the four Messengers of the Great Spirit:

[Handsome Lake] looked again, and saw streams of blood. They [the Messengers] said, Thus will the earth be, if the fire-water is not put from among you. Brother will kill brother, and friend friend. Again they told him to look towards the east . . . . he saw the increasing smoke of numberless distilleries arising, and shutting out the light of the sun. It was a horrible spectacle to witness. They told him that here was manufactured the fire-water. Again he looked, and saw a costly house, made and furnished by the pale-faces. It was a house of confinement, where were fetters, ropes and whips. They said that those who persisted in the use of the fire-water would fall into this. Our Creator commands us to put this destructive vice far from us.
Again he looked, and saw various assemblages. Some of them were unwilling to listen to his instruction. They were riotous, and took great pride in drinking the strong waters. He observed another group who were half-inclined to hear, but the temptations to vice which surrounded them allured them back, and they also revelled in the fumes of the fire-water. He saw another assemblage which had met to hear instructions. This they said was pleasing to the Great Spirit. He loves those who will listen and obey. The fire-water creates many dissensions and divisions among us. They said that the use of it would cause many to die unnatural deaths; many will be exposed to cold and freeze; many will be burned, and others will be drowned while under the influence of the fire-water. (I:235-36)

Though Morgan registers some uneasiness with the manner in which Handsome Lake and his current successor have used Iroquois "superstitions" in their admirable aim of promoting temperance, he generally applauds this indigenous attempt to counter the ravaging effects of liquor. The very need for such an effort (indeed the very content of the passage quoted above) seems to support the widespread belief among many Euramericans that Native Americans were in danger of being virtually wiped out by the combined effect of their desire for liquor and whiskey traders' desire for profits. Yet far from mouthing the contemporary commonplace that liquor was causing the Native American to "vanish," Morgan, more so than his predecessors Heckewelder, Schoolcraft, and McKenney, acknowledged the possible effectiveness of Native American efforts to prevent such an "extermination." Like these earlier ethnographers, Morgan allows Native Americans a small but significant voice in his study of them. Perhaps to a greater degree than his predecessors, Morgan allows that some Native American tribes were actually beginning once again to flourish: "At the present moment their decline has not only been arrested, but they are actually increasing in numbers" (II:110)

Though Morgan had thought that his publication of the League would mark the end of his career as an ethnographer, in fact it was only the beginning. Morgan's interest in Native American cultures grew after his experience among
the Iroquois. He was particularly interested in further studying Native American social organizations, intrigued by their apparent systems of consanguinity. Morgan believed that by studying the manner in which Native American designated their familial relations, he could establish not only the cultural affinity between all indigenous peoples of the New World, but also their common Asiatic origin, still a matter of great debate in his time. Leslie White contends 'Morgan had virtually no predecessors in the field he literally created the science of kinship" (10). Dissatisfied with the response on questionnaires he sent to missionaries and to government agents, each summer from 1859 through 1862 Morgan himself travelled west to visit western Native American tribes. What he discovered concerns us less here than what his discoveries led him to conclude not only about the fate of Native Americans but also about the job of the ethnographer.

Morgan subscribed to, indeed even refined, the stadialist model of social development: he divided human society into a hierarchical sequence of seven "ethnic periods" (see Dippie 103). A key to an individual culture's status was its "level" of agricultural practices; like many of his contemporaries, Morgan's belief that many Native American tribes' predilection for hunting signalled their "savagism," although he argued that many tribes had "passed by natural development out of the conditions of savages into that of barbarians" ("Indian Question" 332). While Morgan was encouraged by what he considered progress among the Iroquois, he was disturbed by the condition of many of the tribes he observed in the west. He wrote in his 1859 journal, echoing Thomas Jefferson:

It is of course utterly impossible to preserve the Indian anywhere in his wild and thriftless state. He must become a farmer and make

20 He sought also to prove the theory of monogenesis against the still popular belief in polygenesis which implied that Indians were separately created and therefore constituted a separate "species" from whites.
money and throw off the Indian in part. Those alone who do this will be able to save themselves and ultimately will be absorbed in our race. The untamed Indian who refuses to settle and civilize to the extent of becoming tolerable farmers must pass away. (qtd. in L. White 36)

This passage suggests a curious ambivalence in Morgan's attitude towards the status of Native Americans. For while the "philanthropist" applauded the efforts of missionaries and others to teach them Euramerican values and ways of life, including the practice of Christianity and of farming, the "scientist" regretted that native peoples seemed to be changing so rapidly. Writing in 1877, Morgan included a special tone of urgency in his charge for fellow ethnographers to gather their data on Native Americans while they could:

While fossil remains buried in the earth will keep for the future student, the remains of Indian art, languages and institutions will not. They are perishing daily, and have been perishing for upwards of three centuries. The ethnic life of the Indian tribes is declining under the influence of American civilization, their arts and languages are disappearing, and their institutions are dissolving. After a few more years, facts that may now be gathered with ease will become impossible of discovery. These circumstances appeal strongly to Americans to enter this great field and gather its abundant harvest. (qtd. in Dippie 229)

Because their subject, indigenous culture, was believed to be fast eroding before the progress of civilization, Morgan argued that ethnographers must curb the desire for speculation, for synthesis, for large-scale sweeping generalizations about native peoples, focusing instead on collecting "data." These injunctions were greatly to influence the ethnographic mode of writing about Native Americans in the latter part of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, affecting the kinds of information Euramericans would publish about Native American culture.

21 Though in his studies Systems of Consanguinity and Ancient Society, Morgan himself had indulged in such sweeping generalizations.
Conclusion

In the roughly 50 years between the federal policies of Removal and Allotment, the relationship between whites and Native Americans in the American west changed considerably. The early nineteenth-century belief that "national completeness" meant Euramericans' settlement westward to the Mississippi River had prompted officials to designate a vast "Indian country" in the west, intended as an inviolable, permanent reserve for Native Americans. Yet the discovery of western mineral deposits and arable lands fueled many whites' desires to immigrate west, as pundits began to declare that it was the United States's "manifest destiny" to push "civilization" westward across North America. From the mid-1840s on, Euramericans' farmers, miners, traders, and soldiers converged on the western prairies and plains, an "invasion" which overwhelmed many Native Americans. The federal government developed the reservation system in large part to open land for use by whites by further subdividing the west into a series of smaller and smaller patches of "Indian country." Many tribes resisted the federal attempts to keep them confined to their respective reservations, triggering skirmishes dubbed the Plains Indians Wars, which for some whites (mostly easterners) strengthened the calls for reform of U.S. Indian policy, and for others made heroes out of Custer and other slain white soldiers, "martyrs" in the cause of "winning the west."

Just as there was little real innovation in Euramericans' policy throughout much of the period between Removal and Allotment, mostly a change of venue, so was there little innovation in Euramericans' literary perspectives of Native Americans. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Indian had long been an entrenched figure in American literature, with an assortment of established, well-worn tropes concerning "Indian nature." Debates about "Indian nature," and especially how it was portrayed, continued to proliferate. Most writers were well
aware of competing perspectives on Native Americans, and defined their own in 
contradistinction to others. Thus Irving "revises" Hubbard's depiction of King 
Philip; Fuller complains about Irving's "academic figures"; Parkman objects to the 
rhapsodies of poets, the cant of sentimentalists." Even dime novelist Edward Ellis 
framed his Indian Jim around the opposing perspectives of an easterner influenced 
by Cooper and Longfellow and white Minnesotans who supposedly "know better."

Yet despite varying degrees of sympathy and antagonism toward "the red 
man," most literary portrayals of Native Americans were colored by established 
conventions. Lee writes of the nineteenth-century literary traveller, "the usual 
pattern would seem to be to import a literary technique or point of view" (9). In 
the literary travel narratives discussed in this chapter, all writers who had 
criticized certain accepted assumptions about Native Americans countered with 
other traditional assumptions, particularly those concerning Native American 
drinking. Portrayals of Native American drinking are frequently used to illustrate 
theses about vanishing Americans, falling away at the "tainted touch" of 
civilization, ravaged by their assumed addiction to the white man's "fire-water."

In a different fashion, frontier dime novels also drew on established 
conventions of portraying Native Americans. Their plots were heavily derived 
from the epic narrative structure of the war and captivity narratives, particularly 
as it had been developed in the frontier romance. Native Americans are primarily 
treated as foils for white protagonists, faceless foes who are all the more terrifying 
for the grotesquely violent scenes of destruction they leave behind. Those few, 
anomalous Indian characters who do befriend whites (dime novelists apparently 
imitating Chingachgook of Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales) follow typical patterns, 
frequently involving drinking. Indian drinking is treated as a predictable, even 
inevitable result of interaction with whites, sign of an intermediate (and hence
"imperfect") process of acculturation. Liquor is claimed to unleash the latent violence in the "savage beast." Yet, apparently conforming to contemporary pieties about the power of Christianity, dime novels also suggested that further, "perfect" acculturation can transform the Indian into a gentle, converted soul, "with a white heart."

Yet as these established stereotypical assumptions about "Indian nature" and particularly "the drunken Indian" were perpetuated in popular literature of the mid-nineteenth century, some Euramericans were developing and building upon other ways to perceive and "textualize" Native Americans. Lewis Henry Morgan rejected conventional literary perspectives on Native Americans, arguing that because whites refused to appreciate the systematic, dynamic quality of Native American cultures, instead conceiving of it primarily in negative terms of what "savagism" lacked compared to "civilization," they profoundly misunderstood Native Americans. One of Morgan's greatest contributions was his recognition that Native American cultures were not static entities, forever "frozen" in a state of "savagery." To be sure, many of Morgan's view reflect the ethnocentrism of his day. Seeming to espouse certain notions about scientific racism, Morgan believed that Native American cultures were biologically determined, literally perpetuated through the blood, and he thus regarded miscegenation as the quickest means of assimilating Native Americans into Euramerican culture. Yet his emphasis on the integrity of Native American cultures, on how the cultures could be affected by and could affect patterns of drinking (particularly evident in his admiration of the "new religion" of Handsome Lake), marked a signally different understanding of Native Americans that that which predominated in much American literature throughout the middle of the nineteenth century.
Chapter V

Friends of the Indian. Early Twentieth-Century Westerns and Boasian Anthropology

By the late nineteenth century, many Euramericans who wished to help improve conditions for Native Americans had become convinced that the reservation system was an insurmountable barrier to "civilizing the savage." Reservations concentrated groups of Native Americans onto communally owned spaces, allowing them to retain many aspects of their tribal cultures. Some Euramericans, including Lewis Henry Morgan, believed that this arrangement was best for the present. Considered the product of a stage of cultural development below that of whites, the Indian, it was thought, could only be civilized gradually. Native American cultures had to be permitted to change from within, over a period of many years. The reservation system insured that Native Americans would not be too rapidly thrust into "the white man's world."

Those who differed with this gradualist position argued that reservations "cruelly" bind Native Americans to "primitive" life. In order truly to help the "poor red man," they declared, he should be encouraged (or forced) to live more like the white western homesteader, who was purportedly independent, self-sufficient—an ideal American type. Native Americans must be "detrinalized," the argument went. Merrill E. Gates, president of the Lake Mohonk Conference on the Friends of the Indian, stressed "the absolute need of awakening in the savage Indian broader desires and ampler wants. . . . In his dull savagery he must be touched by the wings.
of the divine angel of discontent” (qtd. in Berkhofer 173). The most effective way to accomplish this goal, many thought, was to instill in Native Americans a desire for private property, individual ownership of land.

Proposals for allotment in severalty had been offered numerous times throughout the nineteenth century as an answer to the “Indian problem.” If the government simply divvied up all “Indian country” into separate lots which would then be allotted to individual Native Americans, land disputes—the major cause of intercultural conflict—would no longer exist. This idea became official federal policy in 1887 with the passage of the General Allotment, or Dawes Act. The Dawes Act allowed the head of each Native American family to select 160 acres of reservation land as his own property, with 80 acres awarded to orphans and single persons over 18. After allotments had been made to all Native Americans on a given reservation, the federal government could sell the remaining reservation land to Euramericans. As Dippie observes, the “general policy of allotment in severalty ... managed to accommodate both East and West. It appealed simultaneously to humanitarian instincts and overt self-interest” (163).

Indeed, many whites apparently gained quite a bit from this piece of “humanitarian” legislation. Between 1887 and 1934, when the “Indian New Deal” was implemented, 60 percent of 138 million acres of Native American reservation land was sold as “surplus.” Under the Dawes Act, the federal government held the title to individual allotments for 25 years, after which the Native American owner was free to sell the land if he or she wished, under this provision another 20 percent of 1887 reservation land was transferred to whites “through disposal of allotments” (Berkhofer 175).

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1 The same as allowed white homesteaders under the 1860s Homestead Act.
The Dawes Act had purported to offer a quick solution to the "Indian problem"—allotment would soon make the Indian like the white homesteader, and allow the federal government to dismantle the Office of Indian Affairs. George Bird Grinnell, a "lay expert" on Plains Indians cultures, complained, however, that the federal government was not doing enough to assimilate Native Americans, to encourage them to adopt the values and lifestyles of Euramericans. In an 1893 pamphlet entitled *The Enforcement of Liquor Laws a Necessary Protection* published by the Indian Rights Association, Grinnell announced that "The Indian today is becoming rapidly civilized and self supporting. He has changed from a hunter and a warrior to a working man...[but many] are in especial need of encouragement and help in some directions, and of restraint in others" (1). One of these "other directions" involved drinking. Grinnell believed that "whisky drinking is most truly the Indian's curse" (*Indians* 357). Grinnell argued that it was the duty of the federal government to do everything in its power to keep liquor out of the hands of Indians since "An Indian can no more resist the temptation to drink liquor, if it is accessible, than a two-year-old child can help taking a lump of sugar if it is within his reach" (*Enforcement* 1). This required a greater commitment to enforcing existing laws. Grinnell complained that federal Indian agents had not been sufficiently authorized to arrest suspected whiskey traders; they did not even have a budget to transport witnesses to court. Thus many cases were dismissed simply because witnesses were unable to appear at trial. Grinnell concluded that "Usually no one pays much attention to whether the Indians get drunk or not, the sale of liquor goes on, and the Indians barter away, for a few gallons of spirits, the little property that they have perhaps acquired by painful effort at unaccustomed work" (*Enforcement* 2).
Francis E. Leupp, Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1905 to 1909, believed that the "Indian problem has now reached a stage where its solution is almost wholly a matter of administration" (vii). Leupp agreed with Grinnell, however, that liquor posed a serious obstacle to Native American acculturation, indicating even less hope that the problem could be solved: "We can heap prohibitory law upon prohibitory law till we have a pile as high as the tree-tops, and still every Indian will continue to drink as circumstances permit. The most we can do in the case of sots is to make the laws for the punishment of their offenses drastic and disagreeable, and then execute every law to the letter" (234). Indeed, Leupp seemed so pessimistic about the prospects of reforming "the drunken Indian" that he argued for those "habitual drunkards who hold allotments, (to) declare him non-competent, take his land and sell it for him and with the proceeds, put him in an asylum" (235).

Despite such pessimism (or perhaps because of it), the federal government took several measures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to combat what they considered to be the persistent and alarming prevalence of drinking among Native Americans. To keep up with Native Americans' changing legal status, in 1897 Congress specified that the prohibition of sale of liquor applied to "any Indian to whom allotment of land has been made while the title to the same shall be held in trust by the Government, or to any Indian a ward of the Government under the charge of any Indian superintendent or agent" (qtd. in Mosher 15). In 1906, Congress created a special budget "to enable the Commissioner of Indian Affairs ... to take action to suppress the traffic in intoxicating liquors among the Indians" (qtd. in "Aborigines" 41). In 1912, the special agents of the Indian Bureau assigned to suppress the liquor traffic (and their deputies, many of whom were Native Americans) were empowered to arrest any suspected violator of
the liquor laws. In 1917, these agents were authorized to seize any vehicle
suspected of transporting liquor for trade with Native Americans, regardless of the
owner's suspected involvement. Mosher writes:

between 1880 and 1920 . . . was a period of intense prohibitionary
zeal. Temperance groups became a strong political force and made
the issue of liquor control a national controversy. While Indian
drinking was not the primary concern of the temperance movement,
Congress found Indians a convenient scapegoat for legislation since
the tribes had no political representation. (19)

Indeed, imitating strategies used by many Euramerican and Native American
temperance groups. "On July 7, 1915, the Indian Bureau inaugurated an elaborate
pledge-signing movement among the Indians" ("Aborigines" 42).

Throughout the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries, the
avowed goal of the various groups of "friends of the Indians" was to assimilate
Native Americans into Euramerican culture, to teach them to emulate the "civilized
white man." Yet in the 1920s and 1930s, a contingent of Euramerican activists
began to perceive this "humanitarian" goal as more of a threat than a boon to
Native Americans. Inspired in part by the views of cultural relativism promoted by
American anthropologists,² these activists argued that Native Americans should be
couraged to preserve, not abandon, their traditional cultures. Perhaps the most
vocal advocate of this position was John Collier, an officer of the American Indian
Defence Association. Many of the same Native American traits that had repelled
advocates of the Dawes Act attracted Collier and his colleagues. Collier perceived in
traditional Native American communal lifestyle "an alternative to the creed of
rugged individualism" (Dippie 306). With the American dream badly tarnished by
the Great Depression, Collier, reversing earlier arguments of assimilationists.

² See the section on "Boasian anthropology" later in this chapter.
argued that Native American cultures even offered Euramericans a model to follow—
they were "the long hope."

In 1933, Collier, a longtime critic of the federal government, was given an
opportunity to implement some of his suggestions when Roosevelt appointed him
Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Indeed, in 1934 Collier was primarily responsible
for putting together the Wheeler-Howard Indian Rights Bill, the most sweeping
piece of legislation concerning Native Americans since the Dawes Act. The goal of
the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) was to "retribalize" the Native American.
Collier described the IRA's three main objectives: "Economic rehabilitation of the
Indians, principally on the land. Organization of the Indian tribes for managing
their own affairs. Civil and cultural freedom and opportunity for the Indians" (qtd.
in Dippie 307). The Act ended the policy of allotment and even "pledged the federal
government to buy lands for homeless Indians to create new reservations and to
consolidate allotted landholdings fragmented through inheritance into viable
economic units" (Berkhofer 183). Some criticized that Collier had reversed the
assimilationist's error—that many tribes were not prepared to assume the kind of
economic and political responsibility the IRA would give them. Some claimed that
Collier had generalized his understanding of "Indian nature" from his observations
of the southwest Pueblo Indians, who had been far less affected by Euramericans
than the majority of Native American tribes. Some claimed Collier's efforts hurt
those Native Americans who actually sought assimilation into Euramerican society.
Yet most historians now agree that despite their short-sightedness, Collier's policies
benefited most Native Americans.

3 Anticipating such objections, Congress had stipulated that a majority of
members of any tribe must vote for the Act before it would apply to that tribe.
The Indian Reorganization Act was designed to allow Native American tribes greater autonomy, more power to govern themselves. The goal was to shift much of the decision-making concerning Native Americans from the BIA to individual tribal governments (though many critics have complained that this was not the actual effect). Yet one issue remained staunchly within the control of the federal government: "Indian prohibition." The IRA was implemented in 1934, one year after the United States had rejected its "great dry experiment" and repealed national prohibition. S. Lyman Tyler writes, "By an Act of May 21, 1934, certain discriminatory Federal laws of early origin allowing military and civil control within reservation boundaries and hampering freedom of speech were repealed. The Indian liquor law [however] . . . remained in force" (129). "The drunken Indian" remained such a strongly ingrained stereotype that, unlike other U.S. citizens, Native Americans were not allowed to make choices concerning drinking. Indeed, the federal prohibition against drinking by Native Americans would remain in force until 1953, when the matter was given over to state and local authorities, in the federal government's unsuccessful effort to terminate its special responsibilities and services to Native Americans.

Friends of the Indian and a New Narrative Paradigm

Throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, the Indian continued to remain a prominent fixture in American literature. Dime novelists continued to exploit the Indian captivity motif, perpetuating many of its attendant assumptions about "Indian nature." Proponent of literary realism Mark Twain seemed to have his own thoughts about how Native Americans had often been portrayed. As part of his vigorous campaign to challenge the romantic perspective he associated with Cooper, Twain sought to reverse what he believed many of his readers' conceptions
were concerning the "noble savage." In his autobiographical travel narrative Roughing It (1872), Twain generalizes from his observation of a small band of "Goshoots" (Gosiutes) he encountered in Utah Territory, calling them "a silent, sneaking, treacherous looking race... prideless beggars—for if the beggar instinct were left out of an Indian he would not 'go' any more than a clock without a pendulum" (144-45). Twain proceeds, "[they were] savages who, when asked if they have the common Indian belief in a Great Spirit show a something which almost amounts to emotion, thinking whisky is referred to" (145). Indeed, in several of his works, Twain draws on the accepted belief that Native Americans are "habitual drunkards." In Mark Twain's Burlesque Autobiography, Twain claims as one of his ancestors Pah-g-to-wah-wah-puketekeewis, who supposedly fought with General Braddock against George Washington. Firing at Washington 17 times and each time missing, Twain's ancestor allegedly gave up, saying "It ain't no (hic!) no use. 'At man's so drunk he can't stan still long enough for a man to hit him" (21-22). Helen Harris has concluded that when Mark Twain "wrote of the Native American he was unfailingly hostile" (495).

Yet increasingly in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, another faction of Euramericans society sought to promote its view of Native Americans. Reports of the problems in the reservation system, prompted many in the east to clamor for changes in federal Indian policy. Several groups were founded, including the Boston Indian Citizenship Committee and the Women's National Indian Association, who considered their goal not only to directly pressure federal officials but to lobby the American public, to stir up popular sentiment for the welfare of "the red man." Reformers published scores of pamphlets and wrote editorials for popular journals arguing for change in the government's Indian policy. Herbert Welsh, founder of the Philadelphia-based Indian Rights
Association, wrote that the government's leaders "cannot know enough to handle
this tremendous power over the Indian wisely and well, unless steadily out of the
people comes an influence, a voice 'telling them to do their duty and how to do it.'
(qtd. in Mardock 200).

The common goal uniting many of these reformers was to "Americanize" the
Native American. They believed that intercultural conflicts resulted from
differences in environment and education. "Indian nature" was assumed to be not
fixed, but malleable, and thus with the right "stimulus" subject to alteration.
Dismissing the caution preached by gradualists like Lewis Henry Morgan who
contended that Native American cultures must be allowed to evolve slowly, the
reformers generally "believed that compulsory Indian participation in civilizing
programs could accelerate the process considerably" (Bannan 789). As noted, to
this end, many reformers strongly pushed for the dismantling of "communistic"
reservations and the allotment of land to individual Native American families. They
also pushed for a rigorous education program to instill "American values" into
Native Americans, many favoring sending Native American children to boarding
schools where they would be free from the influence of their "backward" home
environment. Richard H. Pratt, founder of the Carlisle (Pennsylvania) Indian
School, argued, using an interesting analogy, "Reforming a drunkard by keeping
him in a saloon would be quite as sensible as our method of trying to civilize and
Americanize our Indians by keeping them separated in tribes on prison
reservations excluded from all contact with our civilization" (qtd. in Bannan 789).
As Prucha points out, the ultimate goal of the reformers was to make Native
Americans conform to "the ideal of the [national] homogeneous mass"
("Introduction" 9), a view that would prevail (at least as far as federal Indian policy
was concerned) though the mid-1930s.
This movement to "Americanize" the Native American, suggested a new narrative paradigm for "Indian stories," one which came to compete with the still-popular Indian captivity motif. Several American literary figures who wrote about Native Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were greatly influenced by the reformers' campaign to assimilate Native Americans. Though Helen Hunt Jackson, Hamlin Garland, and Oliver La Farge each held their separate views about what constituted the best Indian policy, each writer was actively involved in helping to shape Indian policy of his or her day, each at some point serving in some official or semi-official capacity. Each of these writers also helped to develop a new narrative paradigm, utilizing a new set of assumptions for fiction involving Native Americans. Whereas many earlier American writers had turned to the "untamed frontier" (often of the past) as the setting for their "Indian stories," Jackson, Garland, and La Farge for the most part wrote about contemporary Americans, who were expected (and in many cases forced) to "walk the white man's road." As organized armed Native American resistance to Euramerican domination of the west began to weaken, finally ending at Wounded Knee in 1890, the image of the "savage Indian warrior" more and more became an historical figure, an anachronism (though nevertheless a popular anachronism for popular stories set in the "wild west"). The contemporary Native American trying to adapt to or to defy the "white man's world" offered American writers a different kind of struggle to dramatize than that provided by the Euramericans settling of the New World, "winning the west." The context of "Americanization" afforded writers a vastly different perspective from which to speculate on the effects of relations between Euramerican and Native American cultures. Not surprisingly, we find in Jackson.

Indeed, like John Collier, La Farge was in many ways anti-assimilationist.
Garland, and La Farge different assumptions about "Indian nature" and about alcohol and Native Americans from those which had been consistently espoused and popularized by many of their predecessors.

**Helen Hunt Jackson**

Throughout most of her literary career, Helen Hunt Jackson was known primarily for her conventional prose and poetry, works published usually under pseudonyms such as "H. H." or "Saxe Holm." After she met Ponca Chief Standing Bear in Boston in 1879, however, Jackson, who previously "had been openly critical of women who appeared on lecture platforms" (Whitaker 25), enthusiastically took up the cause of the "dispossessed red man," in the last five years of her life writing the two books for which she is most remembered by modern scholars. In *A Century of Dishonor* (1881) and *Ramona* (1885), Jackson abandoned her characteristic use of pseudonyms, proudly displaying her full name as author.

In 1858, the Poncas had signed a treaty with the United States government insuring them a permanent home on the Niobrara River in Nebraska. In 1876, however, following Custer's infamous defeat by bands of Sioux and Cheyenne, the Poncas, who "had never engaged in any warfare with the United States" (D. Brown 335), were included on a list of tribes who were to be relocated in the Indian Territory. Ponca Chief Standing Bear, unhappy with the new southern lands assigned to his people, left the reservation and led a small group northward. Standing Bear's group was intercepted by the U. S. Army and detained at Fort Omaha. Lawyer John L. Webster took up their case, arguing that the Army had no legal

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5 Among other reasons, Standing Bear wanted to honor the wish of his son to be buried beside the Niobrara. Along with many other Poncas, his son had died of disease in the inhospitable climate of the Indian Territory.
right to hold Standing Bear. At the cost of claiming to have abandoned all tribal standing, Standing Bear was ruled by Judge Dundy to be a legal "person" and therefore entitled to the right of free movement enjoyed by American citizens. Standing Bear was allowed to settle on the Niobrara with his small group. Yet those Poncas who remained in Indian Territory were not allowed to move north and Standing Bear and his followers, having been forced to renounce their legal status as "Indians," were not eligible for the money and food guaranteed to the Poncas by earlier treaties.

Omaha Daily Herald reporter Thomas H. Tibbles had piqued national interest with his articles on the proceedings of Standing Bear's trial. In an effort to raise money for the destitute Poncas and to inform the American public about the plight of many western Native American tribes, Tibbles persuaded Standing Bear and the Omaha brother and sister Frank and Susette LaFlesche to tour the country telling their story. In Boston, on October 29, 1879, Helen Hunt Jackson heard Bright Eyes (Susette LaFlesche) translate Standing Bear's account of how the U.S. government had treated the Poncas. Whitaker writes, "suddenly she had a crusade, and it became the dominant force of her life. She helped form the Boston Indian Citizenship Association, travelled with Tibbles, Standing Bear, and the LaFlesches, and began to gather data about government treatment of the Indians" (25-26).

Jackson believed that once the emotions of the public had been aroused, once Euramericans had heard in graphic detail just how Native Americans had been dispossessed of their lands and degraded by white settlers, traders, and federal agents, they would rally behind the cause of the "noble Indian" and demand that "justice be done." Borrowing from strategies established by abolitionists, Jackson sought a way to dramatize the great injustices Native Americans had endured at the hands of a government which purported to prize the rights of all individuals.
Jackson decided to compile a selected though detailed account of just how the federal government had dealt with a number of Native American tribes and consequently "settled down in New York, returning day after day to the small alcove assigned to her at the Astor Library, where she read and catalogued every document [regarding federal treatment of Native Americans], every bit of testimony, compiling a grim record of fraud, pillage, oppression, and the worst kind of cruelty" (May 62).

Realizing she had neither the time nor the need to compile a full-fledged history, Jackson focused A Century of Dishonor: A Sketch of the United States Government's Dealings with Some of the Indian Tribes (published in January 1881) primarily on broken treaties. In her introductory chapter, Jackson asserts that the U.S. government has the same legal responsibility to honor treaties negotiated with Native American tribes as it has with treaties with other nations: by breaking any of its treaties with Native Americans, the federal government necessarily violates recognized international law. Jackson referred to this introductory chapter as a "lawyer's brief," and noted that two lawyers had in fact verified its legal soundness. Yet despite Standing Bear's equivocal courtroom victory, Jackson had little faith that legal arguments alone would secure justice for Native Americans. The long record of broken treaties, the "century of dishonor," required that something more be tried. "There is but one hope of righting this wrong. It lies in appeal to the heart and the conscience of the American people. What the people demand, Congress will do" (Century 30).

Jackson realized that many Euramericans were not automatically disposed to open their hearts to the welfare of Native Americans. She acknowledged the strong, longstanding prejudice many Euramericans harbored against Native Americans, a prejudice only fueled by popular images of "the ignoble savage."
According to Jackson, the federal government had succeeded with virtual impunity in breaking treaties with Native Americans largely due to the wide-spread sentiment among the people of dislike to the Indian, of impatience with his presence as a "barrier to civilization," and distrust of it as a possible danger. The old tales of the frontier life, with its horrors of Indian warfare, have gradually, by two or three generations' telling produced in the average mind something like an hereditary instinct of unquestioning and unreasoning aversion which it is almost impossible to dislodge or soften. (Century 338)

While in A Century of Dishonor Jackson understandably does not dwell at any length upon the killing of white settlers and soldiers by Native Americans—standard fare of many frontier and western dime novels—Jackson does acknowledge the historical reality of such events. She explains such killings, however, as either retributions for previous Euramerican "massacres" of Native Americans, or, in line with her introductory focus on international law, as measures authorized in treaties. Many treaties negotiated between Native Americans and the federal government not only specified boundaries between Euramerican and Native American lands, but also included clauses allowing Native Americans to prevent whites from encroaching on their lands by using any means they chose. Jackson charges that few accounts of "Indian massacres" of white pioneers admitted that from a strictly legal point of view Native Americans often could be considered as exercising their rights to deter trespassers (39).

Yet, as noted, Jackson's design in A Century of Dishonor was not simply to mount a legal defence of Native Americans but to sway the emotions of Euramerican readers, who would unlikely be greatly moved by any excuses for Native American killings of whites, however legally justified. One strategy Jackson employed was to invert the epic convention of Indians massacring whites, in Chapter IX recounting several well-known massacres of Native Americans by whites. Indeed, printed in red on the cover of A Century of Dishonor was a quote from Benjamin Franklin's
1764 Narrative of the Late Massacres in Lancaster County, an account of the exploits of the so-called Paxton Boys: "Look upon your hands! They are stained with the blood of your relations." Jackson asserts that such tales clearly prove that "in the long contest between white men and Indians, the Indian has not always been the aggressor, and that treachery and cruelty are by no means exclusively Indian traits" (335).

Like Standing Bear, the LaFlesches, and Tibbles, Jackson sought above all to highlight the distresses experienced by Native Americans. Most of the chapters in A Century of Dishonor recount the stories of individual tribes—Delawares, Cheyennes, Nez Percé, Sioux, Poncas, Winnebagos, and Cherokees—who had suffered from their treatment by whites. Native Americans had been dispossessed of land that had been previously granted to them in perpetuity. They had been herded from their ancestral grounds onto confined reservations which often had little arable land, where they were subject to malaria and other diseases which their bodies were ill equipped to combat. Unable adequately to support themselves by farming and hunting on such land, Native Americans further were denied the annuities which had been guaranteed to them by treaties—money and supplies which were now necessary for their very survival. As a consequence, many starved to death.

Jackson believed that most of her readers only vaguely perceived the repeated removals of Native Americans as "a sort of reassertion of an abstract general principle" and she sought to change this reaction by her recounting of Native American dispossessions with a "startling force... a vivid picture of details" (Century 64). One particular detail she focuses upon is the degradation and destruction brought to Native American communities by the introduction of alcohol, the white man's firewater. She sought to win her reader's sympathy for
Native Americans in part by invoking the already "loaded" image of "the drunken Indian."

Jackson notes how several of the sources she draws upon in *A Century of Dishonor* show that Native Americans have been repeatedly victimized by liquor traders. She quotes a federal agent to the Delawares who wrote in the 1830s:

> The only hindrance now in the way of the Delawares, Shawnees, and Kickapoos is ardent spirits. * * * These whiskey traffickers, who seem void of all conscience, rob and murder many of these Indians; I say rob—they will get them drunk, and then take their horses, guns, or blankets off their backs, regardless of how quick they may freeze to death; I say they murder—if not directly, indirectly, they furnish the weapon—they make them drunk, and, when drunk, they kill their fellow-beings. Some freeze to death when drunk; several drunken Indians have been drowned in the Missouri River this season, aiming to cross when drunk. (Century 50)

Jackson's emphasis is not on the Native Americans' "moral weakness" which is "proven" by their perceived susceptibility to alcohol, but rather on the cupidity of those whites who capitalize upon this susceptibility. Of the Winnebagoes, who had been removed to west of Minnesota Territory in the 1860s, Jackson writes, "The only serious faults with which they could be charged were drunkenness and gambling, and both of these they had learned of the white settlers" (Century 224). She continues, "Drunkenness is becoming one of the serious vices of the tribe. They are surrounded on all sides by white men who traffic in whiskey, and who are, moreover, anxious to reduce the Indians to as degraded a state as possible" (Century 227). She quotes from an 1861 document in which the Commissioner of Indian Affairs acknowledges how some whites have used liquor as a weapon against the Winnebagoes:

> There are some circumstances connected with the location of this tribe which make it more difficult to protect them from the ravages of liquor-selling than any other tribe. They are closely surrounded by a numerous white population, and these people feel very indignant because the Indians are settled in their midst, and are disposed to make it as uncomfortable for them to remain here as they
can, hoping at some future time they may be able to cause their removal. (Century 227)

Jackson makes similar observations about Euramericans' relations with the Poncas (187), the Sioux (152), and the Cheyennes (68).

In each of these instances, alcohol is cited as an agent of destruction among Native Americans. liquor sapping vital forces rather than changing Indians into dangerous enemies of whites, as in many earlier epic narratives. Yet Jackson is far from content with merely calling up the familiar stereotype of the "lifeless sol" who will drink himself into oblivion if afforded the opportunity, an image which had been used in the "benevolent" campaign for removal in the 1830s. Throughout A Century of Dishonor, Jackson carefully counters this distinctly unflattering image of the Native American, an image that could well elicit disgust as well as pity, with repeated assertions that, without pressure from whiskey sellers, Native Americans would remain sober. She quotes Catlin on the Sioux:

That the Indians in their native state are drunken, is false, for they are the only temperance people, literally speaking, that ever I saw in my travels, or expect to see. If the civilized world are startled at this, it is the fact that they must battle with, not with me. These people manufacture no spirituous liquor themselves, and know nothing of it until it is brought into their country, and tendered to them by Christians. (141)

Jackson repeatedly highlights Native American temperance efforts. She writes of Delaware volunteers in the Union Army, "They were reported as being in the army 'tractable, sober, watchful, and obedient to the commands of their superiors.' They officered their own companies, and the use of spirituous liquors was strictly prohibited among them" (58). Jackson also emphasizes the resolute, determined attempts to curb drinking among the Cheyennes and Cherokees. In fact, arguing that the Cherokees, who had endured one of the most destructive forced removals just a few years earlier, had resiliently succeeded in achieving some measures of "progress" in Indian Territory. Jackson noted, "They had a
temperance society with three thousand members, and an auxiliary society in each of the eight districts into which the country was divided" (287). Such passages suggest that while Jackson wished to use the stereotypical image of "the drunken Indian" ravaged by the white whiskey seller to create sympathy for the Native American, she also wished to show that many Native Americans were as fully capable of avoiding debauched drunkenness as "respectable" whites.

Jackson had high hopes that *A Century of Dishonor* would create a sensation among multitudes of Euramerican readers who, outraged at the treatment of Native Americans she portrayed, would demand reform in federal Indian policy. She even had copies of the book sent, at her own expense, to every member of Congress. Yet the anticipated "mighty outspoken sentiment and purpose of the great body of the people" (*Century* 30) did not come. Many contemporaries groused that *A Century of Dishonor* was too "one-sided"; even Keiser complains that the book "bears all the earmarks of propaganda" (250). While some advances for Native Americans were gained, Jackson was disappointed that more was not accomplished, and that her book was so attacked by many reviewers. Her interest in Native Americans, however, did not wane. On the contrary, at the end of 1881, Jackson travelled to southern California to study the so-called "Mission Indians," those tribes which had been formerly under the jurisdiction of the Mexican Mission system. Her previous writing on the "Indian problem" had been based mainly upon her library researches and her association with Tibbes and Standing Bear. In southern California she would get a chance to observe first hand at least how some Native American tribes were facing incursions from Euramericans.

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6 A March 1881 bill allowed individual Poncas the choice of residing in Indian Territory or of returning to Nebraska.
In late 1881 and early 1882, Jackson travelled throughout southern California on an assignment from *Century Magazine*. Jackson observed living conditions of the Mission Indians of the region and interviewed individuals who could provide some perspective on their problems. The Mission Indians faced significant legal problems with the lands they occupied. When the United States took possession of California after the Mexican War, many of the former Mission Indians held Mexican land grants. Yet these grants were frequently ignored by many of the immigrating whites, who claimed their individual plots of California land under the Homestead Act. In her travels, Jackson encountered many Native Americans who were thus being deprived of land they had inhabited often for many years.

Indignant at this pattern of dispossession, Jackson wrote Secretary of the Interior Henry Teller especially on behalf of Native Americans of the village of Saboba (a plea which would prove unsuccessful). Teller apparently was so impressed by her zeal that in mid 1882 he and Commissioner of Indian Affairs Hiram Price appointed Jackson and Abbot Kinney (whom Jackson had met in Los Angeles) as special agents of the Interior Department, assigned “To visit the Mission Indians in California, and ascertain the location and condition of various bands . . . and what, if any lands should be purchased for their use” (qtd. in Mathes, “Official Agent” 68).

For several months, Jackson and Kinney continued to travel throughout Southern California, observing the situation of the Mission Indians. On July 13, 1883, they submitted their “Report on the Condition and Needs of the Mission Indians of California” (which was appended to subsequent editions of *A Century of Dishonor*). Included among the report’s 11 recommendations were “resurveying and marking existing reservations . . . removal of all white settlers from

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7 The Mission System having been disbanded under Mexico’s secularization decree of 1833.
reservations . . . the establishment of more schools . . . a fund for the purchase of
food and clothing for the aged and sick” (Mathes, Indian Reform Legacy 72-73). As
in A Century of Dishonor, Jackson noted that drinking had taken its toll. Describing
the plight of many dispossessed Native Americans, Jackson and Kinney write:

Considerable numbers of these Indians are also to be found on the
outskirts of white settlements, as at Riverside, San Bernadino, or in
the colonies in the San Gabriel Valley, where they live like gypsies
in brush huts, here to-day, gone to-morrow, eking out a miserable
existence by days' works, the wages of which are too often spent for
the whiskey in the village saloons. ("Report" 459)

They describe conditions at the time of the American takeover: “there were . . .
whole streets in Los Angeles where every other house was a grog-shop for Indians;
and every Saturday night the town was filled with Indians in every stage of
intoxication” ("Report" 463). Indeed, reminiscent of Jackson's strategy in A Century
of Dishonor, she and Kinney state that not all Native Americans they observed were
drunkards: “That drunkenness, gambling, and other immoralities are sadly
prevalent among them, cannot be denied, but the only wonder is that so many
remain honest and virtuous under conditions which make practically null and void
for them most of the motives which keep white men honest and virtuous” ("Report"
464).

Jackson believed she had written an especially moving account of the Mission
Indians, one which would evoke immediate sympathy; Mathes writes “although
other agents had reported on the conditions of the Indians [Jackson] felt she could
write an account 'Which . . . will reach hearts' " ("Official Agent" 69). In 1884
Commissioner Price did introduce a bill which followed many of Jackson and
Kinney's recommendations. This bill, however, died in Congress; though several
homestead claims on Indian lands were cancelled, the report failed to achieve any significant immediate effect.\(^8\)

Disappointed, Jackson decided to change genres. If she had failed to stir the necessary number of hearts with non-fiction accounts of Native American suffering, perhaps fiction, already her demonstrated area of expertise, would prove more effective. "She realized, as did many other popular writers, that 'felt history' was simply more successful, both politically and financially, than understood history, which did not have the power that personality-centered fiction could lend it" (Marsden, "Jackson" 17). For while A Century of Dishonor and the report on the Mission Indians documented in fulsome detail the distresses of many Native Americans, they both generally portrayed Native Americans in the aggregate. A novel would allow her to focus on individual lives in greater depth; in a novel Jackson felt she could more forcefully dramatize the plight of many Native Americans.

The idea of writing an "Indian novel" had initially been suggested to Jackson by Richard Watson Gilder, editor of Century Magazine, who was unhappy with a novel on the subject his magazine had already commissioned. Gilder "told Jackson that she was the person to write a novel that would do for the Indians what Harriet Beecher Stowe had done for the Negroes" (Whitaker 32). Jackson herself seemed taken by this comparison to Stowe, writing to a friend in May 1883, "If I could write a story that would do for the Indian a thousandth part of what Uncle Tom's Cabin did for the Negro, I would be thankful the rest of my life" (qtd. in Marsden, "Jackson" 17). Jackson turned to the material she had gathered in her travels throughout southern California, writing to several acquaintances for additional information.

\(^8\) Though in 1891, six years after Jackson's death, Congress passed a bill which was based on a number of Jackson and Kinney's recommendations.
and in a short period of time transformed this material into one of the most enduringly popular nineteenth-century American novels. In just over two months—from December 1883 to March 1884—Jackson wrote *Ramona*. First serialized in *The Christian Union* and subsequently published in book form in November 1884, *Ramona* sold 15,000 copies in its first year—a figure that could not approach *Uncle Tom's Cabin*'s first-year sales of 300,000, but one which was nevertheless more than merely respectable.

In 1886, the *North American Review* ranked *Ramona* along with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "as one of the two great ethical novels of the century" (Dorris, "Introduction" v). Subsequent critics, however, have been quite divided over the efficacy of *Ramona* as a social protest novel arguing for Native American land rights. Some have pointed out the weakness of Jackson's romantic plot, complaining that it focuses too little on the condition of the Mission Indians. There is some justification for this criticism. After all, the novel begins with Ramona, mixed-blood daughter of Scotsman Angus Phail and a Native American woman, as the longtime ward of Senora Gonzaga Moreno, a bigoted Mexican matron whose large ancestral estate is threatened by encroaching Anglo-Americans. Blue-eyed and fair skinned, the heroine is brought up ignorant of her Native American blood. When the Temecula Indians come one autumn to help the Moreno's servants with sheep-shearing, Ramona falls in love with Alessandro, son of the band's chief, whose skin, we are told "was not a shade darker than Felipe's [Senora Moreno's son]" (101). Jackson, perhaps bowing a bit to what she might have perceived as her contemporary readers' prejudice, takes special care to note that Ramona and Alessandro at least do not look like typical Native Americans.  

9 Jackson seems to have followed the lead of abolitionist novelists who often "blanched" the features of their African-American protagonists.
his leg, Alessandro agrees to stay on the estate while the rest of his people return to
their threatened village. Indeed, Alessandro is prepared to sacrifice his duty to his
people in order to be near Ramona, whom he believes is much too "fine" to live in
an "Indian village"; Alessandro's love here virtually eclipses his sense of social
responsibility. Though Ramona does finally choose to live among Native
Americans, and though much of the subsequent narrative does focus upon the
distresses of the dispossessed Mission Indians, the novel ends, after the death of
Alessandro, with Ramona becoming the bride of Felipe and being led into Mexico
City, the new Senora Moreno, married into one of Mexico's most venerated families.
Her association with Native American culture is lost as she becomes absorbed into
Mexican high society, a rescued damsel. Mathes writes that "Jackson failed to create
a sympathetic feeling for the Indians among many of her readers, who instead saw
only a tender love story" (Indian Reform Legacy 82).

Yet while these elements of the typical love story certainly compromise
Ramona's claim to serious social commentary, they do not necessarily negate such a
purpose. A significant portion of the novel does focus upon the situation of the
dispossessed Mission Indians. For much of the novel, Alessandro and Ramona are
forced to seek shelter, avoiding the land-hungry Anglos whose new claims preempt
the rights to land long inhabited by Native Americans. As John Byers Jr.
documents, many of the accounts of Anglo injustices against Native Americans in
this section of Ramona were adapted quite faithfully from actual incidents Jackson
had seen and heard in the course of her travels as special agent for the Interior
Department; Jackson "had written . . . in her Mission Indian report the seeds for the
whole story as it is found in the novel" (Byers 332). Such events in the novel as the
forced removal of the Temecula Indians from their village and Doctor Morong's
claim to the land of Alessandro's friend Ysidro have almost direct parallels in the
1883 "Report" (Byers 334-35: 337-38). Alessandro's death by the vicious white man Farrar, who charged Alessandro with horse stealing, is nearly identical to the fate of Juan Diego, a Cahuilla who was killed by the white man Temple under a similar charge (Byers 342-43). The novel's Aunt Ri, the Anglo easterner who befriends Alessandro and Ramona, was modeled after not only Stowe's fictional Aunt Ophelia but also after the real Mrs. Gregory "who is mentioned [in the Jackson and Kinney report]... in the section on the Conejos Indians (Byers 339).

In the portion of the novel which focuses on Alessandro and Ramona's several attempts to set up a peaceful home, Jackson pointedly inverts several images of Native Americans popularized in earlier epic literature. One aspect is dramatized in the conversion of Aunt Ri Hyer, whose family has emigrated to California from southern Tennessee. The Hyers first encounter Alessandro and Ramona in a snowstorm just after the couple and their infant daughter had been forced to leave the San Pasquale valley. Struck by the devotion they show one another, Aunt Ri is forced to rethink her previously held notions concerning "Injuns": Jackson tells us that Aunt Ri's "ideas of Indians had been drawn from newspapers, and from a book or two of narratives of massacres" (Ramona 387). Drawn to the plight of the young couple, she is indignant at how Native Americans had been driven from their homes in Temecula and San Pasquale, refusing to believe that the federal government could have been aware of such treatment: "I'm an Ummeriken!... We're Ummerikens! 'n' we wouldn't cheat nobody, not ef we knew it, not out of a doller... The Ummeriken people don't want any o' this cheatin' done, naow!... Why, it's a burnin' shame to any country!" (394). Indeed, from initially thinking of Native Americans as violent savages Aunt Ri becomes one of the novel's most vocal advocates for Native American rights. When she learns that Alessandro has been killed by a white man who had accused Alessandro of stealing his horse, she
castigates the government agent who claims he has no authority to pursue an incident which Aunt Ri plainly sees as murder. She charges that the agent spends much effort in trying to curb the whiskey trade but neglects assisting Native Americans in more pressing matters: "ef yeow 've got power ter git a man put in jail fur sellin' whiskey t 'n' Injun, 'n' hain't got power to git him punished ef he goes 'n' kills that Injun. 't seems to me that's suthin' cur'us abaout that" (475).

As in A Century of Dishonor and the later "Report," in Ramona Jackson repeats the charge that Euramericans have used liquor to degrade and dispossess Native Americans. This same government agent answers Aunt Ri's complaint that he does not do enough to assist his Native American "wards": "I am determined to break up this vile business of selling whiskey to Indians. It is no use trying to do anything for them while they are made drunk in this way, it's a sin and a shame" (474). Yet despite such references, Ramona contains no dramatized instances of drinking by Native Americans. In fact, not only has Jackson made her Native American male protagonist light-skinned, she has made him absolutely detest liquor. When at one point Ramona suggests that she and Alessandro go to Los Angeles to look for work, Alessandro is aghast at such an idea:

they pay the Indians in money sometimes, half wages; sometimes in bad flour, or things he does not want; sometimes in whiskey; and if he will not take it, and asks for his money, they laugh and tell him to go, then. One man in San Bernadino last year, when an Indian would not take a bottle of sour wine for pay for a day's work, shot him in the cheek with his pistol, and told him to mind how he was insolent any more! (377)

In fact, ironically, the only drunken characters in the novel at all are Euramericans. Rather than liquor making Native Americans act more aggressively towards whites, in Ramona liquor serves to make whites act more aggressively toward Native Americans, a direct inversion of the earlier epic image of Native American drinking that appeared in Indian war and captivity narratives. This
pattern is dramatized most pointedly when Alessandro and Ramona first return to Temecula after whites had driven out all the Native American inhabitants. Hoping to raise money by selling his violin, Alessandro seeks to retrieve the valuable instrument from the white tavern owner Hartsell, who had previously treated Alessandro and his family kindly and who now holds Alessandro's violin in safekeeping. Carefully concealing himself, at darkness Alessandro steals through the village. He notices a light on in the house previously inhabited by himself and his family and investigates the new "squatters." "The woman looked weary and worn... but the man was a brute—a human brute" (290). Alessandro observes that the couple are quarrelling and that the white man has intimidated his entire family: "He was half drunk, his worst and most dangerous state" (290-91). When this "human brute" catches a glimpse of Alessandro in his window, "With a fearful oath, the half-drunk man exclaimed, 'One of those damned Indians, I expect... We'll have to shoot two or three of 'em yet before we're rid of 'em!' " (291). Luckily, the half-drunk man's hand is unsteady, causing the bullet to fly free of its mark, allowing Alessandro to escape unharmed.

Yet Alessandro fares no better at Hartsells. Expecting to be greeted sympathetically by the white tavern owner, whom he hopes will pay generously for his violin, Alessandro is instead informed by Hartsell's wife, "Jim's drunk. No use your talking to him tonight" (296). Shortly after this announcement.

... the door to the dining-room burst open, and a dozen men, headed by the drunken Jim, came stumbling, laughing, reeling into the kitchen.

"Where's supper! Give us our supper! What are you about with your Indian here? I'll teach you how to cook ham!" stammered Jim, making a lurch towards the stove. (298)

Jackson describes Alessandro at this moment as "standing like a statue, his eyes, full of hatred and contempt, fixed on the tipsy group" (299), while Mrs. Hartsell warns him, "You'd better go. There's no knowing what they'll do next" (299).
In Ramona, Jackson has gone one step further than in A Century of Dishonor. Whereas in the earlier work, Jackson had countered the evidence of excessive drinking by Native Americans with assertions that Native Americans are at their core a temperate people, willing if given the chance to maintain sobriety in their own communities, in Ramona Jackson suggests that Native Americans may actually have more to fear from drunken whites than whites from drunken Native Americans. Consistent with her strategy in Chapter IX of A Century of Dishonor, Jackson has inverted the epic scenario of savage Indians attacking a white settlement or wagon train, threatening innocent pioneers, a narrative context which had shaped Aunt Ri's initial conception of "Injuns." Instead, whites are portrayed as the "savages," unjustly harming innocent Native Americans. Drinking and drunkenness are attributed to those whites responsible for dispossessing Native Americans, symbols of their uncontrolled, "uncivilized" lust. Indeed, in many ways Jackson seems to retain the same rhetorical associations of drinking and drunkenness that characterized early American Indian war and captivity narratives, transferring them virtually intact to her white antagonists—the same symbol with a different subject.

Hamlin Garland

By the time Hamlin Garland began to write about Native Americans he had already acquired fame (or notoriety) as an "angry young man." Main-Travelled Roads (1891), with its portraits of the drudgery of midwestern farm life, its expose of the despair of the tenant farmer and ruthlessness of the farm landlord, countered the pastoral myth of the midwest as "America's garden" where "free and independent" Americans could thrive. Many charged Garland, himself born and raised in the midwest, with betraying his people, his "roots." After the failure of
his political novel *A Spoil of Office* (1892). Garland “gave up political fiction and retreated, as he said, ‘from the ethic to the esthetic’” (Underhill and Littlefield 7).

In the mid 1890s, Garland began to travel about the far west, writing descriptive pieces about western landscapes, several of which were published in *Atlantic Monthly*. “Many aspects of the West interested Garland, but he found the American Indian most fascinating” (Underhill and Littlefield 8). Indeed, beginning in 1895, Garland made several extended tours of western reservations, taking extensive notes, poring over agency records, and interviewing Native Americans and white traders and agents. In 1895, travelling through Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona, Garland visited the Southern Ute Reservation, the Isleta Pueblo, the Hopi Reservation, and the Zuni and Acoma Pueblos, returning to many of these places the next year. In 1897 Garland toured the northwest, stopping at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in the Dakotas, the Crow and Flathead Reservations in Montana and the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. In 1898 he toured the Yakima Reservation in Washington and in Montana visited the Blackfeet, Fort Belknap, and Fort Peck Reservations.

Over the course of the next two years, Garland revisited many of these places and extended his tours to such places as the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservations in the Indian Territory. Garland also made the acquaintance of many reservation employees, including George W. Stouch, agent to the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahos, and John Seger, subagent and school superintendent for “Seger’s Colony” in Oklahoma. Garland’s association with these men proved so fruitful for his literary career that he has more than once been accused of crass plagiarism (for instance, see McKay). While Garland may have been no expert on Native Americans, his writings were at least based on a far more extensive first-hand observation of their life than those of most of his predecessors. Underhill and
Littlefield amply demonstrate that most of the stories that Garland printed in magazines such as Harper's Weekly and McClure's (and later collected in The Book of the American Indian) and many of the episodes in his novel The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop were closely reworked from notes Garland had taken during his visits to the various western reservations.

Despite his avowed intention after A Spoil of Office to avoid political issues, Garland's "treatment of the Indian was sympathetic from the start, and that sympathy caused him to expend much of his energy on works that were as much sociological as literary and more reformist than aesthetic" (Underhill and Littlefield 8). Indeed, in his 1903 essay "The Red Man as Material," Garland takes to task earlier writers who had perpetuated the popular image of the Native American as a "violent, ignoble savage." Such writers were, he claims, most concerned with their own gain and were too willing to accept established stereotypes:

Even the explorers could not endure to tamely report [the Indian] peaceful nor the missionary recognize him as virtuous, for to do so would make exploring altogether too easy and conversion of no avail. When a man starts out to find a savage and terrible tribe he generally succeeds—in his book—and so the primitive races have ever been represented on their diabolic rather than on their human side. From the beginning they were "material." (179)

The reading public, many of whose ideas about Native Americans had, like Jackson's Aunt Ri's, been shaped by sensational tales of war and captivity, had come to expect conflicts between handsome white heroes and violent, beastly Indian savages and popular authors had responded to this demand: "to Cooper, Simms, Bird... and a thousand others who followed them—the Cherokee or the Sioux was 'the enemy' who furnished the hero an opportunity to display his valor" ("Material" 180). Garland is profoundly aware of how this narrative pattern necessarily constrained a writer's use of ethnographical information about Native Americans: "Under these conditions you must not expect to gain any very clear notion of what a
red family is like—for this 'fiend' has no family: he is merely stalking the woods to
capture 'heroines' and clip locks of hair from temples of handsome young heroes”
("Material" 180). Though he credits Cooper with trying to work within this
narrative pattern to create a more sympathetic portrait of Native Americans than
was previously available in epic literature, Garland recognizes that the very form
of the frontier romance automatically subverts such attempts:

> even a friendly fictionist like Cooper is forced, from the very
> necessities of his tale, to traduce other tribes while ennobling the
> one he happens to know.... It is necessary that the romance of
> adventure have an "enemy," and in order that the reader shall be
> blinded to the barbarism—the useless cruelty of the hero and his
> forces—the enemy is painted in the blackest colors.... the kind of
> novel [Cooper] elected to write defeated him—he was forced to be
> superficial and unjust to the Miami in order to exalt his hero and the
> friendly Delawares. ("Material" 181)

Garland considered his own fiction about Native Americans as a distinct break
from the epic tradition of frontier romances and dime novels. The one historical
narrative he did write—the prose-poem "The Silent Eaters"—is a virtual inversion of
the typical frontier story. Narrated by Iapa, an American-educated Uncappappas
Sioux, "The Silent Eaters" retells the story of Sitting Bull. Drawing upon official
records at the Standing Rock Agency and upon his own interviews with individual
Sioux, Garland sought to portray the notorious Sioux chief from a Native American
point of view, as a peaceloving leader who wanted only to be left alone by the white
army which fought to force his people onto reservations. The Battle of Little
Bighorn, the infamous "Custer's Massacre," is dramatized as a purely defensive
struggle on the part of the combined Sioux and Cheyenne band. In direct contrast
to the Puritan Indian war narrative and its fictional descendents, "The Silent
Eaters" depicts Native Americans under siege from aggressive whites.

The majority of Garland's Native American stories focused upon the
contemporary scene: Native Americans who were confined to reservations and who
were expected to "walk the white man's road." Garland seems curiously ambivalent about Euramericans' attempts to teach Native Americans "American values," to transform them all into Christian farmers. Several of his stories depict Native American characters coming to appreciate certain aspects of Euramerican culture. In "The River's Warning," the young Big Elk, who had been "brought up to hate the white man who came into our land to kill off our buffalo" (68), loses all desire to raid the "enemy" white town when he observes some of the material advantages the white villagers enjoy. Big Elk observes a blacksmith shoeing a horse and muses, "That seemed to me a fine thing to do and I wanted my pony fixed that way" (70). Similarly, in "Nistina" a Native American girl overcomes her aversion to white schooling and learns to read and write in order to correspond with her lover Hawk, who had been sent to Florida for a retaliatory raid he had led against some "white ruffians." When her father discovers that Nistina can receive and send written messages across hundreds of miles, the old man, who had previously scorned all "white ways," declares, "It is good . . . Surely the white people are wonder-working beings" ("Nistina" 22).

Not all instances of Native American "conversion" to Euramerican ways are portrayed, however, as equally benign. Several of Garland's short stories show Euramericans coercing Native Americans to attend their schools. While Garland seems generally supportive of such intentions, he does not unequivocally applaud every method employed. In "Wahiah—A Spartan Mother," the white school teacher Seger convinces chief Tomacham and his wife Wahiah to send their son Atokan to his school, arguing, "What will you do? The buffaloes are gone. The elk and deer are going. Your sons cannot live by hunting—they must live as the white man lives—by tilling the earth" (3). Tomacham consents, but Seger faces a problem when Atokan and a group of his fellows begin to play hookey. Seger decides he
must administer a white school teacher's punishment in order to break the rebellious spirit of the Native American boy: a public whipping. Tomacham and Wahiah at first object, claiming that it would never do to have a chief's son humiliated before others. But Seger persists, refusing to bend his rules to Native American custom and proceeds to spank Atokan before the entire class. The parents, broken in spirit as well, passively accede to Seger's disciplinary act, tacitly admitting that some aspects of Native American culture must bend before the "white man's ways."

More than any other of Garland's stories perhaps "Rising Wolf-Ghost Dancer" best suggests Garland's overall attitude toward the clash between Native American and Euramerican cultures. Rising Wolf, like his father before him, had been a respected medicine man among his people. He tells of his people's initial subjection: "the white man came with his soldiers, and made a corral here in the hot, dry country, and drove us therein, and said, 'If you go outside we will shoot you.' Soon we became poor. We then had no buffalo at all" (56). As a medicine man, schooled in the ancient beliefs of his people, Rising Wolf is predisposed to believe in the message of Wovoka, the Paiute Ghost Dance messiah, who prophesied the rise of the "red people." In 1890, as nearly every Native American group had been herded onto reservations, an evangelistic millenarian movement swept throughout several of the western Indian reservations, especially those of the Sioux. An syncretic blend of traditional Christianity and Native American belief, the Ghost Dance movement promised a return to the conditions of "the old days" if Native American believers would perform a special dance. Rising Wolf is told, "Let everybody come and dance four days in succession, and on the fourth day the white

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10 Garland depicts this movement in the most detail in chapters XI through XIII of "The Silent Eaters."
man will disappear and the buffalo come back; our dead will return with the buffalo" (58). The reason for the present degraded state of Native American people: "You have forgotten the ways of the fathers, therefore great distress is upon you. You must throw away all that the white man has brought you" (58-59).

Rising Wolf fervently leads his people in the Ghost Dance. But after the fourth day of dancing, he collapses, disheartened to realize that nothing has changed, that the Ghost Dance prophesy was false. Disillusioned, Rising Wolf resolves:

I will follow the white man's trail. I will make him my friend, but I will not bend my neck to his burdens. I will be cunning as the coyote. I will ask him to help me to understand his ways, and then I will prepare the way for my children. Maybe they will outrun the white man in his own shoes. Anyhow, there are but two ways. One leads to hunger and death, the other to where the poor white man lives. Beyond is the happy hunting ground, where the white man cannot go. (62)

Rising Wolf is ready to live on earth, to eke out a subsistence, like a Euramerican; he refuses, however, completely to discard his beliefs. Indeed, in several of his stories, Garland illustrates similar types of compromise: Native Americans accepting certain aspects of Euramerican culture but retaining important aspects of their own. As Underhill notes, "one of the major themes of Garland's work [is] that the Indian should not be 'civilized' at the expense of his native rituals, ceremonies, and amusements" (108).

Like other Euramerican commentators upon the reservation system in the late nineteenth century, Garland observes that one major obstacle to the "civilization" of Native Americans is the prevalence of liquor. In his 1902 essay "The Red Man's Present Needs," Garland argues that the practice of licensing white traders and giving them a monopoly on trade with a particular group of Native Americans allows these traders to take advantage of their "customers" with high prices. Garland advocates that "competing stores should be welcomed on each reservation"
but only "Under the single restriction that no liquor should be sold" (173). McKay complains of Garland's depiction of Native Americans: "Completely overlooking the Indian virtue of self-restraint, Garland appealed to the stock figures of the drunken Indian and the immoral squaw" (65-66). Yet while references to drinking by Native Americans are fairly plentiful throughout Garland's writings, as in the works of Helen Hunt Jackson, there are significantly few actual dramatizations of such drinking, certainly none by protagonists. Most references to Native American drinking in The Book of the American Indian are in the form of complaints by Native American characters about how white traders have used liquor to cheat their people. In "Big Moggasen," a Navajo chief refuses to send children from his band to the white boarding school (the price of material aid), resolutely declaring: "No. My children shall not come. I do not believe in the white man's ways. I am old and I have seen many things. The white man makes our young men drunk. He steals away our daughters. He takes away their hearts with sweet drinks and clothes. He is a wolf" (92). Drifting Crane objects to the white man Henry Wilson's settling on land adjoining his reservation because he fears others will follow: "The white men come thick as grass. They tear up the sod. They build houses. They scare the buffalo away. They spoil my young men with whiskey" ("Drifting Crane" 30).

In "The Silent Eaters," Sitting Bull offers the following reason for his refusal to lead his people onto the reservation to which the federal government has assigned them: "I do not wish to be shut up in a corral. . . . It is bad for the young men to be fed by the agent. It makes them lazy and drunken. All the agency Indians I have ever seen were worthless" (199). In "The New Medicine House," the Sioux refuse to send their children to the white man's hospital in part because, despite the excuse that the white nurse takes drink for her cough, the Sioux medicine man Tah-You declares, "the medicine woman drinks whisky in the night
and our children ought not to see that their medicine woman is a drunkard" (41).

In each of these cases Garland’s Native American characters recognize that liquor is a destructive agent among their people, an agent for which the Euramerican is ultimately responsible. Like Jackson’s Alessandro, these characters themselves refuse to drink, belying the stereotype of “the drunken Indian.”

Indeed, as in *Ramona*, in Garland’s stories Euramericans are more frequently depicted as drunkards than are Native Americans. We see this pattern dramatized particularly in “The Story of Howling Wolf.” After several rowdy cowboys had killed his brother, Howling Wolf had “made a solemn declaration of war against the white cattlemen” (136). Yet Captain Cook, newly appointed head of the Snake River Agency, succeeds in convincing the bitter man that not all whites are bad, that many wish truly to help Native Americans. Howling Wolf relents and asks Cook to write on a piece of paper that he can show to all, “I am Howling Wolf. Long I hated the white man. Now my heart is good and I want to make friends with all white men. I want to work with a plow and live in a house like the white man” (140). The chief makes good on his promise, assiduously taking up his farm work.

Yet one day as Howling Wolf and several Native American co-workers drive a load of hides from the reservation to the neighboring Euramerican town, they are accosted by a group of cowboys. In town, they meet again:

> [Howling Wolf] was standing before a shop window lost in the attempt to understand the use of all the marvelous things he saw there, when a saloon door opened and a party of loud-talking white men came out. He turned his head quickly and perceived the three cowboys who had passed him on the road. They recognized him also and their leader swaggered up to him, made reckless with drink, and began to abuse him. (143)

Though Howling Wolf tries to avoid a fight, one of the drunken cowboys pulls out a pistol and fires. In the confusion, when the bullet ricochets into the leg of a
bystander, Howling Wolf is apprehended and, though unarmed, is accused of shooting the man. Garland writes:

Meanwhile grossly distorted accounts of the affair passed from saloon to barber shop and at last took this shape: "A gang of drunken reds had struck Hank Kelly for a drink and when he refused one of them shot him in the stomach. All escaped but one, old Howling Wolf, one of the worst old reprobates that ever lived. He ought to be lynched and we'll do it yet." (145)

In the meantime the real culprit swaggers around town, perceived as the hero of the muddled affair; "Ultimately he grew too drunk to throw any light on the subject at all and his companions took him and fled the town, leaving Howling Wolf to bear the weight of the investigation" (145). Howling Wolf is subsequently imprisoned and is later nearly beaten to death by a crowd of whites. His faith in whites completely crushed, Howling Wolf’s "hate and despair never lifted" (155).

The white townspeople obviously believe that "drunken reds" are potentially dangerous, that liquor can make an "Injun" a threat to whites. Garland’s actual depiction of drinking in “The Story of Howling Wolf” suggests, however, that white men are equally, if not more prone to be turned into violent drunks. In fact Garland in a sense anticipates MacAndrew and Edgerton’s argument (advanced over sixty years later) that Native Americans may have modeled their drinking behavior after the examples they witnessed of Euramericans drinking. In “The Red Man’s Present Needs,” Garland wrote, “The cowboy is a picturesque citizen, but he does not make for sweetness and light... he is not... an inspiration to a race struggling to acquire sobriety and thrift. Nevertheless he has been for forty years the chief exemplar of the the white man’s civilization—so far as the red men were aware” (176). Indeed, Garland went on to state, "As a novelist, I am sorry to see [cowboys] go; as a well wisher of the red men, and as a believer in decent speech, sobriety and kindly living, I am glad of the cowboy’s diminishing hoof-beats. He carries with
him something fine, but his room is better than his presence when all is said and
done" ("Needs" 177).

Garland's 1902 novel *The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop*, one of the most
popular of his many novels, treats the subject of alcohol and Native Americans in a
similar manner. The novel focuses upon the efforts of U. S. Army captain George
Curtis to help Native Americans adapt to life on a reservation, to become "yeoman
farmers." At the outset of the story, Curtis is appointed as agent to the fictional
Tetong Agency, where he is to "assume command" from the corrupt agent Sennett.
In an inversion of the earlier epic narrative pattern of white homesteaders
besieged by hostile Indians, the novel follows Curtis's attempts to protect the
reservation from surrounding white ranchers who are pressuring the government
to disband it and to allow them to use it as grazing land. Much of the plot, however,
revolves around the growing love affair between idealistic westerner Curtis and
Elsie Brisbane, daughter of powerful former U. S. Senator Alexander Brisbane, a
politician instrumental in efforts to remove the Tetongs. Elsie is an artist from the
east, initially interested in Native Americans solely as picturesque subjects for her
paintings. Garland traces Curtis's attempts to persuade Elsie to take a more humane
view of Native Americans, striving against the cultural prejudice "inherited" from
her father. Some readers have criticized what they perceive as Garland's
overreliance upon this love story between two white characters. McGreivey traces
the novel's faults to "the simplistic conventions of romance that Garland was trying
to use for his reformist ends" (57). Meyer claims the novel "fails because the
fictional vehicle is inadequate" (302).

Yet despite Garland's focus upon the relationship between Curtis and Elsie
Brisbane (which, after all, does center primarily on the two characters' initially
conflicting attitudes towards Native Americans), *The Captain of the Gray-Horse*
**Troop**, unlike many other contemporary fictional treatments of Native Americans, seriously addresses one of the major issues of Native American–white relations: land rights. The contention between the white ranchers and the Tetongs over livestock grazing on the reservation mirrored similar controversies actually taking place throughout the American west at the outset of the twentieth century.

Garland’s sympathies lie squarely with Native Americans. After several of the Tetong complain that white ranchers have illegally herded their sheep on reservation land, the white sheepherder Coles is found fatally shot on the reservation, increasing tension between whites and Native Americans. As several mobs of whites storm the Tetong reservation seeking retaliation for Coles’s death, Garland capitalizes on his opportunity to demonstrate that cowboys are definitely not exemplars of “decent speech, sobriety and kindly living.”

As in several of his short stories, in *The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop* Garland alludes to the belief that Native Americans are especially susceptible to drinking and drunkenness. When Curtis is called to Washington to testify before a Senate Committee debating whether to remove the Tetongs or buy out for them the surrounding white ranches, Curtis and his ethnologist friend Lawson meet a delegation of Cheyennes and Apaches waiting to see the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Lawson warns the group, who inform him they have had “a good visit” in Washington, “Well, don’t stay too long here. The white man will rob you of your good clothes. Be careful of fire-water” (109). When the eastern painter Jerome Parker and his wife later come to visit the Tetong reservation, with the sole interest in finding interesting subjects for Parker’s art, Captain Curtis, as the gracious host, takes his guests on a camping trip to a remote part of the reservation. When an isolated band of Tetongs offer to perform a ceremonial dance for the interested whites, the effete Parker, whose notions of the west have been formed only by what
he has read, becomes "a little nervous" (186). Parker asks Curtis "Suppose they
should get hold of some liquor" (186), apparently believing in the stereotype that
once Native Americans drink, they become uncontrollably violent, a danger to
"well-meaning" whites such as himself. Curtis replies "with a slight smile," "This
band is too far away from the white man to have his vices" (186).

Indeed, it is "white vices" that Garland illustrates most plainly in his novel.
For whereas Cut Finger, the Tetong who killed the trespassing Coles, is portrayed as
an overly zealous defender of his people's right, he is a distinctly sober one, more
than can be said of the whites who ride onto the reservation demanding "justice."
Garland describes Sheriff Winters and his "posse" who first come to investigate
Coles's death: "There were eleven of them; all were deeply excited, and two or three
of the younger men were observably drunk and reckless" (214). Shortly afterward,
a second group of white vigilantes show up, obviously in collusion with this "posse."
Curtis recognizes that he faces a tricky situation: "Many of them were the roughest
types of cowboys, the profane and reckless renegades of older communities, and
being burdened with ammunition, and foolhardy with drink, they were in no mood
to turn tail and ride away" (216-17). Indeed, it is only through the wiles of Elsie
Brisbane and Curtis's sister Jennie that this group is "defused": playing on the
stereotype that a cowboy always respects a lady, the two young women invite the
men to a dinner, and their "feminine strategy" dilutes the zeal of the tipsy cowboys,
allowing Curtis to convince their leaders that he himself will bring the "murdering
Injuns" to justice, and succeeding in getting them to leave the reservation.

Yet such strategy does not for long keep out the vigilantes. With Bill Yarpe as
their leader, a group of whites return to the Tetong reservation, again demanding
to be allowed to conduct their own "investigation" of Coles's shooting. Garland
writes, "As he looked into the big, red, whiskey-bloated face of Yarpe, Curtis was
frankly dismayed. The old ruffian was not only inflamed with liquor, he was intoxicated with a subtler elixir—the pride of command” (274). In this case, feminine wiles are not sufficient to pacify the mob: Garland has the U. S. cavalry, to whom Curtis had sent a message when he had learned that the ranchers were planning another ride into the reservation, appear on the scene to deter any violence against the Tetongs, led by Curtis’s friend Captain Maynard, who at least has the sense of humor to observe “here I am, rescuing beleaguered damsels, like the hero of a dime novel” (289). While Garland does not even imply that drinking has directly caused the white ranchers to threaten force in revenging Coles’s death, he makes a point of describing the white vigilantes as intoxicated, their excessive drinking precipitating their aggressive intimidation of the Tetongs.

Curtis discovers that Cut Finger is the killer and convinces the Tetong to give himself up, though neither truly believes that Cut Finger will receive fair treatment in the white courts. The issue is not even allowed to go that far. When Curtis delivers Cut Finger into the jail in Pinon City, a town adjoining the reservation, many of the white men are not content to let the Tetong have a trial. Garland describes the atmosphere of the town: “The street was thronging with noisy boys, and at intervals a band of young herdsmen clattered into the square. Their horses thickened along the hitching- poles, and the saloons swarmed with men already inflamed with drink” (369). In fact, the drunken white mob succeeds in its aim, that night breaking into the jail and lynching Cut Finger.

While at the conclusion of The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop Senator Brisbane’s political faction is defeated—the bill for the government purchase of white ranches surrounding the reservation winning over the removal bill—and

11 Indeed, in his depiction of western mob mentality, Garland in a sense anticipates Walter Van Tilburg Clark’s The Ox-Bow Incident.
even the Indian-hating Elsie Brisbane is won over to "the red cause." Garland’s portrayal of western white ranchers—the cowboy who had come to be so idealized in contemporary dime novels—remains overwhelmingly negative. Indeed, in his novel, Garland, as Jackson had done in *Ramona*, virtually reverses the image of the clean, sober white cowboy, defender of honor and justice, and that of the degraded, savage "Injun," the aggressive villain. As in "The Story of Howling Wolf," in *The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop*, it is the whites who are the aggressors, made more violent through drinking. Indeed, as Jack Davis notes, Garland’s novel in many ways constitutes a criticism of "American values" as they were represented by many Euramerican westerners:

Pushed to its logical conclusion, *The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop* is a continuation of Garland’s earlier criticism of our failure to establish a worthy civilization in America. Had we learned from the first Americans how to limit technology so it did not diminish man’s identity with the wondrous world around him, there would not be the ugliness of spirit that so enraged Garland—the avariciousness of land-hungry ranchers, the leering racial brutality of drunken cowboys... ("Garland’s Indians" 438-39)

Through his depiction of the white ranchers’ siege of the Tetong Reservation, Garland inverts an American literary tradition begun with the Puritan Indian war narrative, and in the process subverts conventional stereotypes regarding alcohol and Native Americans.

**Oliver La Farge**

Of popular Euramerican writers throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Oliver La Farge had perhaps the deepest interest in the welfare of Native Americans. Though during his New England childhood La Farge was undoubtedly introduced to literary stereotypes of Indians, when a young adult his perspective took a more scientific turn. At Harvard La Farge majored in the relatively new
academic field of anthropology, accompanying two scholarly expeditions to the Navajo Reservation in the southwestern United States before he graduated and one immediately after. As linguist for the 1925 Tulane University expedition to Central America, La Farge co-wrote with expedition leader Frans Blom Tribes and Temples, a study of Mayan culture. In 1931, he and Douglas Byers published The Year Bearer’s People, another book on the Mayans, incorporating research from a third Tulane expedition (T. M. Pearce 101).

Throughout much of his career, La Farge concerned himself with publishing factual accounts of Native American life. In 1942, he edited The Changing Indian, a collection of essays written by reputable scholars and other experts (among them BIA Commissioner John Collier) informing readers of the problems facing contemporary Native American peoples, an attempt to counter the static image of the Native American as primitive savage perpetuated by much of the popular literature and film of the day. In 1956 La Farge published A Pictorial History of the American Indian, an account of Native American life before and after European immigration to the New World. These and other of La Farge’s non-fiction works sought not only to contribute to the scholarly accumulation of knowledge about Native Americans, but perhaps more importantly, to provide a more factual base of information from which the American public would form its perceptions of Native Americans.

La Farge “devoted a good part of his life to Indian causes, serving in several official capacities” (Kleinpoppen 71). He was prominent in the community of educated Euramerican activists who appointed themselves as advocates for Native American interests. He was elected as a director of the Eastern Association of Indian Affairs in 1930 and in 1932 was made president of the merged Eastern Association and the American Defense Association (John Collier’s group), which became known
as the Association on American Indian Affairs. He served as president until 1941
and then again from 1947 till his death in 1963. Collier had enough confidence in
La Farge that in 1936 he appointed him as a field representative for the Bureau of
Indian Affairs.

Yet despite his varied career as scholar and activist, La Farge is perhaps best
known today as a writer of fiction, especially as author of the 1929 Pulitzer Prize-
winning novel Laughing Boy. The idea for Laughing Boy purportedly evolved
from studies La Farge conducted among the Navajo for his Harvard masters thesis.
From the outset of his scholarly work La Farge had shown great interest in
learning about Native American cultures. He later noted that by the time that he
first went to the southwest he had long rejected the popular images of Native
Americans promoted by many publishers and other merchants in the east:

I was not going to be fooled; the West of Owen Wister was dead, cowboys existed no longer, Indians were ragged pensioners of the
Government, Navajo blankets were woven in Chicago and shipped to
the reservation for the Indians to sell. I vigorously denied in
advance all the romance at which I had played as a boy. Dime-novel
stuff. (Raw Material 151)

La Farge wanted to understand Navajo culture, to the extent that he was able,
from an indigenous point of view; he wished to describe it as objectively as he
could, without the stereotypical images that had so permeated most of the previous
American literature about Native Americans. Indeed, La Farge wrote in the
"Introductory Note" to the first edition of Laughing Boy that though "This book is a
work of fiction [.,] I have tried to be as true as I knew how to the general spirit of
Navajo things, to customs and character" (vii). Caffey writes that this
"anthropological perspective" is a trademark of virtually all of La Farge's Native

12 Indeed, La Farge was so closely associated with this novel that later in his
life he expressed regret that his first novel had virtually preempted his subsequent
work in the minds of so many people he met.
American fiction: "the scientist in La Farge demanded that portrayals of culture and character be true to his data" (5). D'Arcy McNickle suggests that the abundance of ethnographic material in Laughing Boy, such as "Mother-in-law avoidance, the rule against marriage within the clan, the etiquette about using personal names, the four-day waiting period after marriage, the fish taboo, the eastward facing door, the return of the gods after first frost" (55) perhaps indicates La Farge's initial uncertainty about novel-writing: "He leaned on the ethnographer's notebook as a pillar for inner security" (55). Yet McNickle praises La Farge's "artistry [in] blending this essentially esoteric information in a narrative" which truly entertains (55).

Kleinpoppen writes that La Farge's "central narrative problem ... especially in Laughing Boy ... is that of making the alien sensibilities of Native Americans accessible to a non-Indian audience" (73). Of course, La Farge had not been the first to attempt this. In 1890, Adolph Bandelier, a "disciple" of Lewis Henry Morgan who conducted anthropological research among the Pueblos, had published The Delight Makers, a novel about life among southwestern Native Americans. Bandelier had "placed [his] subjects far into the past before White contact, thereby avoiding the knottiest problems of the Indian genre of literature" (Berkhofer 107). In 1922, Elsie Crews Parsons edited a volume of short pieces by such noted Boasian anthropologists as Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Clark Wissler, and including a piece by Franz Boas himself, which sought to outline in a narrative format typical individual lives among different Native American tribes. Alfred Kroeber wrote in his introduction to this volume that this narrative strategy was intended to make the information about Native Americans already gathered by anthropologists and recorded in "bulky, detailed, often tedious" volumes more accessible to Euramerican "lay readers." Kroeber noted:
the fictional form of presentation . . . allows a freedom in depicting or suggesting the thoughts and feelings of the Indian, such as is impossible in a formal, scientific report . . . Each author has adhered strictly to the social facts as he knew them. He has merely selected those that seemed most characteristic, and woven them into a plot around an imaginary Indian hero or heroine. The method is that of the historical novel, with emphasis on history rather than the romance. ("Introduction" 13)

Yet Parsons's American Indian Life exhibits the same literary weaknesses as The Delight Makers: while both attempt to recreate a sense of Native American cultures, they do so by focussing almost exclusively on conjectured precontact lifestyles, for the most part ignoring the results of Native Americans' interaction with Euramericans. These works, and others like them, leave themselves open to Vine Deloria, Jr.'s general charge against Euramerican anthropologists who, often unwittingly, perpetuate a false image of Native American cultures as necessarily primitive, static, unchanging (see Anthropology and the American Indian).

Like Jackson and Garland, in much of his fiction Lafarge focuses upon intercultural conflicts, using the narrative context of Euramerican reformers prodding Native Americans "down the white man's road." Yet Lafarge shares with the Boasians an interest in simulating for his readers a Native American point of view. While the protagonists in the "Indian literature" of Jackson and Garland are not only Native American victims of white injustices but their white advocates as well (indeed, perhaps the major conflict in The Captain of the Grav-Horse Troop is between the "Indian-loving" Captain Curtis and the "Indian-hating" white ranchers), in his fiction Lafarge for the most part relegates whites to relatively minor, "supporting" roles. Euramerican influence upon Native Americans is dramatized not as much through land-hungry ranchers or pushy teachers and missionaries (though these figures certainly are present in Lafarge's work), as through Native American characters who have been affected by such influences. Laughing Boy in particular focuses upon conflicts between and within
Native American characters who to various degrees reject or accept Euramerican culture. Thus La Farge wrote in his 1929 introduction, "The hostility with which certain of the characters... view Americans and the American system is theirs, arising from the plot, and not the author's" (vii-viii). La Farge does admit, though, that in Laughing Boy, "the picture is frankly one-sided" (viii), leading McNickle to conclude that La Farge's opening disclaimer that the novel was "meant neither to instruct nor to prove a point, but to amuse" (vii) was more form than fact: "if escape was his purpose, he shot over his shoulder with telling effect as he ran" (56).

The plot of Laughing Boy is fairly simple: Slim Girl, a young Navajo woman who had been sent to a white boarding school when a very young child, designs to use Laughing Boy to achieve her personal revenge upon whites, and instead finds herself a sincere "convert" to Navajo life. Slim Girl's story is virtually a captivity narrative in reverse: taken from her home when a baby, fully Christianized in a missionary boarding school, she had been completely diverted from the beliefs and values of her people, taught to despise the "Indian" in herself. When she was made pregnant by a white cowboy who seduced and then abandoned her, she had been thrown out by the American minister who had sheltered her, an act which demonstrates to her the hypocrisy of the white man's "Jesus Trail." Slim Girl had then been taken in by a group of white and Native American prostitutes and taught how to make money by selling her body. She had soon grown to hate her white "tricks," wanting only revenge upon Euramericans. She schemed to take a Navajo husband and live far from everyone else, isolated in a comfortable cabin, with

13 La Farge here seems to draw upon an Anglo-American narrative tradition perhaps most popularly employed in Susanna Rowson's Charlotte Temple, casting a Navajo girl in the role of the victimized female.
children whom she vowed would never be taken from their home and forced to learn English in a white boarding school. She had, she believed, "emerged from the struggle not American, not Indian, [but] mistress of herself" (58).

Slim Girl first meets Laughing Boy at a Navajo Mountain Chant, a ceremonial festival to which Navajo from many miles around come to dance, pray, gamble, and enjoy one another's company. Laughing Boy, who lives in a remote part of the reservation, is a naive, traditional young man who knows little about Euramericans: when one of his more "experienced" friends repeats to him the rumor that Red Goat's wives had kicked him out of his hogahn because he had spent their money on whiskey, Laughing Boy replies, "I have never tasted whiskey...what is it like?" (19). Though he does not get his taste of whiskey at the Chant, Laughing Boy is allowed to witness some of its effects. A white and a Navajo are violently apprehended by white and tribal police when they are discovered to have illegally smuggled liquor onto the reservation. One of the Navajo, in a drunken state, had shot and killed a Hopi when officials had attempted to arrest him (47). Laughing Boy and his friend Jesting Squaw's Son discuss the incident:

"What is whiskey?" Jesting Squaw's Son asked. "I am always hearing talk about it. They say it is so bad, yet they try so hard to get it."

"I do not know. They all say it is very bad. It makes you crazy, they say. It must be like eating jimpson weed, I think."

"It made that man crazy. He tried to fight alone."

"M-m. It made him brave. I think. But it stopped his sense...."

(49)

Slim Girl considers Laughing Boy as her ideal husband. A traditional young man, "he was the perfect implement delivered into her hands: he was an axe with which to hew down the past, he was a light with which to see her way back to her people, to the good things of her people" (58). Laughing Boy's family strongly objects to the proposed match: his uncle says of Slim Girl, "She is not of the People any more, she is American" (38). Yet Laughing Boy ignores these warnings and
goes off with Slim Girl to her small house just on the border of the reservation near
the Euramerican town of Los Palos, remote from any Navajo community. Slim Girl
vows to herself that she will break Laughing Boy of his "Indian" love of gambling
(at the Mountain Chant, he had lost nearly every possession to his rival Red Man)
and instill in him the Euramerican's thirst for individual acquisition. Slim Girl
bribes the sottish Navajo "medicine man" Yellow Singer with a bottle of whiskey to
sing over Slim Girl's and Laughing Boy's marriage. Slim Girl gets her supply of
liquor from the white cowboy George, to whom she is "Lillian," his paid mistress.

Slim Girl in fact leads a double life, contriving to keep Laughing Boy tending
the livestock around the house and away from town, and slipping into Los Palos
every few days for a rendezvous with George, a practice she continues only for the
money the cowboy gives her. She had always pretended to George that she had a
"drunken Indian" husband living in her house, and she proceeds to make her
previous lie a fact. Kleinpoppen writes, "Slim Girl, in an effort to keep her husband
from getting too restive at their unnatural isolation from other Navajos, introduces
him to alcohol, a greater scourge to Native Americans, in some ways, than smallpox
or firearms" (87).

Laughing Boy gets his first taste of whiskey at his wedding ceremony. Yellow
Singer gives him a drink and when Laughing Boy asks about the curious glow in
his stomach, the old man replies, "It is beginning to do its good, little brother... By
and by you will love it, that feeling" (91). Slim Girl realizes that she can use liquor
to keep Laughing Boy under her control: she begins to serve it to him nightly and
when Laughing Boy tells her he likes the sweet drink she makes for him, she muses
to herself, "I shall tie you with it. It is another hobble around your feet, so that you
will not go away from me" (112).
Laughing Boy comes greatly to appreciate the evening ritual of Slim Girl making him the sweet drink that warms his whole body. One evening after returning home before a thunderstorm, Laughing Boy discovers that Slim Girl is still in town and so decides to make himself his daily drink. He takes several series of swallows of the "filthy-tasting stuff," unable to find any fruit to sweeten it, and begins to feel a slight euphoria, thinking to himself that his solitary life with Slim Girl is beautiful. But after a few more gulps:

he began to feel sorry for himself. Then he began to be sick. He felt very sick. Everything was dark and whirling, and he was miserable. He fell upon the floor, hiding his eyes to see if things wouldn't stay still. Immediately the floor began to rise on end, higher and higher; soon he would be pitched against the wall. He opened his eyes, the floor went back to level, but the whole business span. Then he was racked. The world heaved and bucked, waters roared in his ears. Then he went out completely. (132-33).

Later, he awakens with a headache. Yet despite his hangover, Laughing Boy does not renounce his drinking. Rather he comes to a recognition that it is Slim Girl only who must serve him the liquor, that she alone has the knowledge to "tame the beast." He tells her when they are travelling on a several-day trip to a chant, "I wish you had brought some of that whiskey. Since you have taught me that, everything is flat without it. There is no salt in things. I missed it last night, and I do now" (147). He realizes however that his drinking would be decidedly incongruous with the traditional chant gathering—that it is a feature only of his isolated life with Slim Girl. Slim Girl gives him two small drinks and tells him there will be no liquor at the chant; Laughing Boy replies, "That is all right. It does not belong there; it is part of the new world you have made for me. I do not think I could go back to just living, like these other people" (147).

As Laughing Boy remains content with the recognizably different lifestyle he lives with Slim Girl, Slim Girl becomes more and more attracted to traditional Navajo culture, taking up weaving in her attempts to experience "Indianness." Yet despite
her vows to herself to stop, she continues her visits to town, unwilling to give up
the money that comes from her liaisons with George (she tells Laughing Boy she
earns the money by performing work for a woman missionary). Eventually,
however, Laughing Boy senses something is profoundly wrong with their lonely
"idyll," especially after his uncle Wounded Face warns him:

You will see what is left of a man when he leaves our way, when he
walks in moccasins on the Americans' road. You have seen other
people who live down there. Some of them are rich, but their hearts
are empty. You have seen them without happiness or beauty in their
hearts, because they have lost the Trail of Beauty. Now they have
nothing to put in their hearts except whiskey. (171)

Laughing Boy becomes increasingly uneasy about his life with Slim Girl and
at last decides to visit Yellow Singer. For a twenty dollar fee, the old man instructs
Laughing Boy to pray to the Divine Ones and to drink: giving the young man two
bottles of rye. Yellow Singer advises, "When you have prayed, just start drinking it
By and By you will feel your mind becoming all right, your heart will be high.
Then you will sleep. When you wake up, you will feel badly, but if you take some
more, you will feel all right. One bottle should be enough. Put the other away until
something tells you you need it" (217). Kleinpoppen writes of this passage, "Here,
in these simple, straightforward instructions, issued by a practicing whiskey
Indian to a probable initiate, is one of the cleverest compendiums of the complex
problem of reservation alcoholism ever written" (88). La Farge describes Laughing
Boy's subsequent experience:

After the first few drinks it came easier, but it did not make him
feel very happy. As he grew drunk, he longed more and more for his
own country, and for a truce from the constant feeling of the
presence of alien things. About the time it grew dark, he stopped
drinking and walked up and down. At first he sang, then he was
silent.

Liquor, taken in solitude, sometimes has this effect. Along with a
megalomaniac sense of his central position in the universe, a man
grows bluntly honest with himself. All the secret, forgotten, stifled
thoughts come out of the closet in his mind, and he must face them in
turn, without a saving sense of proportion. This now was Laughing Boy's portion. I am not happy in this house at Chizai. It is too lonely, too strange; no one ever comes... (218)

After several more drinks, Laughing Boy passes out. Upon waking, he reflects, "This whiskey now, this magic. It did drive the clouds out of his thoughts, but it made everything appear twisted" (221). Laughing Boy then begins to speculate about the effects of drinking on many of his people:

He saw a very clear picture of Yellow Singer and his wife as he had first met them, sober, and reaching for the bottle; he saw other scarecrow Indians he had met in this American's country. He looked at them, and behind them saw incoherently the great, ominous cloud of the American system, something for which he had no name or description. (222)

Discarding Yellow Singer's advice about what he should do upon awakening, Laughing Boy breaks the bottle of rye: "The liquid ran into the coals of the fire, caught, and for a moment the dampened sand burnt with a blue flame. That startled him. To drink something like that!" (222).

Laughing Boy resolves to give up drinking, the "white vice," and now alerted to the dangers of "the American system," becomes increasingly uneasy about his "unnatural, alien" life with Slim Girl. A few days later, tracking a loose horse through town Laughing discovers Slim Girl's secret, seeing her with her cowboy. Slim Girl's double life comes to a quick end, but instead of leaving her, after she tells him of her childhood, Laughing Boy decides to take her back to "the People" to begin their life again as part of a Navajo community. On their way North, however, La Farge, perhaps bowing to certain conventions of romantic fiction, has Slim Girl die from a stray bullet shot by Red Man, Laughing Boy's rival. After burying his wife, Laughing Boy comes upon a traditional Navajo mountain chant where his grief is soothed through following traditional ritual. After his isolated life on the outskirts of the reservation, the naive young man achieves a deeper appreciation for his people and a more meaningful sense of his own Navajo identity.
In their "Indian stories," Helen Hunt Jackson and Hamlin Garland had avoided direct portrayals of drinking by Native Americans, frequently alluding to the great problems it caused, but, perhaps wary of risking their readers' sympathy, consistently characterizing their Native American protagonists as complete teetotallers. In the course of his first novel, La Farge, however, transforms his protagonist from a "traditional Navajo" into a "drunken Indian." Yet rather than invoking conventional images involving alcohol and Native Americans, rather than dramatizing commonplace assumptions about Native Americans' supposed "addiction" to alcohol, their uncontrollable violence when drunk, in Laughing Boy La Farge offers a much more complex examination. Drinking is portrayed in several different manners—from the violent shooting in Chapter Four, to Yellow Singer's incorporation of drinking in native ritual, to Laughing Boy's pleasant nightly "buzz." Liquor is shown as having an overall negative influence among the Navajo, but "demon rum" (or in this case whiskey) is not presented as the sole problem of the people. Rather, liquor is one among a constellation of problems Euramericans have brought to the Navajo. Sympathetic with John Collier's arguments about "retribalizing" Native Americans, La Farge was generally critical of how Euramerican culture had superseded traditional aspects of Native American life. La Farge focuses not just upon the direct negative effects of drinking (indeed, he shows that for several months, drinking had made Laughing Boy quite content), but also upon the indirect effects: how drinking serves to supplant other, more fulfilling aspects of life. Among other influences, liquor makes Laughing Boy unable to realize the void in his life away from his people. Liquor is most "evil" in Laughing Boy for the solipsistic, purely physical pleasure it can provide, temporary pleasure that can destroy the individual's sense of community with his people, a serious consequence. La Farge suggests for the sociable Navajos.
In "Hard Winter," drinking is portrayed as contributing to a sense of social/cultural dissolution for another of La Faye's Native American protagonists. Tall Walker, a Jacarilla Apache, is persuaded by his friend Juan to attend a fiesta at Taos. Even though Tall Walker claims he is not impressed with Juan’s lifestyle—Juan is essentially a gigolo for a rich white woman—Tall Walker leaves his wife and children in his home village and makes the several days' journey to Taos. La Farge describes Tall Walker's initial impression of the artist's colony there (undoubtedly modeled after Mabel Dodge Luhan's): "Right at the outset he encountered numbers of people gathered together, women similar to Juan’s, too rapid talk, a drink of whiskey with which began a long-continuing sense of unreality" (13). Tall Walker is fascinated by these strange, friendly white people and comes to empathize with Juan's decision. He is propositioned by a white woman and, at first confused, later "As they, the last of the visitors, got ready to go, he was tipsy. When she came to him, he saw her through a warm glow, and it occurred to him that a white woman might be desirable" (16). Tall Walker is seduced by the festive, carefree lifestyle of the white artists, and begins an affair with this white woman, virtually forgetting his family and staying on at Taos for many weeks. In November Tall Walker receives a letter from his wife begging him to come home to herd the sheep south before winter hits, and he reluctantly complies, telling his white mistress that he will return soon. "After this, one would not care to live long in a drafty tent, labouring over the flocks" (20).

Yet as Tall Walker drives his sheep south, an unexpected blizzard hits, covering the range with six feet of snow. His infant son dies from exposure and he loses nearly all his sheep and horses. Yet through his suffering, he gains a greater sense of identity. "He paused to look at [his wife], seeing the dishevelled hair hanging all around her head, the pinched, drawn face, the self-control and the
steadiness with which she went about her business. That is how Apache women are, he thought: that is why we were great warriors once” (26). He is startled when Juan and his white mistress from Taos drive up in a truck, the woman telling Tall Walker she was worried, saying he must return to his house, that she will take care of him. Realizing how deeply he had been betrayed—how deeply he had betrayed himself—by the fundamental indifference of the whites to Apache life, he experiences a moment of epiphany: “Since back before the sheep stopped moving he had been numb. Now suddenly he was angry—so deeply, tremendously angry that he shook and he could not speak at all” (28). As in Laughing Boy, in “Hard Winter” liquor serves to help lead the Native American protagonist away from his community, from the traditional ways and experiences of his people, a diversion he comes deeply to regret.

There are apparent similarities between La Farge’s assumptions concerning the effect of alcohol on Native Americans and those of a number of nineteenth century epic mode writers. La Farge uses alcohol as a general symbol of Euramerican influence upon Native Americans, demonstrating how drinking can threaten a Native American’s sense of “Indianness.” Several epic writers had made similar points: we might recall Cooper’s Old John Mohegan in The Pioneers and Simms’s Occonestoga in The Yemassee. Yet the rhetorical function is quite different in these cases. Epic writers such as Cooper and Bird subscribed to the notion of the Vanishing American; their portrayals of drinking by Native Americans purported to illustrate that Native Americans were declining fast, thus implying that they should be removed westward for their own ultimate survival. La Farge, who advocated “retribalization,” uses his depictions of drinking by Native Americans to suggest that Euramerican influence should be excluded from reservations, in a sense arguing that Euramericans should be removed from Native American land.
In a different rhetorical context, the image of a Native American losing his cultural identity through drinking takes on quite a different meaning for La Farge than it did for earlier epic writers.

Of course, La Farge also illustrated, in fairly typical fashion, that liquor can function as an agent of physical and economic destruction among Native Americans. In "North is Black," the Navajo protagonist nearly freezes to death when he gets drunk on "bitter-water" and is tossed out of a saloon into a snowy street (69). In The Enemy Gods, the Navajo Buckskin Man, whose land is coveted by a group of Euramerican ranchers seeking to expand their grazing lands, is forced to move when he is made drunk, jailed, and forced to pay a fine for which he has no money. He tells his relatives from whom he seeks help, "Any man will drink sometimes. You have all done it, I think. But I did it with my enemies. So my wife lost her sheep, the corn is gone, and we are here" (81).

Perhaps La Farge's most powerful dramatization of the negative consequences of Native American drinking is found in the short story "All the Young Men," about which he had told his brother Christopher, "It was cry from the soul, as far as I was concerned, a statement of my feeling of the tragic loss of beauty in Indian life" (qtd. in McNickle 96). Old Singer, a venerable Navajo medicine man who can remember the time when he blessed Navajo warriors before a battle to keep the U.S. military off their land, having nowhere else to go is taken in by his granddaughter and her husband, Homer Wesley. "They were a smart pair of educated Indians who dressed well and spoke good English, and affected to despise Navajo ways" (33). The young couple, who live off the reservation, think of themselves as fully assimilated to Euramerican civilization. In fact, as La Farge writes, "It was trying to be up to the minute, and wanting a new car, that got [Wesley] started running liquor into
the reservation. That was dangerous work, but he did it well, drank little himself, and made big money" (33).

Old Singer vociferously objects to his grandson-in-law's illegal enterprise.
"He'd tried liquor when he was young, knew it was fun, and a bad thing when it got going the way it had among the Navajos in recent years. He had seen the spread of drinking, and was worried about it" (34). In order to quiet the outraged old man, and to spite him, Wesley resolves to get Old Singer to start drinking. Claiming that "his liquor would bring beautiful, mystic experiences and religious communions, [Wesley] thus persuaded the old man to try it" (34). With little else to bring meaning to his life, with his growing sense of alienation from many of his people, within several months Old Singer "was drinking regularly" (34). In fact, he began to drink so much that he frequently began to make mistakes in his chants, and lost all his business from neighboring Navajo to younger, sharper medicine men. Wesley kept giving Old Singer liquor, "hoping that he would drink himself to death" (35).

In despair, Old Singer decides to leave the alien white town and return to the reservation. Yet in his drunken state, he loses his way and is picked up by white policemen. Jailed, he fantasizes about the old days, imagining as he dies in his cell, young Navajo warriors assembled before a battle with the U.S. army, conjuring the memory of his moment when his life had made sense to him, when he participated fully in his traditional community.

"All the Young Men" is La Farge's bleakest portrayal of Native American drinking. Liquor is both a weapon used by the assimilated Wesley to destroy his elder, tradition-minded relative and a dangerous solace with which Old Singer fills his time in an alien environment. More than simply a product of white-Native American interaction, drinking is depicted as a complex problem within Native
American cultures themselves. La Farge goes beyond a blanket condemnation of Euramericans who sell liquor to Native Americans, beyond simple evocations of two-dimensional images of "the drunken Indian," to more intricate explorations of how drinking can effect negative consequences for Native American individuals and communities, in a sense anticipating how a number of Native American writers would later portray drinking by Native Americans.

Westerns of the Early Twentieth Century: Continuing the Epic Tradition

The modern western is often claimed to have begun with Owen Wister's The Virginian (for instance, see Etulain 23). Yet many of the conventions that Wister employed in his popular 1902 novel, and that many of his successors were to use, were adapted from earlier forms of popular fiction, particularly frontier romances and frontier and western dime novels. Indeed, crediting the scholarly work of Richard Slotkin, John Cawelti notes that "many of the mythical patterns important to the . . . twentieth century Western originated . . . in the Captivity and Indian War narratives of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. . . . the underlying themes of the Western are present in America practically from the beginning of white settlement" (7-8). One constant in epic frontier and western narratives is violent conflict between the dichotomous forces of "civilized" and "savage." In the frontier stories of James Fenimore Cooper, Edward Ellis, and Owen Wister and Zane Grey, "savagery is implicitly understood to be on the way out" (Cawelti 63).

Yet one major difference separates western writers such as Wister and Grey from their predecessors. For authors of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century captivity narratives, early nineteenth-century frontier romances, and even for mid nineteenth-century dime novels, Euramerican warfare against Native Americans often was current news: somewhere in the country there was at least
the threat of armed conflict between "savage Indians" and "civilized" whites. It is true that frontier romance and dime novel writers, who frequently set their tales in the past, wrote mainly for eastern audiences who were themselves in no way personally endangered by Native American "uprisings" in the west. Yet these writers' stories were published within the context of continual reports of "Indian marauding" on the western frontier, of Euramerican pioneers and soldiers being massacred by "rampaging savages." Stories of Sitting Bull's attempts to elude capture by the U.S. military in the northwest and Geronimo's similar "escapades" in the southwest, as well as other reports of "Indian uprisings," reminded Euramericans through nearly the close of the nineteenth century that the "Indian problem" was not yet solved—there were still some "Injuns" to be "tamed."

By the time Wister and Grey began publishing their stories, however, the skirmish at Wounded Knee had signalled the end of the Plains Indian Wars and Frederick Jackson Turner had announced the closing of the American frontier. "Wister . . . popularized the modern version of the Western formula just as the frontier seemed to be disappearing" (Bold 37). Tales of white combat with Indians were now necessarily dated. Yet while writers like Jackson, Garland, and La Farge updated the "Indian story" to focus on the situations of contemporary Native Americans forced to "walk the white man's road," in some instances even simulating a Native American point of view, many of the western writers who followed Wister and Grey still dramatized conflicts on the "open, wild" frontier. For these writers, Cawelti states:

The relatively brief stage in the social evolution of the West when outlaws or Indians posed a threat to the community's stability has been erected into a timeless epic past in which heroic individual defenders of law and order without the vast social resources of police and courts stand poised against the threat of lawlessness or savagery. (66)
Thus Euramerican anthropologists were beginning to develop perspectives of cultural relativism, learning to appreciate Native American cultures not as examples of primitive stages in an evolutionary hierarchy, but as phenomena worthy of study and respect for their own sakes. Writers of modern westerns held to earlier, simplified notions of savage Indians who threatened the progress of Euramerican civilization. Cawelti notes that in the western, "the Indian rarely stands for a possible alternative way of life which implies serious criticism of American society. Instead he poses a problem for the hero" (64). In fact, within a narrative formula which above all celebrates the white man's "winning of the west," Native Americans become primarily one of the "obstacles" whose subduing Turner theorized had helped create the distinct "American character" (see 32-33). Again, Cawelti writes:

> the Western formula seems to prescribe that the Indian be a part of the setting to a greater extent than he is ever a character in his own right. The reason for this is twofold: to give the Indian a more complex role would increase the moral ambiguity of the story and thereby blur the sharp dramatic conflicts, and second, if the Indian represented a significant way of life rather than a declining savagery, it would be far more difficult to resolve the story with a reaffirmation of the values of modern society. (65)

**Owen Wister**

Owen Wister was born into a prominent Philadelphia family in 1860. Schooled at Harvard and taking the eastern Euramerican "aristocrat"'s customary European tour, Wister studied to become a lawyer. Yet he was also fascinated with the American west. When Wister suffered from a nervous breakdown in 1885, Dr. Weir Mitchell prescribed for him a trip to Wyoming. Wister was so enthusiastic about what he saw there that, like the "tenderfoot" narrator of *The Virginian*, he made a western trip nearly an annual rite. Wister returned to Wyoming 14 times within the next 14 years, "eventually buying a ranch in Jackson Hole" (Bold 40). After
several years of his western travels, Wister quit his profession as a lawyer to become a full time author. Indeed, writing stories with mainly western settings, Wister became one of the most popular fiction writers of his day.

Wister was particularly fascinated with the image of the American cowboy, an image which he helped a great deal to shape. Wister saw the "cow-puncher" as the ideal American type; rugged, individualistic, adventurous—the cowboy represented the best of the American character. Indeed, while Wister implicitly agrees with Turner's myth-hypothesis that the environment had shaped the distinctive quality of the westerner, he suggests that there were other, equally important factors, most notably the cowboy's Anglo-Saxon lineage. In his essay "The Evolution of the Cow-Puncher," Wister writes, "in personal daring and in skill as to the horse, the knight and the cowboy are nothing but the same Saxon in different environments" (39).

According to Wister, drawn west not so much by prospects of profits but rather by sheer adventure, the cowboy's latent "racial heritage" was tapped by the western frontier. The challenge of frontier life awakened dormant qualities in the cowboy's Anglo-Saxon blood:

...[in] watching for Indians, guarding huge herds at night, chasing cattle...was the race once again subjected to battles and darkness, to nature in the raw, to the fierceness and generosity of the desert. Destiny tried her latest experiment upon the Saxon...face to face with the eternal simplicity of death, his modern guise fell away and showed once again the mediaeval man. It was no new type, no product of the frontier, but just the original kernel of the nut with the shell broken. (43)

Wister muses over what he sees as the decline of the cowboy, which will necessarily follow the "closing" of the frontier: "the American descendant of Saxon ancestors, who for thirty years flourished upon our part of the earth, and, because he was not compatible with Progress, is now departed" (53).
Not surprisingly, much of Wister's fiction contains more than a hint of racism—and "nativism," as pressures were growing in the east in the last decade of the nineteenth century to curb immigration, especially of people from eastern Europe. Some of these attitudes are reflected in Wister's most famous cow-puncher, the Virginian. G. Edward White observes that "The Virginian . . . is not above an occasional nativist or racist salvo: he sings a song deriding the intelligence of Negroes . . . calls Germans 'Dutchmen,' Jews 'Hebes,' and doesn't consider Indians humans" (143). Wister portrays this as an admirable rather than a deplorable characteristic. In fact, Wister's tenderfoot narrator, who in many ways resembles Wister himself, idolizes nearly everything about the Virginian.

One of the tenderfoot's first impressions of the west, as he gets off his train, is of the saloon. Yet we are presented with no scenes of wild debauchery; instead, "Youth untamed sat here for an idle moment, spending easily its hard-earned wages. City saloons rose into my vision, and I instantly preferred this Rocky Mountain place. More of death it undoubtedly saw, but less of vice, than did its New York equivalents. And death is a thing much cleaner than vice" (Virginian 32-33). Indeed, though the Virginian is no teetotaller, he refuses to get drunk this night because he has been entrusted with the duty of escorting the narrator to Judge Henry's ranch; he resolutely declines the drink offered by his friend the bar owner, claiming "I have got to stay responsible" (41). The temperate Virginian is certainly a far cry from Garland's "whiskey-inflamed" cowboys in The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop, published in the same year as The Virginian.

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14 Though Wister acknowledges that he was a necessary precursor of this Progress

15 See Marovitz for a discussion of this theme in Wister.
Interestingly, the only Native Americans who appear in the novel are a group of peaceful Indians who gather around the Virginian "in their show war bonnets and blankets" (197) as, in the capacity of road foreman overseeing a trainload of cattle sent to Chicago, he tricks the mutinous Trampas with his tall tale about frog legs. However, Native Americans do play a significant "off-stage" role. When the Virginian is leading the white rancher Balaam through Wyoming mountains to his employer Judge Henry's ranch—Balaam returning a horse he had borrowed from Henry—the two men run across signs of Indian camps, which they conjecture were left by a group of renegade Crows who are reported to have escaped from their own reservation to visit friends on another reservation. The two white men separate, and Wister proceeds to describe Balaam's close escape from the dangerous mountain pass. The Virginian, however, suffers another fate. Yet rather than providing a dramatic description of the Indian attack, Wister next describes the Virginian unconscious, bloody and bruised near the cabin of his sweetheart Molly, where he had dragged himself after the "off-stage" fight. Native Americans are thus characterized solely by the results of their violent actions; Wister uses the Crow renegades only as a plausible means to allow his protagonist an extended stay at Molly's cabin, where Molly becomes more and more attached to her badly wounded patient. Indian savagery, a stock quality which Wister can manipulate at will, is here used mainly to advance the love plot between the western cowboy and the eastern "school marm."

Though "invisible" in The Virginian, renegade reservation Indians play a more prominent, visible role in several of Wister's short stories, in which Wister also demonstrates how images of Native American drinking fit into his western formula. In "The General's Bluff," a U.S. cavalry troop, arriving at winter quarters after spending many months on the range rounding up errant Native American
bands who refused to stay on their assigned reservations, is again called out to
intercept a group of renegade Pah-Utes. The chief E-egante is reported to be once
more "on the rampage" in the neighboring area. The Indian interpreter for the
white soldiers tells them of E-egante's recent exploits, recounting how he had
invaded the homestead of a white man named Dailey and, among other disruptions,
put his cats in molasses. The interpreter Sarah describes the Pah-Utes' intentions:
"they hunt for whiskey, break everything, hunt all over, ha-lo whiskey! . . .
Meester Dailey he good man. Hy-iu temperance. Drink water. They find his
medicine; drink all up, make awful sick" (87). Here the Pah-Ute band, conforming
to one traditional stereotype, are driven to violence and destruction by their
"insatiable" desire for liquor, tearing up Dailey's home in their search for whiskey.

In "Little Big Horn Medicine," Wister draws upon the long-established
stereotype that Native Americans become dangerously aroused when they drink.
Against the wishes of the more pacifistic Crow elders, the young Crow medicine
man Cheschapah attempts to stir up a rebellion on the reservation. Aided by the
mercenary white trader Sol Kinney, who calculates that a Crow uprising would
profit his own business. Cheschapah impresses his young followers with such
tricks as making cold water "boil" by using seltzer fizz salts given him by Kinney.
When Cheschapah leads a band of Crow on a raid against nearby Piegans, Kinney
insures the band will be especially impassioned when they return:

The situation was assisted by a step of the careful Kinney. He took a
private journey to Junction City, through which place he expected
Cheschapah to return, and there he made arrangements to have as
much whiskey furnished to the Indian and his friends as they should
ask for. It was certainly a good stroke of business. The victorious
raiders did return that way, and Junction City was most hospitable to
their thirst. The valley of the Big Horn was resonant with their
homeward yells. . . . On the buoyancy of the whiskey they rode
round and round the store containing the agent, and then rushed
away, firing shots at the buildings and shots in the air, and so
gloriously home among their tribe. (18-19)
True to (stereotypical) form, these Native Americans become violent as they drink, liquor functioning to fuel their "latent savagery."

The short story "The Promised Land" perhaps offers Wister's most extensive and telling portrayal of drinking by Native Americans. In this story, the Clallam family has emigrated from Iowa into the Oregon Territory, seeking a new home in the Pacific northwest. Liza Clallam is nervous about passing so near the Colville Reservation, but her husband John assures her she has nothing to worry about, that the Indians are all peaceful. Their sixteen year old son Mart had been disappointed "in the westward journey to find all the Indians peaceful" (232). But he doesn't remain disappointed for long.

The Clallam family is ferried over the Columbia River by the white trader Wild-Goose Jake, who shelters them for the night in his cabin on the Okanagon River, which doubles as his home and his store. First, though, Jake has to kick out a group of "rowdies," several "drunk Indians" from the neighboring reservation who had been making "an uneven, riotous din" (252). The Clallams are appalled to learn that their host is a whiskey trader. Jake defends his covert operations, "A store on a trail like this here, ye see, it hez to keep spirits, of course" (258). Of his profitable liquor trade with the Siwash Indians, Jake remarks, "Uncle Sam is a long way off, and I don't say we'd ought to, but when the cat's away, why the mice will, ye know—they most always will!" (259).

Jake speculates about alcohol and Native Americans, "Most white men know when they have had enough whisky. Most Indians do not" (263). He continues:

there's no brisker success in our far West than selling whisky to Indians. Very few people know what the whisky is made of, and the Indian does not care. He drinks till he drops senseless. If he has killed nobody and nobody him during the process, it is a good thing, for then the matter ends with his getting sober and going home to his tent till such happy time when he can put his hand on some further possession to trade away. (264)
Wister's Jake repeats an extreme variation of a stereotypes concerning Native American drinking: that Indians live to drink, that it is their primary goal. The desire is taken for granted, neither requiring nor even inviting explanation.

That night the Clallams are disturbed by a noisy ruckus in Jake's store caused by several Siwash who had persuaded Jake to allow them to enter and drink. Thoroughly intimidated by the unruly "drunken Indians," the Clallams nevertheless refuse the Indians' demand the next morning to be allowed to ferry their belongings over the Okanagon, fearful that the still tipsy Siwash will damage their possessions. At this, the Indians begin to raise a fuss, and Jake decides to pacify them with liquor in order to give the Clallams time to ferry over their possessions and continue their westward journey. Jake's plan backfires, however, when the Siwash become even more riled:

Suddenly all drew pistols. At this the two remaining stumbled among the group, and a shot went into the roof. Jake was there in one step with a keg, that they no sooner saw than they fell upon it, and the liquor jetted out as they climbed, wresting over the room till one lay on his back with his mouth at the open bung. (275)

Jake manages to lure the Siwash into his storeroom full of liquor, once again believing that they will simply drink themselves to incapacitation. Once again, though, Jake's plan proves wrong: one of the enraged prisoners starts to break down the storeroom door with an ax. A shot comes from inside the storeroom and kills Jake's son. "With a terrible scream, Jake flung himself at the place, and poured six shots through the panel; then, as Clallam caught him, wrenched at the lock and they saw inside. Whisky and blood dripped together, and no one was moving there. It was liquor with some, and death with others, and all of it lay upon the guilty soul of Jake" (277). Jake himself has been shot in the scuffle and, ironically, just as the sheriff and his deputy arrive charging Jake with selling liquor to Indians, Jake
says "The Supreme Court's a-goin' to call my case.' Then he fell back, for his case had been called" (280).

In "The Promised Land," Wister purports to offer a pointed object lesson demonstrating why liquor must be kept out of the hands of Native Americans. The story abundantly illustrates that when drunk, Native Americans are likely to become uncontrollably violent, capable of almost any destruction. Not only had Jake played with fire by selling liquor to Indians, he also neglected to recognize the "natural law" that liquor makes Indians more dangerous—his two attempts to pacify the already tipsy and impassioned Siwash by giving them more liquor (predictably) have just the opposite of the intended effect. "The Promised Land" includes no cowboys, but just the same follows a standard western narrative pattern, in which sympathetically portrayed, "innocent" whites are endangered by savage Indians. Native American drinking within this narrative context is portrayed only in terms of what it means for the Euramerican protagonists, in this case further jeopardizing the pioneering Clallam family. Uninterested in exploring Native American cultures, in investigating how drinking affects these cultures, in his fiction Wister simply warms over conventional, two-dimensional images of Native American drinking solely to increase the element of danger for Euramerican protagonists which is a necessary characteristic of the traditional epic western.

Zane Grey

One of the most popular and prolific Euramerican writers, Zane Grey is best known for his many novels set on the western frontier. Grey admitted that as a boy he was an avid reader of dime novels; indeed, in his early teens, Grey wrote his first piece, modeled after a dime novel, which his father reportedly destroyed, wanting his son to become not a writer but a dentist. Grey did take a degree in
dentistry from the University of Pennsylvania in 1896, and shortly after set up a practice in New York City. Yet within a few years Grey had given up dentistry altogether and concentrated upon his ambition to become a successful novelist. After a few moderately successful works, Grey realized his goal in the early years of the twentieth century. Indeed, Grey "set a record by appearing in the top ten bestseller list nine times from 1915-1924" (Bold 67). In an age of increasing nativistic sentiment, when some Euramerican authors were criticizing what they saw as the economic, political, and even spiritual corruption of the nation, Grey offered a comforting vision of America's "grand past." Kant writes that in the second decade of the twentieth century,

Grey's popularity skyrocketed because . . . he reaffirmed the promise of the earlier, optimistic years. He urged a return to the traditional values, prophesying that such a return would put America back on the right path. These older values, which he felt were part of the true American spirit, were originally generated on the frontier, and it was there that Americans could still find them. To set the world right again, Americans should look to the West for guidance and inspiration. (5)

While Grey shared Wister's "apotheosis" of the cowboy, he didn't share Wister's disdain for Native Americans. In fact, beginning early in his career, Grey expressed a particular interest in Native Americans. In 1911, he first toured the Hopi-Navajo Reservation in Arizona and returned six times over the next twenty years. In several of his novels, Grey alluded to the great wrongs Native Americans had suffered at the hands of Euramericans. Carlton Jackson writes that "Grey had the greatest sympathy for the Indian, and he constantly lamented the government's mistreatment of them. . . . Certainly, he did not condone the Indian's violence, but in apportioning blame for violence in general, Grey argued that the onus rested on the white man's shoulders" (101). Jackson argues, "Even when an Indian is obviously wrong, Grey either hints or states outright that it is still the white man's faults for bringing out the Indian's savage instincts to begin with" (78; emphasis
added), a rather curious manner of defending Grey's supposedly humane perspective of Native Americans

Actually Grey did write one novel in the "reformist mode," one which he believed would have a direct influence upon the federal policies regarding Native Americans. After completing the third draft of *The Vanishing American*, Grey wrote to William H. Briggs in 1924:

> I have studied the Navajo Indian for twelve years. I know their wrongs. The missionaries sent out there are almost everyone mean, weak, immoral, useless men... They cheat and rob the Indian and more heinously they seduce every Indian girl they can get hold of. It is common knowledge on the reservation... My purpose [in *The Vanishing American*] was to expose this terrible condition—to help the great public to understand the Indians' wrongs (qtd in C. Jackson 65)

In his "reform novel," Grey, like La Farge in *Laughing Boy*, begins with a reverse captivity motif. The Nopah (Grey's fictional name for the Navajo) Nophaie is stolen from his people when a young boy and is taken east to be educated in white schools. Eighteen years later Nophaie returns to the Nopahs and finds them under the tyrannical rule of the corrupt missionary Morgan and head agent Blucher.16 Blucher pockets money allocated by the government for food and other supplies for the Nopah. In what Grey suggests is a more heinous mistreatment of Native Americans, the missionary Morgan sexually seduces young Nopah girls whose souls have been entrusted to him. In Grey's fiction, as in many earlier frontier romances, the (threat of) rape of young women is depicted as perhaps the villain's greatest crime, a wrong which most intensely motivates Grey's hero. It is interesting to note how Grey has continued his inversion of captivity motifs.

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16 Making Blucher of German descendant, Grey capitalizes on anti-German sentiment in the United States after the First World War.
substituting a white missionary for a "lusty Indian" and an Indian girl for a white "maiden."

In addition to these Euramerican injustices, Grey also highlights an inner struggle within Nophaie. Schooled for eighteen years in eastern Euramerican society, Nophaie feels a great rift between himself and his people: he is torn between Christianity and the more pantheistic beliefs of the Nopah. Grey resolves this conflict by having Nophaie reach a spiritual epiphany at the Great Rock Bridge in which he manages to reconcile Christianity with Native American beliefs and then, in an act of Christian charity, save Morgan and Blucher from being killed by a crowd of riotous Nopah. In the conclusion of the 1925 book version of The Vanishing American, Nophaie then dies from wounds he had incurred in the rescue of the white villains, thus preventing the union of the Indian and his white fiancée Marian. As in many earlier "Indian tales," the martyred "dying Indian" is prevented from miscegenation with the white heroine. The original manuscript, the one Grey favored but was forced by his publishers to change, concludes with Nophaie marrying the white woman. Yet both end with the same image—Native Americans riding into the sunset, vanishing from sight, symbolizing their inevitable disappearance, now not by disease and warfare, but by their eventual genetic (as well as cultural) assimilation into superior Euramerican civilization.

The Vanishing American contains few references to drinking among Native Americans, but these few reflect fairly conventional assumptions. Nophaie tells his white sweetheart Marian that she had "saved him from the bottle." In a letter to her, he alludes to the first time they had met: "I was young and full of fire that summer at Cape May. I drank the white man's liquor" (14). Nophaie had been a successful athlete in the eastern college he had attended, and had begun to lead a somewhat dissolute lifestyle. But he claims that Marian had changed all that. "I
loved you at sight and respected you when I knew you. I stopped drinking for you. And for an Indian to give up whisky, once he knows its taste, is no small thing" (14). Following a typical romantic pattern, the male hero's love for a woman effects his moral reform, all the more impressive in this case given the Native American's supposedly insatiable desire for liquor. On the Nopah reservation, Nophaie reflects in several instances that "white man's fire-water" has contributed to the destruction of his race. Grey echoing here many of the reformist's pleas to stop the illegal Indian liquor traffic (for example, see 221, 294). Though Grey is reported to have frequently stated that he was proud of his literary accomplishment in The Vanishing American, which he felt painted a "true picture" of the distresses of Native Americans forced to "walk the white man's road," others have not been so favorably impressed. James Folsom, for instance, concludes that The Vanishing American is "escape literature of the most insidious kind. Grey is interested in nothing other than the most complacent romanticizing. The fate of the Indian is exploited to lend the book a dim melancholy quality" (157).

The Vanishing American was quite popular—it was filmed several times. Yet it is not representative of the bulk of Grey's work, the tales of adventure on the "wild frontier" which had brought him his great fame. Like many of the frontier romances and western dime novels, Grey's adventure stories depict violent conflict on the frontier between forces of civilization and those of savagery, all within the context of the westward movement of "progress." Such stories necessarily lend themselves to recurring patterns; in his typical adventure stories, Grey, in fact, "emphasized the repetitions . . . to create a mythological context for the Western formula" (Bold 79). As noted earlier, with the frontier officially announced as "settled," in the twentieth-century western adventure "the debate over treatment of the Indian no longer has any practical application. The modern Western became
identifiable as a genre distinct from earlier novels about the frontier only after the
Indian question had been pragmatically settled" (Folsom 146). Folsom reflects on
the how the final "taming" of Native Americans affected literary conventions:

literary treatment of the Indian which, however wrongly, had
traditionally been considered to have at least a nodding acquaintance
with the Indian problem, was transformed in the [twentieth century]
Western into a frame of reference which need answer only the
artistic demands of a particular work of imagination. Whatever the
writer's concern might be, whether serious or trivial, he no longer
had to make his Indians "true to life"—or perhaps it would be more
accurate to say, true to what his white readers considered the facts of
Indian life. (147)

The result in the case of Grey, who elsewhere professed such compassion for Native
Americans, was an ambivalent, seemingly schizophrenic attitude in his western
adventures, with the actions of Indian characters in many instances negating
whatever sympathy his protagonists or narrators might have acknowledged for
Native Americans.

The Spirit of the Border (1906) is one of Grey's earliest novels, second in his
Zane trilogy. Though the story takes place in the Ohio valley in the eighteenth
century, it nevertheless exhibits many of the same qualities of his later westerns.
The book focuses upon two brothers from Virginia, Joe and Jim Downs, both of
whom emigrate inland into the Ohio Valley, but for vastly different reasons. Joe,
who becomes a protege of the legendary Indian-hating Lew Wetzel, wants to go
westward to help settle the west and to "fight Indians" (7). Jim, who joins a party of
Moravian missionaries bound for Gnadenhutten to help spread Christianity among
the "heathen," differs dramatically from his brother in his conception of Native
Americans. Jim declares, "My sympathy is with the redman. I have had an
opportunity of studying Indian nature and believe the race inherently noble" (16).
In many ways similar to Edward Ellis's Indian Jim, The Spirit of the Border plays
these opposed ideas off one another—or rather plays them both at the same time.
Indeed, the novel’s fundamental ambivalence about Native Americans is succinctly illustrated by Colonel Zane. Having been stationed at several frontier forts, Colonel Zane has had ample opportunity to observe interaction between Euramericans and Native Americans. Zane is highly critical of how whites have seized lands from indigenous inhabitants: "If the pioneers had paid for land... there would never have been a border war. But no: the settlers must grasp every acre they could... and now the border is a bloody warpath" (81). Yet, as Karolides observes, "this generous attitude and a further recognition of skills and ways of [Native American] life does not prevent this spokesman from applauding the heroics of the Indian-killers or from pursuing the settling of the land" (212). In practically the same breath, Zane celebrates the sight of white men clearing the forest: "This scene is so full of life... I never saw such good will among laboring men. Look at that brawny-armed giant standing on the topmost log. How he whistles as he swings his ax!" (81).

The central conflict of the novel focuses on the famous massacre of Moravian Indians at Gnadenhutten, the Village of Peace. In 1781, Pennsylvania militiamen attacked and killed 90 peaceful Moravian Indians whom they (wrongly) charged with being in league with British forces. Helen Hunt Jackson had highlighted this incident in *A Century of Dishonor* as one of the most infamous Euramerican massacres of Native Americans (317-24). In *The Spirit of the Border*, however, Grey performs some interesting historical revisions, as John Hollow notes (121). Grey has the peaceful Native American converts to Christianity threatened not by the American militia, but by "uncivilized savages" who resent the Moravians’ Christian lifestyle. Wetzel warns the white missionaries of Gnadenhutten: "These [savage] Injuns won’t allow this Village of Peace here with its big fields of corn, an’ shops
an' workin' redskins. It's agin' their nature. You're only sacrificin' your Christian Injuns” (180).

The powerful Delaware Chief Winengund is incited by white renegades Simon and Jim Girty (another holdover from frontier dime novels) and their followers to attack the Village of Peace because the Girties are jealous of the Moravians' influence over the neighboring Indian population. They choose a telling means of instigating Winengund's warriors: the Girties order the savage Indians first to infiltrate Gnadenhutten and then they provide them with whiskey. "This was all that was needed to inflame the visitors. Where they had been only bold and impudent, they became insulting and abusive... The slaughtering of cattle commenced: the despoiling of maize fields, and robbing of corn-cribs began with the drunkenness" (201). When violence breaks out, the Christian converts all take refuge in the church: Heckewelder describes the scene: "Just listen!... Did you ever hear the like? All drunk, crazy, fiendish! They drank every drop of liquor the French traders had. Curses on the vagabond dealers! Rum has made these renegades and savages wild. Oh! my poor, innocent Christians!” (239). Grey narrates. The clearing was alive with Indians. But such Indians! They were painted demons, maddened by rum. Yesterday they had been silent; if they moved at all it had been with deliberation and dignity. To-day they were a yelling, bloodseeking mob” (239).

Of course, after the ensuing massacre, Jim Downs heads back east, admitting the ultimate and inevitable failure of his scheme to help convert the Indians, himself now a convert to the popular theory that "savagism" and "civilization" cannot mix. While Grey declares in the preface of the novel that “[we should] not forget the wronged Indian” (4), the story itself amply excuses whites for perceiving Native Americans essentially as "savage beasts.” Carlton Jackson argues that in his
Ohio River trilogy, Grey presented the "thesis . . . that the Indians were not barbarians until the white man made them so" (8). Yet the incidents in which white villains provide liquor to Indians serve more than simply to denounce certain whites for instigating Native Americans. More significantly, these incidents echo and perpetuate the long-established, two-dimensional image of the drinking Indian as a violently aroused, ferocious brute, an image hardly calculated to promote understanding and sympathy among Euramerican readers for "the wronged Indian."

In Grey's *Fighting Caravans* (1929), Clint Belmet, son of a pioneering family, is transformed into an Indian-hater when his mother, father, and best friend are killed in separate Indian raids on the wagon train he travels with. Left with no family, believing his childhood sweetheart to be held captive by Indians, Clint joins a freighting caravan, making his living by trucking supplies back and forth, east and west across the plains, a premise that allows Grey to follow his exploits on the plains over the course of twenty years. Grey's episodic novel aspires to recreate a sense of life on the open plains, dramatizing the conflicts involved in the "settling" of the west. Grey writes:

> In the slow, patient movement of [the] caravan there lay the suggestion of an irresistible tide of travel westward. It held an epic significance. Nothing could halt it permanently. Beyond the boundless purple horizon beckoned an empire in the making. Behind the practical thought of these teamsters, behind the courage, the jocularity, the endurance, and the reckless disregard of storm, thirst, prairie fire, and hostile savages, hid the dream of the pioneer, the builder. (10).

Within this context, this all-encompassing celebration of Euramerican westward migration in which can be heard echoes of the epic agenda which informs much "frontier literature," Native Americans are necessarily cast as antagonists, obstacles. Throughout the novel, bands of Crow, Comanche, Cheyenne, and Kiowa continually attack Clint's caravan, threatening its continuous
"support mission" for Euramerican settlement. Not surprisingly, then, Native American drinking is portrayed in a stereotypical epic fashion. On his one last big caravan run, Clint is told by Hatcher, one of his drivers, "the pace is gettin' too hot. I don't mind redskins by themselves so much. But when they're set on by men of our own color an' inflamed by rum, wal, excuse me. If we get through safe I'll let it be my last caravan" (302). Indeed, Hatcher's worst fears are realized when the caravan is attacked by a combined force from several different tribes. Most fearful is the Kiowa band, for reasons Grey describes in the following passage:

... Clint was watching through the glass. He could not make an accurate estimate of the restless Kiowas, but their number far exceeded two hundred. Clint tried to get the glass on the leader, but he was surrounded by his red lieutenants and somewhat hidden. The glass, however, enabled Clint to make a discovery Stevens had missed. These Kiowas were under the influence of rum. Kiowas were wicked enough when normal. But stimulated and maddened by rum—Clint felt his very marrow freeze.

"Men, these Kiowas are half drunk," he announced, tragically. The absolute silence with which this statement was received attested to its staggering purport. These fiends would have to become sober before they could be beaten. (345-46)

Grey does throw in his usual allusions to Euramerican wrongs against Native Americans: "injustice, cheating, broken treaties, murder for nothing, and the slaughter of their buffalo, had made them bitter ruthless fiends" (326).

Euramerican injustices had made Native Americans "fiends." Grey writes, but this "fiendish" quality in turn justifies Euramerican aggression against Native Americans. Liquor, provided by white traders, makes Indians more violent, thus warranting more retaliatory violence by whites. Cawelti notes "one of the major organizing principles of the Western is to so characterize the villains that the hero is both intellectually and emotionally justified in destroying them" (42). In Fighting Caravans, drinking (or, more accurately, its dramatic "inevitable" effects) thus serves as one such villainous characteristic of Native American antagonists.
The Lost Wagon Train (1936) begins with one of Grey's most unusual premises: in the early 1860s, southerner Stephen Latch, wrongly scorned by his northern sweetheart and unfairly denied a commission in the Confederate army, decides to carry on his own private war in the west, attacking Union supply shipments with his band of white followers. Yet Latch soon turns to indiscriminate looting of pioneer wagon trains, regardless of their sympathies in the war. Grey, however, saves his unlikely hero from the actual dirty work of murdering innocent white women and children: Latch pawns this task off onto the group of Kiowas whom he has allied with his own band. Latch keeps the Kiowas under his influence by their desire for liquor: "Satana (the Kiowa leader) had been difficult to deal with, but gifts, and especially firewater, had brought him around" (3). Latch plots with his white followers. "We shall use our rum to inflame the Kiowas and send them against the damned Yankee freighters. We shall set Satana to kill every last man—and woman, too—of every caravan we attack" (10). Latch cautions his men that they must be extremely careful in their timing in giving the Kiowas the liquor since, as is taken for granted, "The redskins, you know, can't be held back, specially if they have a little rum—an' it takes damn little to infuriate an Injun" (40). Indeed, Grey describes the effect that drinking has on the Kiowas:

the liquor of one keg was poured out into buckets from which the small cupfuls were swiftly dispensed to the Indians. Silent, with eyes of dusky fire, the savages presented themselves for their portion. Many of the young braves choked as if indeed they had swallowed fire. Their very bodies leaped. From the drinking they went to the war-dance. (42)

Grey demonstrates just how ingrained is the lore concerning the violent "drunken Indian" when he switches focus to the perspective of the wagon train Latch's band is about to attack. A scout for the wagon train reports the following sight:

...
"... them white men was dealin' out likker to the Injuns!" concluded Smith, impressively.

"How'd you know it was drink?" demanded Anderson, hoarsely.

"It might have been soup."

"Shore I thought of that. But soup doesn't make Injuns leapin', boundin', dancin' demons."

"Some white renegades gittin' the redskins drunk!" ejaculated Anderson. . . . (61)

In the context of the story, Native Americans drinking can only mean one thing: trouble for innocent whites.

The manner in which Grey redeems his hero-villain Latch is telling, helping to explain some of the already noted "schizophrenia" in Grey's overall depiction of Native Americans. For Grey does not so much redeem Latch and his brigandage as he contextualizes him within the all-encompassing epic story of "how the west was won." Indeed, Latch contextualizes himself, prophesying as he disbands his group of plunderers:

I can see the day when the West will not abide the outlaw. Maybe not in our own day. But that's not the point. The great drive is on. The empire-building era of the West has started. The freighters will go, the caravans, the plainsmen, the scouts, the soldiers, and with them the Indians, along with every kind of border criminal. What I respectfully call to your attention is the fact, the movement. (201-02)

Grey writes that in his older years, Latch becomes even more philosophical about the "winning of the west" and his own small role in this "victory":

The fact was that he grasped to his broken heart every stray bit of fact or rumor connected with the making of frontier history. How wild men at a wild period, in a wild country contributed to the progress of the western movement of civilization! He never condoned or excused his past, but as the days multiplied he grew to understand it. Not all was he to blame! The fur-trappers, the discovery of gold in California, the freighting caravans across the plains, the Civil War, the white invasion of Indian territory, the massacre of the buffalo, the cattle-driving—all these had contributed their share to the evil of the West. (398)

Such a mythic perspective helps explain why Grey can in one breath both chastise whites for giving liquor to Native Americans and in another still use Native American drinking consistently as an agent for justifying white aggression.
against "fiendish Indians." For in the end, in Grey's mytho-historical crucible, violent acts, inexcusable when considered in isolation, pave the way for "progress" in the west. Indeed, from the broader perspective, even constitute "progress" themselves. Grey's pose of sympathy for Native Americans dispossessed by whites can exist alongside sympathetic portrayals of white protagonists fighting Native American antagonists, for both the dispossession and the fighting are finally presented as merely parts of a larger epic drama. "Necessary evils" can even be celebrated, used to titillate readers, when they are emphasized as inevitable precursors of the "civilizing" of the west, taken for granted as an absolute, even "sacred" good.

**Boasian Anthropology**

Lewis Henry Morgan, the self-taught anthropologist who elaborated and extended his predecessors' evolutionary model of cultural development—which assumed Native American societies were inherently inferior to those of Euramericans—was frustrated by what he considered the amateurish practices of many of his predecessors and contemporaries. In an 1876 article for the *North American Review*, Morgan harshly criticized American ethnographers for all too often falling back on established sentimental perspectives on their Native American subjects:

> Ignorant of [Native American cultures'] structure and principles, and unable to comprehend its peculiarities, they invoked the imagination to supply whatever was necessary to fill out the picture. When the reason, from want of facts, is unable to understand and therefore to explain the structure of a given society, imagination walks bravely in and fearlessly rears its glittering fabric to the sky. (qtd. in Mitchell 229-30)

Yet by the turn of the century, Morgan himself would be subjected to similar criticism by a "new breed" of anthropologists, the Boasians.
Franz Boas is reputed to have been "the most important single force in shaping American anthropology in the first half of the twentieth century" (Stocking 1). Handler writes that "Much of Boas's lifework was an attack on nineteenth-century social evolutionism" (254). Boas's major disagreement with earlier anthropologists focused on what he saw as their continual attempts to forge connections between information collected on one Native American people to that found on others. Kardiner and Preble observe that Boas's "main point against the evolutionists and their 'comparative method' is that they attribute cultural similarities to identical processes, on the unfounded assumption that the human mind obeys the same laws everywhere. It is never safe, he argues, to compare only the results of cultural growth, because similar customs, traits, and beliefs can develop from different causes" (151). Thus Boas strenuously objected to the common practice among curators in the late nineteenth century of grouping Native American artifacts according to their conjectured "cultural stages." "Boas thought materials should be arranged by ethnological, not typological, connections—by tribe, not function. Rather than placing, say, all baskets together, he thought it far more important to show how baskets from a particular tribe fitted in with its other cultural artifacts" (Mitchell 248). With his great classificatory schemes, especially in the influential 1877 Ancient Society in which he attempted to depict a model of "primitive society" culled from research done on several continents, Lewis Henry Morgan and his brand of anthropology was "out": "From the point of view of the Boasians, Lewis Henry Morgan was the main source of error in American anthropology" (Kuper 144).

Boas developed a radically different methodology for anthropological studies. He discarded the lengthy schedules that Schoolcraft and Morgan had used to collect so much of their data on Native Americans. Boas held that such "questionnaires"
necessarily tainted the information they sought to obtain since they necessarily reflected only the researcher's already developed hypotheses concerning what was noteworthy about Native American subjects. Instead, Boas was "committed . . . to an almost exclusive inductive approach" (Kardiner and Preble 153): he argued that anthropologists should concentrate upon a particular community, a particular people in a particular set of circumstances. Generalizations could come only after painstakingly detailed observations of virtually everything about individual Native American communities—that is, everything that caught the researcher's attention. Indeed, Boas cautioned that reliable, accurate generalizations in anthropology could take years, perhaps generations. Kardiner and Preble write that Boas, in fact, "never allowed himself one comfortable generalization about man" (134).

Of course, to generate such "thick description" of particular Native American communities required a different relationship between ethnographer and subject than had previously been attempted. To the degree possible, the ethnographer must become a member of the subject group, seeking to understand the group "from the inside." In his monumental work on the Northwest Kwakiutl, among whom Boas lived for many months, making eight field trips between 1886 and 1900, Boas relied heavily on George Hunt, part Tingluit: "Boas taught Hunt write in Kwakiutl, and in 1893 Hunt began to record texts with a close-to-literal interlinear translation" (Goldman 335). Reports by Native American subjects became just as important, if not more important, than the observations of the Euramerican ethnographer. In his introduction to American Indian Life, Kroeber describes the method of the Boasian anthropologist

he takes up his residence, for a continuous period or repeatedly for several years, among a tribe, on its reservation or habitat. He enters into as close relations as possible with its most intelligent or authoritative members. He acquires all he can of their language, reduces it to writing, perhaps compiles texts, a dictionary or grammar. Day after day he records notes from visual observation or
the memory of the best informants available on the industries, beliefs, government, family life, ceremonies, wars, and daily occupations of his chosen people. (12)

As Boasian ethnographers narrowed their immediate focus to individual Native American communities, eliciting help from members of these communities in collecting (and in some cases even recording) information, they began to voice their appreciation of the uniqueness of these communities. Native Americans became more than specimens of "primitive society," but individuals, worthy of study for their own sakes. Among many Boasian anthropologists, a belief in cultural relativism, even cultural pluralism, toppled previous theories of cultural hierarchies: "Boas and his students replace[d] one scientific paradigm (evolutionism) with another (relativism)" (Handler 253). In The Golden Age of American Anthropology, Margaret Mead asserted that the new orthodoxy in anthropological studies required "that anthropologists treat human beings as human beings, members of one species, inheritors of cultures of different adequacy and complexity but equal dignity" (6).

Not surprisingly, many of the Boasians became vocal opponents of the racist and nativist sentiments that flourished in the United States in the early twentieth century. Boas himself argued for the dignity of African-Americans, claiming that their African heritage was worthy of profound respect. Based on his extensive physiological studies of immigrants to America and their offspring, Boas forcefully stated that fears that the "American race" would become "mongrelized" by the growing influx of people from eastern and southern Europe were entirely unfounded. Boas vocally denounced Nazi theories of Aryan racial superiority as complete fantasies. "Boas continually restated . . . that no physical characteristics exist which doom any particular race to mental and social inferiority and that judged on their own basis, the people who we label 'primitive' are no less
intelligent than we are; they merely cope with the world in a different, and often more complex way" (Leventstein 19).

The Boasians' emphasis was on "thick description." The lengthy, detailed texts they produced were believed to contain part of the necessary information which would help generate and support future generalizations about the "nature of mankind" (or at least of particular communities of mankind). Yet, as Goldman argues, for Boasians, "Authentic description of a natural form is also an end in itself, as a partial portrait of the natural world. Such a portrait has aesthetic value, it has moral value, and it has a scientific value as a reconstruction that seeks to be faithful to real events" (333). Dipple notes of Boas's research on the Kwakiutl, "He published an estimated 10,000 pages of ethnographic materials in which he let the facts speak for themselves; no artificial order could be imposed on them without doing damage to the delicate tissue of human culture whose diversity mirrored that of nature" (234-35).

Though they argued that Native Americans were neither racially nor culturally inferior to Euramericans, and though many of their positions helped bring about John Collier's Indian New Deal, Boasians were not especially critical of Euramerican treatment of Native Americans in the early twentieth century. The nature of their work, the primary task they set for themselves, may have had much to do with this. Boasians were interested primarily in recreating portraits of aboriginal culture, of Native American life before contact with Euramericans. Indeed, the Boasians' desire to record Native American cultures as they existed in their precontact states was made all the more earnest by their recognition that Native American lifestyles were continually changing due to interaction with Euramericans. The goal, then, was to look past the "changed" aspects to arrive at the "purely indigenous." Thus Kroeber writes in the preface of his over nine
hundred-page *Handbook of the Indians of California*, which, according to Kardiner and Preble, became "the basic reference work in the field" (192).

This book is a history in that it tries to reconstruct and present the scheme within which these people in ancient and more recent times lived their lives. . . . I have omitted all directly historical treatment in the ordinary sense; that is, accounts of the relations of the natives with the whites and of the events befalling them after such contact was established. . . . It is . . . a matter that has comparatively slight relation to the aboriginal civilization. (v)

In his preface to *The Crow Indians*, Robert Lowie acknowledges that

"Anthropologists whom fortune has taken to the interior of the Congo or New Guinea turn up their noses at work on 'primitive' tribes surviving in a civilized country. Naturally, such lack the glamour that envelops exotic peoples who have remained virginaly uncontaminated by an industrial age" (xvii). Lowie then counters that though the Crow "have had their share of the tribulations usually created by aboriginal contacts with white civilization" (xxi) (though he does not specifically list excessive drinking as one of them), still there are ample resources among the Crow which allow him to get a decent sense of their precontact lifestyle. Lowie asserts that he has been able, especially through interviews with Crow elders, to piece together an adequate portrait of "aboriginal" Crow culture.

There was thus a conscious, determined effort among many of the Boasians to screen out the effects of intercultural contact in their descriptions of Native Americans, including, presumably, effects of drinking. This tendency among many early (and later) twentieth-century anthropologists has been criticized by activists who have sought improve the economic and social conditions of twentieth-century Native Americans. In order to help implement the Indian Reorganization Act, John Collier assembled an Applied Anthropology staff. Collier initially believed that the anthropologists, trained in studying other cultures, could help advise how best to effect policies to benefit specific Native American communities—indeed, they might
even help initiate such policies. Collier was disappointed in much of the results of the Bureau anthropologists, however, discovering that much of their research was not easily transformed into policy. "Collier and his advisers were not interested in descriptive studies, even those with important implications for theoretical issues, unless they were addressed to immediate problems on which action could be taken" (Taylor 160). More recently, Vine Deloria, Jr., noted Sioux activist, has argued that much of twentieth-century anthropological research has actually (indirectly) harmed contemporary Native Americans.

Yet not all anthropologists in the first half of the twentieth century ignored in their published works the effects of contact between Native Americans and Euramericans. In Indians of the United States, Clark Wissler acknowledged that "the liquor trade is an ugly page in history, from the day when Henry Hudson made Indians drunk in Manhattan to the present" (267). Yet rather than simply chastise unscrupulous traders who sold liquor to Native Americans or ineffectual government officials who were unable effectively to prohibit the illegal trade, and rather than echo conventional notions of drinking as a sign of Native American moral weakness, Wissler reaches for more complex reactions to observed incidents of drinking among Native Americans. In a sense anticipating more recent theories by MacAndrew and Edgerton and others, Wissler notes about early patterns of drinking among Native Americans:

No United States Indian had ever discovered distilled alcohol, so there were no rules of experience to guide him. His notion of how to
consume liquor was to get drunk as fast as possible. He had no feeling for the white man's way of allowing himself to be teased by the presence of liquor and showing his power of control in not taking enough to get drunk. We suppose that with most peoples drinking liquor is a social matter, the chief enjoyment coming from the community spirit in sharing it. The Indian always shared food—that was fundamental with him—and when a keg of liquor was available all the assemblage began to work up their emotions preparatory to a grand debauch. (265)

Speculating on more recent factors affecting drinking among Native Americans, Wissler writes, "When Indian reservations became the order of the day, those in charge of such reservations were usually powerless to prevent white bootleggers from selling to the Indians. Remember that hunting had ceased and raiding for plunder and scalps was under the ban, leaving the men with no occupation. Liquor promised a way of release" (267). Rather than explaining drinking among Native Americans as a sign of deficient qualities within "Indian nature," Wissler suggests how aspects of their culture may have encouraged some Native Americans to drink. Indeed, Wissler points out that whites were not immune to their own fascinations with new "drugs": "Tobacco was less harmful to the whites than liquor to the Indians," but the former swept over Europe at an astonishing rate. The white man was immediately as crazy about tobacco as the Indian about liquor, and neither laws nor execution deterred them" (268). While Wissler's discussion of Native American drinking is quite brief, it nevertheless exemplifies an approach that does not seek one, overall explanation that will fit all instances—an approach that almost necessarily lends itself to perpetuation of stereotypes—but rather one which acknowledges the likelihood of a multiplicity of factors. Wissler seems to recognize, like many contemporary anthropologists and other researchers who study the subject, that the causes and effects of drinking among Native Americans are complex, a recognition that naturally follows from the

17 Wissler's book appeared in 1940.
acknowledgement and appreciation of the complex nature of Native American cultures.

The Boasian "view from the inside" also has encouraged writers to depict Native American life from Native American points of view. We have already seen how LaFarge attempted in much of his fiction to dramatize the perspectives of his Native American characters, who are the major protagonists in many of his stories—and we have seen how LaFarge provided depictions of Native Americans drinking that were far more intricate than many of his predecessors and contemporaries. Beginning in the early twentieth century, many anthropologists filled their research with autobiographies of individual Native Americans, giving them a voice with which to describe and express themselves.\(^\text{18}\) Perhaps the proliferation of such autobiographies beginning in the mid twentieth century helped to prepare the way for the growing number of Native American writers who recently have written about their people.

**Conclusion**

Near the conclusion of the nineteenth century, the end of the Plains Wars and the "closing" of the frontier marked a change in the perceived status of Native Americans of the west. With unparalleled vigor, Euramerican reformist groups launched campaigns to "acculturate" Native Americans, to assimilate them into "civilization," which was now believed to have been spread throughout virtually all of U.S. territory in North America. These attempts to encourage (or coerce) Native Americans to "walk the white man's road" helped to give rise to a new narrative paradigm of "Indian literature," a novel manner of "textualizing" Native Americans

\(^{18}\text{Though see Krupat for a significant caveat for reading many of these autobiographies.}\)
in American literature. Designedly countering images of the Indian which had
pervaded much previous literature, writers such as Helen Hunt Jackson, Hamlin
Garland, and Oliver La Farge sought to inspire in their audience a respect and
appreciation of Native Americans not as "stoic Noble Savages," but as persons with
whom they could truly sympathize. For instance, refuting the assumption that
Indians were primarily violent, an assumption which predominated in epic
American literature, Jackson, Garland, and La Farge emphasized the peaceful
natures of their Native American protagonists, who are often portrayed as
threatened by aggressive, "beastly" whites.

The manner in which Jackson, Garland, and La Farge handled images of
drinking among Native Americans is especially interesting. Reformers generally
subscribed to the notion that Native Americans were tragically addicted to alcohol,
strenuously arguing that the BIA should expend more effort to stop the Indian
liquor trade. In their non-fiction, both Jackson and Garland discussed problems
they perceived that drinking had brought to Native American communities, adding
their voices to the chorus of reformers demanding that the government completely
stop all white "whiskey traders." Yet in their fiction, while they both allude to
problems alcohol has introduced Native Americans, neither Jackson nor Garland
actually dramatizes instances of drinking by Indians. Indeed, virtually every
Native American protagonist in the fiction of Jackson and Garland is a teetotaler.
Apparently influenced by the widespread calls for temperance that were heard
throughout the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,
Jackson and Garland "sanitized" their Native American heroes and heroines, no
doubt reasoning that their audience would be less inclined to sympathize with the
plight of a "drunken Indian" than that of one who was "sober and industrious." In
fact, carrying their inversion of familiar stereotypes one step further, Jackson and
Garland each in several prominent cases associated violent drunkenness with white antagonists. Garland particularly wished to present negative impressions of that great American hero the cowboy.

While Oliver La Farge also employed the new narrative paradigm in his fiction, he was more willing to portray scenes of Native Americans drinking. Changing attitudes in American society may have had something to do with this willingness. Laughing Boy first appeared in 1929, in National Prohibition's waning years. More importantly, though, La Farge was concerned not only with countering what he believed were two-dimensional stereotypes of Native Americans, but also with providing his readers with what he believed as an accurate portrayal of the challenges that faced contemporary Native Americans, at least those of the southwest. Influenced by Boasians, indeed, trained as an anthropologist, La Farge sought in much of his fiction to simulate a Native American perspective: Euramericans generally play only minor roles in his Native American fiction. He thus sought to portray Native American drinking in a more complex, in-depth manner than virtually any previous fiction writer. In several of stories, La Farge suggests a multiplicity of causes and effects of drinking among Native Americans, most focussing on socio-cultural factors. From Laughing Boy to Old Singer, social isolation—indeed, social disintegration—is perhaps the greatest problem brought about by drinking, and perhaps its greatest cause, as well. In this sense, La Farge and those Boasians who wrote about "postcontact" Native Americans describe drinking among Native Americans in manner similar to that of many contemporary researchers.

The emergence of the new narrative paradigm of "Indian fiction" did not mean, however, that the epic conventions of the war and captivity narrative would be abandoned. On the contrary, after the "official closing" of the frontier,
Euramerican fascination with the "wild west" perhaps even increased. By the beginning of the twentieth century, writers such as Owen Wister and Zane Grey devoted much of their literary careers to celebrations of the "mythic west." The epic agenda of civilizing the continent was thought to have been accomplished, and now its story must be preserved as a major, and to the followers of Frederick Jackson Turner, the central American achievement, one which virtually defined the "American character." In an era especially noted for its intense "nativism," white frontiersmen and cowboys were thought by many to represent the adventurousness and vitality of the "national spirit." While the primary intent of writers like Wister and Grey may not have been to taint their readers' perceptions of Native Americans (indeed, Grey even considered himself as an advocate for "the red man"), their rehashed plots of adventure on the frontier were largely derived from the epic narrative tradition which originated in America in colonial Indian war and captivity narratives. Wister and especially Grey thus frequently (re)invoked established epic images involving alcohol and Native Americans. Thus, for example, in Grey's stories of the "wild west," drinking almost invariably turns the already savage Indian into an even more vicious "brute," whose defeat is thus assumed to be all the more justified.

The phenomenal popularity of the film and later the television western pretty much insured the greater dissemination of the epic western narrative of Wister and Grey throughout much of the twentieth century. However, in the last 25 years or so, the epic western has declined greatly in popularity, due in part, as Cawelti notes, to "a new awareness of the centrality of racism to American culture...[which] has made the traditional formula no longer acceptable" (20). He continues, "It seems clear that our changed understanding of the Native American makes it increasingly difficult to treat Indians in the traditional Western fashion as savage
antagonists' (21). Against the declining epic western, since the late 1960s a set of voices has arisen which have in part sought to serve as a corrective to stereotypical images of Native Americans so long promoted and perpetuated in Euramerican mass culture. Native American writers such as N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, and James Welch have worked to create in their fiction more accurate, detailed understanding portraits of Native Americans than have been generally available in previous American literature. The next chapter examines how some of these contemporary Native American writers have responded to and reworked conventional images of Native Americans, particularly those concerning alcohol.
Chapter VI

Contemporary Native American Writers

Throughout the history of English-language literature produced in what is now the United States, Euramericans have almost exclusively determined how Native Americans have been portrayed. The preceding chapters have examined many such portrayals through the early twentieth century, particularly exploring the relationship between a work's rhetorical context and its depiction of Native Americans. Thus we have seen how the narrative paradigm of whites "taming the wild continent"—what I have termed the epic mode—called for the construction of a fairly consistent set of stereotypes of Native Americans, including those involving "the drunken Indian." We have also noted how changes in rhetorical context, often precipitated by a more sympathetic perspective towards Native Americans, has tended to influence depictions of drinking by Native Americans—in the case of Oliver La Farge, leading to more complex assumptions than those espoused by many of his predecessors and contemporaries.

This concluding chapter examines the work of several contemporary writers who have begun to influence many readers' perceptions of Native Americans. Native Americans have written and published texts in English for over 200 years, yet it has only been in the last 20 or so years—since the publication in 1968 of N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*—that Native American writers have received much critical or public attention. "The revitalization of Indian pride in the 1960s ushered in an era of creative writing whose quality and quantity were unequalled
in the history of Indian literature written in English" (Ruoff 76). This perceived
outburst of writing has been called by more than one critic no less than a
"renaissance"; **Native American Renaissance** is in fact the title of a 1983 book by
Kenneth Lincoln, one of the first to address the subject. Tom Colonese and Louis
Owens claim that "since the publication of [House Made of Dawn], works by Indian
authors have moved much closer to the forefront of American fiction, eclipsing the
customary 'Indian' novels by white writers" (xii).

Literary production by Native American writers has indeed flourished in the
last 20 years, followed by a mass of scholarly material suggesting appropriate
perspectives from which to view this work. Michael Dorris and others have
underscored the "non-native" nature of much of this literature, especially the
fiction: "a growing number of ethnically Native American writers . . . fulfill a
rather non-traditional artistic role; rather than primarily interpreting or
bringing out a fresh vision of society for their context communities, they are
interpolating and translating their communities for another culture" (Dorris,
"Native American Literature" 154). Indeed, the three writers discussed in this
chapter—N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, and James Welch—all have received
degrees from and have taught at major American universities. Jack Forbes would
thus disqualify them as writers of "Native American literature," since he insists:

Native American literature must consist in works produced by
persons of Native identity and/or culture for primary dissemination
to others persons of Native identity and/or culture. . . . Articles,
poems, and novels written by people of Indian ancestry which are
placed in white publication outlets and never read by Indians can
hardly be considered to be a part of Native American literature. (19)

Other critics, however, emphasize the "Indianness" of the works of many
contemporary Native American writers: Jarold Ramsey celebrates what he
considers "the arrival of a genuine native American current in our contemporary
writing" (36). Many critics have focussed on what they see as a struggle between
Native American and Euramerican perspectives in the works of contemporary Native American writers. Thus, while Paula Gunn Allen asserts that "Indians and their traditions are multitude, and so are the themes of their novels" ("Whose Dream" 98), she also suggests that "One of the major themes in contemporary American Indian literature is that of alienation" ("Stranger" 3). A number of critics have echoed this generalization: "Native American literature portrays characters in quest of a modern identity" (Coltelli 3); "The list of displaced, alienated protagonists in Indian fiction is impressive" (Owens 56); "a significant number of [contemporary Native American] novels are studies of the acculturation process and its destructive consequences for the Indian" (Schneider 67).

Contemporary Native American fiction writers are acutely aware of the long history of stereotypes of Indians in American literature; N. Scott Momaday has acknowledged that such stereotypes "are indeed formidable and . . . inhibiting" (King 67). Colonese and Owens observe, however, that Native American writers are now in a particularly advantageous position to counter many of these existing stereotypes: "in contemporary fiction by Indian writers, Indian and non-Indian alike are permitted to be not stereotypes but individuals with complex needs, desires, and destinies" (xv). Dorris cautions, though, that the possibility for stereotyping still exists, not necessarily through Native American writers' depictions themselves, but through readers' perspectives: "Native-created protagonists may fallaciously assume the proportions, for some readers, of Every Indian—underlining anew the old, hopeful dogma that 'they' must really be all alike" ("Native American Literature" 155). Indeed, several Native American writers have themselves expressed similar concerns, not wanting to be perceived as spokespersons for a "pan-Indian" point of view.
This concern among Native American writers not simply to replace old stereotypes of Indians with new ones is particularly relevant in regard to the subject of drinking. These writers have written in detail about problems which today face many Native American peoples, including the reportedly high incidence of drinking in some Native American communities. Peter Wild observes that the subject of drinking constitutes a special challenge for contemporary Native American writers who wish to avoid cliches: “The alcoholic Indian . . . is a looming reality of Indian life, one that hardly can be ignored in an Indian novel. How [is a writer] to deal with this almost obligatory figure without becoming repetitive, without making him a cardboard, stock character?” (7-8). Nicholas Warner has observed that, in fact, “the issue of the drunken Indian has . . . preoccupied a number of Native American writers . . . who all view drinking as a major source of Indian alienation and cultural decay” (16). Forbes criticizes many contemporary novels by Native Americans as “colonialized” works, claiming they tend to “depict the Native people as simple victims of alcoholism, poverty, or personal alienation” (20). Warner, however, perceives such portrayals quite differently: “It is a sign of their fundamental realism that none of the authors [i.e., Momaday, Silko, Simon Ortiz] denies alcoholism as a contemporary problem, and none shrinks from describing the horrors of dissipation” (27).

This chapter examines the manner in which three prominent contemporary Native American fiction writers have portrayed drinking among Native Americans. While Momaday, Silko, and Welch have all clearly stated that they wish to seen not as representatives of all Native Americans, still they are aware that their largely Euramerican audience, while generally more suspicious of Indian stereotypes than their ancestors perhaps were, remain largely uninformed about Native American peoples and cultures. These writers recognize that their work will play some role in
creating a new awareness of Native Americans in American society. Given the long history of "firewater myths" in American literature—a history which has been suggested in Chapters 2 through 5—it is especially interesting to observe how these writers have handled the controversial subject of alcohol and Native Americans.

N. Scott Momaday

House Made of Dawn, winner of the 1969 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, has often been cited as having initiated the "Native American renaissance." At the outset of the novel, the protagonist Abel steps off a bus at the southwest village of Walatowa, a fictionalized version of Jemez pueblo, where Momaday's parents taught school and where Momaday lived throughout most of his teenage years. It is July of 1945; Abel is returning from duty overseas in World War II. His parents and brother having died years before, Abel is greeted by his grandfather Francisco, who has served as Abel's guardian. Momaday describes their reunion: "The [bus] door swung open and Abel stepped heavily to the ground and reeled. He was drunk, and he fell against his grandfather and did not know him" (9). Abel is in fact so sick from drinking that he spends the first day of his return to Walatowa in bed. It is evident that Abel has drifted apart from the traditional life of the village, his drinking one prominent sign of his psychological and cultural imbalance.

Momaday has indicated that Abel's self-destructive drinking behavior is not necessarily to be considered anomalous: "Abel is a composite of the boys I knew at Jemez. I wanted to say something about them. An appalling number of them are dead; they died young, and they died violent deaths. One of them was drunk and run over. Another was drunk and froze to death. (He was the best runner I ever knew) . . . . They're a sad lot of people" (from a letter to Frances McCullough qtd. in Schubnell 102). Indeed, in his autobiographical memoir The Names, Momaday
describes how drinking had affected one of his own family members, his Kiowa uncle James:

James Mammedaty, whom I loved, was a pathetic figure of a man. I suppose that he began to drink whiskey when he was a child; it was as if he had set out as a little boy to drink himself to death, and so he did, though it took him a long time, fifty years, more or less. All the stories that I have ever heard concerning drunken Indians are concentrated for me in the memory of that sad, helpless man. When I was a boy my cousins and I used to play tricks on him. We liked to jump out at him from hiding when he was drunk, most often. How cruel this was we could not then have imagined; there is no telling what fearful figures we appeared to be in his soft, bleeding mind's eye. . . . When I was older I came to understand that Jimmy was a kind man, and very sick, and I tried to think well of him. It was painful to see how severely alcohol had damaged his mind and body, that he had deteriorated early into a grotesque caricature of the man he might have been. (40)

Momaday describes having learned, long after the fact, of a time when the lives of himself and his mother had even been endangered by his drunken uncle. Momaday's pregnant mother had left the hospital where she had been sent, arriving late one night at the house of her husband's family. James, the only one awake at the time, was apparently confused by this "intruder": "He had got a loaded shotgun, and he was raving and blind drunk. He placed the muzzle of the gun against me in my mother's womb and threatened to shoot" (41). Yet instead of merely decrying his uncle's condition as a result of Euramerican cultural imperialism (though he does suggest this aspect of James's drinking), instead of dismissing James as simply another "drunken Indian," a tragic statistic, Momaday attempts a deeper understanding of his uncle's obvious need to drink. Imagining what his uncle must have felt before going on a "binge." Momaday writes in The Names:

A knot was being drawn very tight inside the man. The thought, just the thought, of being drunk had a physical effect upon him, a giddiness, a kind of euphoria in which his body seemed to grow lighter and more supple, and at the same time there was a kind of resistance in it, in the flesh and blood, the body's own anticipation of impairment and pain, of dehydration and the sharp contraction of
the brain. His eyes went very dry—and his tongue—and sweat broke out at his head and at the palms of his hands. (78)

This speculation about James’s own ambivalence towards drinking suggests that Momaday is prepared to consider the subject of drinking among Native Americans not only from “external” perspective of saddened, troubled onlookers, but also from the “internal” perspective of the drinker himself, immediately probing what kinds of needs drinking may seem to fulfill.

Though House Made of Dawn contains little concerning Abel’s experiences as a soldier, these experiences have apparently affected him adversely, contributing to his sense of alienation.1 “Abel . . . epitomizes the Indian identity crisis, a phenomenon particularly prevalent after World War II, when many veterans failed to find a way back into their native communities. Abel’s tragedy lies in his inability to determine his place and define himself” (Schubnell 100). In the section of the novel describing Abel’s second day back at Walatowa, Momaday provides a Faulkneresque series of flashbacks in which Abel recalls some of his experiences before he had left: “This—everything in advance of his going—he could remember whole and in detail. It was the recent past, the intervention of days and years without meaning . . . time always immediate and confused, that he could not put together in his mind” (23). Though his memories of his boyhood afford him some sense of peacefulness, a personal grounding, Abel still cannot fully reacclimate to life in Walatowa. “Abel’s chief problem . . . is that he is not living in the world of his fathers” (Velie 60). This is evident especially in the events surrounding the “chicken pull.” Momaday describes this traditional Jemez game in Section Four of The Names: mounted riders try to pull a half-buried chicken from the ground. Once successful, a rider then chooses one of the other participants and proceeds to

1 Later in the novel, one of Abel’s fellow soldiers testifies at his trial that Abel had been nearly killed in combat by an enemy tank (116-17).
flail him about the head with the chicken. Momaday writes that "according to the rules of the game [the 'victim'] must stand his ground and try to catch the rooster up in the loop of his reins or under his arm" (The Names 144-45). When in House Made of Dawn a Native American albino—the "white man"—pulls the rooster from the ground and approaches Abel, "Abel threw up his hands, but the great bird fell upon them and beat them down. Abel was not used to the game" (44). Abel later muses, "His return to the town had been a failure . . . he had tried to pray, to sing, to enter into the old rhythm of the tongue, but he was no longer attuned to it" (58).

Abel is also unable fully to participate in the Feast of Porcingula, a festival which syncretically draws from both Catholic and traditional native beliefs. Navajo and other native people in the surrounding area converge on the village for feasting, games, and other forms of celebration. Momaday suggests that drinking is not totally alien to the culture of the area, describing some of the native visitors: "lean young men on horseback, drab and drunk . . . The end of the train would be brought up by fools, in a poor parody of pride: the fat, degenerate squaws, insensible with drink" (69). Indeed, later that night, after most of the visiting Native Americans have left, Momaday describes a scene at one of the local "watering holes": "The last of the wagons had gone away from the junction, and only three or four young Navajos remained at Paco’s. One of them had passed out and lay in his vomit on the floor of the room. The others were silent now, and sullen. They hung upon the bar and wheezed, helpless even to take up the dregs of the wine that remained" (81). While not an integral part of the traditional celebration, still excessive drinking has obviously been incorporated by some Native Americans into the festivities.

Yet while the drinking of the Navajo "bucks" seems to produce no extraordinary consequences, for Abel drinking contributes to quite different
results. Abel is in Paco’s as well, talking and drinking with the albino, the same man who had humiliated him at the chicken pull several days before. “... Abel smiled; he nodded and grew silent at length; and the smile was thin and instinctive, a hard, transparent mask upon his mouth and eyes. He waited, and the wine rose up in his blood” (82). The two leave the bar, and in a struggle, Abel stabs and kills the albino.²

Abel is given a 7 year jail sentence for this killing, and when released, is taken to Los Angeles as part of a relocation program for Native Americans. Yet Abel fares no better in Los Angeles; indeed, he feels more alienated than he had on the reservation. Section 2 opens with Abel lying drunk on a beach in Los Angeles in January of 1952. He has been beaten nearly senseless by the sadistic policeman Martinez. Unable to move, Abel reflects upon his experience in the city after he was released from prison. He thinks, “He had loved his body. It had been hard and quick and beautiful: it had been useful, quickly and surely responsive to his mind ... He had never been sick until he was sick with alcohol. ... His body was mangled and racked with pain. His body, like his mind, had turned on him; it was his enemy” (100-01). Abel reflects at one point upon his situation: “He tried to think where the trouble had begun, what the trouble was. There was trouble; he could admit that to himself, but he had no real insight into his own situation.

² Critics widely disagree on the significance of this incident: Floyd Watkins writes that “Momaday made his victim an albino ... in order to suggest that the man was abnormal and unnatural. ... By Abel’s killing an unnatural thing, the novelist suggests the possibility that his protagonist is potentially in harmony with the good and the natural forces of his world” (141); “Not a person at Jemez,” Momaday told me, ‘would have held Abel liable’ ” (141). Lawrence Evers, however, disagrees: “that Abel is ‘acting within the Indian tradition’ when he kills the albino is wrong” (218); “When Abel kills the albino, in a real sense he kills a part of himself and his culture which he can no longer recognize and control” (220).
Maybe, certainly, that was the trouble; but he had no way of knowing. He wanted a drink; he wanted to be drunk” (105).

If Abel cannot provide any insight into his situation, his friend Ben Benally has a theory. Section 3 is narrated by Benally, a Navajo who has lived in Los Angeles for some time. When Abel is brought to the city, Benally takes Abel under his wing and attempts to “acculturate” him to urban life. Benally believes that Abel’s problem is that he cannot or will not change:

You could see that he wasn’t going to get along around here. . . . He was a longhair, like Tosamah said. You know, you have to change. That’s the only way you can live in a place like this. You have to forget about the way it was, how you grew up and all. Sometimes it’s hard, but you have to do it. Well, he didn’t want to change, I guess, or he didn’t know how. (148)

Tosamah, a Kiowa preacher who has attracted a small congregation of urban Native Americans in Los Angeles, declares of Abel. “They gave him every advantage. They gave him a pair of shoes and told him to go to school. They deloused him and gave him a lot of free haircuts and let him fight on their side. But was he grateful? Hell no, man. He was too damned dumb to be civilized” (148).

Benally offers himself as a model of assimilation. Born and raised on the Navajo reservation, Benally moved to the city when he was a young man because he believed he had no future on the reservation—”just a lot of old people, going noplace and dying off” (159). After getting off work at his low-paying job, Benally frequently socializes with other “urban Indians,” an activity that frequently involves drinking: he says of The Silver Dollar, a local bar, “It’s a pretty good place; there’s a juke box, and there’s always some Indians, drinking and fooling around. You can get drunk in there” (140-41). Benally in fact believes that his drinking helps him cope with urban life: “You’ve got to take it easy and get drunk once in a while and just forget about who you are” (158-59). As Bernard Hirsch notes, “The
need to 'go along with it'... is a recurrent motif in Ben's narrative, and all that
gives meaning to his life must be subordinated to it" (316).

Ben is troubled that Abel cannot follow his lead; one prominent sign of Abel's
inability to adapt is his pattern of drinking. Whereas drinking allows Benally to
escape his sense of self, it makes Abel less sociable. Benally recounts an incident in
which Abel, in a drunken rage, tried to attack Tosamah when the preacher taunted
him for being a "longhair" (159-60). Abel loses his job where Benally works
because he misses several days due to drunkenness. Benally observes:

He went downhill pretty fast after that. Sometimes he was here when
I came in from work, and sometimes he wasn't. He was drunk about
half the time. ... The Relocation people got him a job with the
schools, taking care of the grounds and all, but he showed up drunk a
couple of times and they fired him after the first week and a half.
(162)

One night Benally and Abel are stopped by the cop Martinez, who tries to
shake them down. Benally hands over his money, fatalistically regarding the
corrupt policeman as an inevitable hazard. Yet Abel refuses to cooperate and
Martinez gives him his first beating. Benally states, "He couldn't forget about it.
... And even when he got drunk it was different somehow. He used to get drunk
and happy, and we would laugh around a lot, but after that night it was different"
(175). Abel withdraws further into himself: "it wasn't fun anymore. The liquor
didn't seem to make any difference; he was just the same, sitting around and
looking down like he hated everything, like he hated himself and hated being
drunk" (182). Finally, when Abel leaves after having a fight with Benally, Benally
hears several days later that Abel is in the hospital, beaten nearly to death by
Martinez (the occasion for Section 2).

After his release from the hospital, Abel decides to flee from Martinez and
return to his reservation. Benally recalls that the night before Abel left, several
Indians had driven to the top of a hill outside of the city to drink, sing, and dance.
"There were a lot of Indians up there, and we really got going after a while. We were all pretty drunk . . . There was a lot of liquor up there, and everybody was feeling pretty good" (144). Benally likens the experience to a traditional ceremony: "There were some stars, and it was like we were way out in the desert someplace and there was a squaw dance or a sing going on, and everybody was getting good and drunk and happy" (145). In fact, both Benally and Abel begin to feel nostalgic for their respective people's culture:

We were going to meet someplace, maybe in a year or two, maybe more. He was going home, and we was going to be all right again. And someday I was going home, too, and we were going to meet someplace out there on the reservation and get drunk together. It was going to be the last time, and it was something we had to do . . . We were going to get drunk and, you know, peaceful—beautiful. (145-46)

Warner writes, "For all his good intentions, Ben is essentially a pathetic man, one drawn to his heritage but afraid to embrace it without the crutch of alcohol . . . . Ben recognizes a certain safety in being 'just . . . another drunk Indian'" (23).

Section 4 describes Abel's return to Walatowa, still in pain from his beating by Martinez. Abel discovers that Francisco is dying, and, unable to cope with his grandfather's imminent death, he predictably turns to drinking. "He had gone out on the first and the second days [after his return] and got drunk. He wanted to go out on the third, but he had no money and it was bitter cold and he was sick and in pain" (195). Abel forces himself to face his grandfather, and cares for him in the final days before his death. Warner notes of this section, "Instead of continuing to lose himself in alcohol, Abel tends his sick grandfather, and when the old man dies, he performs the appropriate Indian funeral rites for him. Abel now seems to have left alcohol behind him" (25). At the conclusion, Abel for the first time in the novel fully participates in a Pueblo ritual; after he performs a traditional burial for Francisco, Abel joins in the February dawn run. Evers likens this race to a re-
emergence journey for Abel (214), curing his sense of alienation, signalling his affirmation of traditional Pueblo culture.

Momaday's portrayal of drinking in *House Made of Dawn* conforms to no neat pattern. The Navajos at the Feast of Porcingula and Ben Benally in Los Angeles both are shown to drink, and while they are by no means featured as models worthy of emulation, neither are they necessarily dismissed as "drunkards," their lives tragically ruined by drink. Drinking has different connotations for Abel, though, for Abel suffers from a sense of alienation from his culture. Drinking generally serves to heighten this alienation, both as a cause and a symptom, something which both exacerbates and signals his separation from his people. As Warner points out, "Abel's return to traditional Indian ritual clearly coincides with an abandonment of heavy drinking" (20). This multi-faceted depiction of drinking by Native Americans in *House Made of Dawn*, somewhat reminiscent of, though more complex than La Farge's in *Laughing Boy*, allows Momaday to suggest the overall negative effects that alcohol continues to have upon Native Americans while avoiding cliches concerning "the drunken Indian."

**Leslie Marmon Silko**

Leslie Marmon Silko's 1977 *Ceremony* is another highly acclaimed contemporary Native American novel. *Ceremony* shares a number of similarities with Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (and James Welch's *Winter in the Blood*), similarities which have prompted some critics to generalize about a "characteristic" Native American novel. Like Abel, Tayo, the protagonist of Silko's novel, is a veteran of World War II who returns to the reservation traumatized by his combat experience. Tayo spends much of his time after his release from a Los Angeles V. A. hospital getting drunk with his war buddies and recalling the feeling of being a
U. S. soldier. Also like Abel, Tayo’s process of physical and psychological healing is finally marked in part by his rejection of alcohol.

Alcohol had tragically affected Tayo’s life from the outset. Tayo was the product of one of his Pueblo mother’s “one night stands” with a white man.\(^3\) Tayo’s mother, who “was always drunk” (34), abandoned Tayo on the doorstep of her older sister when Tayo was only four years old. Tayo was subsequently raised by his aunt, who had always encouraged her own son Rocky to be a material success by learning the ways of the “white world.” Rocky greatly yearned to escape life on the reservation, and when the United States entered World War II, he enlisted in the army, followed by Tayo.

Instead of opening the way for their success in Euramerican society, the war proved destructive for both Rocky and Tayo, as well as other characters in Ceremony. Rocky is killed in action in the Philippines, and Tayo returns physically and psychologically shaken. Yet it is more than Native American veterans’ combat experiences overseas that Silko suggests contributes to their post-war despair—it is also the treatment they received after the war. When Tayo and his friend Harley decide to leave their work in the fields to make a “beer run,” Tayo muses that “Harley didn’t used to like beer at all, and maybe this was something that was different about him now, after the war. He drank a lot of beer now” (20). Later Tayo thinks, “He had heard Auntie talk about the veterans—drunk all the time, she

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\(^3\) One of the most disturbing sections of the book involves Silko’s description of the outskirts of Gallup, New Mexico, which, Calvin Trillin writes, “is noted for drunken Indians” (108). Silko creates young Native American children’s perspective of their dissolute mother bringing men to her hut: “They learned to listen in the darkness, to the sounds of footsteps and loud laughing, to voices and sounds of wine; to know when the mother was returning with a man. They learned to stand at a distance and see if she would throw them food—so they would go away and not peek through the holes in the rusting tin, at the man spilling wine on himself as he unbuttoned his pants” (108-09).
said. But he knew why. It was something the old people could not understand.

Liquor was medicine for the anger that made them hurt, for the pain of the loss, medicine for tight bellies and choked-up throats" (40). At one point, Tayo "lectures" to a group of his war buddies in a bar on the outskirts of the reservation. "First time you walked down the street in Gallup or Albuquerque, you knew. Don't lie. You knew right away. The war was over, the uniform was gone. All of a sudden that man at the store waits on you last . . ." (42). As Warner writes, "Tayo's dilemma, like that of many Indian veterans of World War II . . . is that he feels rejected by white society once it has no use for him" (19).

Silko highlights another aspect of Native American drinking patterns in the second part of *Ceremony*. Realizing that there is little they can do to help him, Tayo's family decides to take him to Betonie, a traditional medicine man. Betonie performs a ceremony of healing over Tayo, providing Tayo with a promise of psychic integration. On his return to his part of the reservation, Tayo is picked up along the side of the road by Harley, who characteristically offers Tayo a beer. At first, Tayo refuses this offer, indicating that his stomach is not feeling well, a sign, Silko suggests, of his lingering physical and spiritual sickness. Yet Tayo soon gives in to the social pressure. In an ironic counterpoint to the ceremony in which Tayo has just participated, Harley exhorts Tayo to take a drink:

"We'll give you a cure! We know how, don't we?" . . . Tayo grabbed [the wine] and swallowed what was left in the bottle.

"Drink it! Drink it! It's good for you! You'll get better! Get this man to the cold Coors hospital! Hurry up!" (158).

This scene is virtually repeated near the end of the novel, when Tayo's war buddies come looking for him after he has isolated himself from others, living away from other dwellings as a part of the ritual cure Betonie had invoked for him. Again, Tayo gives in to Harley's offer of beer. "Beer made the feeling recede and slowed down the beating of his heart . . . He needed to rest for a while, and not
think about...the ceremony... So he would hang around with Harley and Leroy; everyone would understand that: drinking around, drinking with his buddies"

(241). Warner notes, "Drinking, then, becomes a sign of conformity in this novel; the path of least difficulty is that of being 'just...another drunk Indian'" (20). Yet in the end Tayo breaks with his buddies, rejecting them when he realizes what a danger they pose for him and what a self-destructive path they are on: "and the young people would leave, go to towns like Albuquerque and Gallup where bitterness would overwhelm them, and they would lose their hope and finally themselves in drinking" (249).

In *Ceremony*, Silko dramatizes several factors that have been observed to affect drinking patterns among many Native Americans. Rejection by Euramerican society has led some Native American war veterans to drink. The traditional emphasis on group conformity has helped to perpetuate excessive drinking. In Chapter One we noted that these are among a number of factors which contemporary sociologists and anthropologists have used to explain Native American drinking behavior. Yet while Silko suggests how destructive an influence alcohol has had among many Native Americans, she implies that it alone has not created the problems she shows. When Tayo is examined after nearly killing Emo, a fellow Native American war veteran, Silko writes:

"Reports note that since the Second World War a pattern of drinking and violence, not previously seen before, is emerging among Indian veterans." But Tayo shook his head when the doctor finished reading the report. "No?" the doctor said in a loud voice. "It's more than that. I can feel it. It's been going on for a long time." (53)

And at the conclusion of the novel, when Tayo stops himself from killing Emo, after Emo has brutally murdered Harley and Leroy, Tayo muses what would have been the "official" explanation had he not restrained himself: "He would have been another victim, a drunk Indian war veteran settling an old feud... At home people would
blame liquor . . . “ (233). Silko thus is able to suggest the disastrous consequences alcohol has had without invoking liquor as a scapegoat for all the problems facing Native Americans; like Momaday in *House Made of Dawn*, Silko includes many references to Native American drinking in *Ceremony* while avoiding a stereotypical portrayal of “the drunken Indian.”

James Welch

James Welch, of Blackfeet and Gros Ventre ancestry, is another highly acclaimed contemporary Native American novelist. All four of his novels to date include interesting perspectives on the subject of drinking among Native Americans. Welch’s first two novels—*Winter in the Blood* (1974) and *The Death of Jim Loney* (1979)—have been compared by some to Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn* in their portrayal of “alienated” Native American protagonists, cut off from both Euramerican and Native American cultures (see, for example, Wild 25-26). Like Momaday’s Abel, both the unnamed narrator of *Winter in the Blood* and Jim Loney drink heavily and frequently; Edward Hoagland writes, “Both books depict a wailing, bleak, alcoholic morass of contemporary reservation existence” (7).

Welch is quite conscious of this aspect of his depiction of Native American life in his first two novels. In a 1984 interview, Welch remarked:

... Indian people really seem to like my work. It amazes me, because I keep expecting somebody to say, “You’re exploiting Indians,” or “exploiting a quality of Indians, like drinking and you shouldn’t be, because you are painting a bad picture of Indians.” And I’ve had about two people tell me that in my entire writing career, two Indian people. But that didn’t bother me, because the majority of them feel that I paint pictures of reservation life as it really is. (McFarland and Browning 8)

Elsewhere Welch has explained his portrayal of drinking, particularly in *Winter in the Blood*, as almost a function of the environment of which he writes—northern Montana:
...there are all kinds of problems in living up there. It's very isolated country. Distances are very great. There isn't much to do... Basically what people do—not only Indians, but white people, too—they drink a lot. They drink too much. They get in their cars and go out and kill themselves. Families break up. There's lots of misery as a result of this isolation and boredom. And in combating this boredom, people often make a real mess of their lives... (Bevis 166)

Welch uses this explanation of drinking in characterizing the narrator of Winter in the Blood: "[he] was just an average guy, basically, and he drank too much—he was bored. There was an innate dissatisfaction with his life" (Bevis 166). Indeed, Wild observes, "On the surface, Winter in the Blood appears to be a 'day-in-the-life-of' novel dogging the sadsack existence of yet another drunken, alienated Native American as he shuffles between his mother's little cow enterprise and the bar-studded towns surrounding the reservation" (29). In the opening scene, which sets the mood for the first half of the book, the narrator, a 32-year-old Blackfeet man, is returning home from a night on the town, sore from being beaten up in a bar, unable to remember exactly what happened, only something vaguely about a fight with a white man over his wife. The narrator recalls that his father First Raise had died returning drunk from a bar in the middle of the winter: "He drank with the white men of Dodson. Not a quiet man, he told them stories and made them laugh... until the thirty-below morning ten years ago we found him sleeping in the borrow pit across from the Earthboy's place" (6). The narrator remarks that he is now "Coming home to a mother and an old lady who was my grandmother. And the girl who was thought to be my wife. But... none of them counted; not one meant anything to me. And for no reason. I felt no hatred, no love, no guilt, no conscience, nothing but a distance that had grown through the years" (2). He continues, "But the distance I felt came not from country or people; it came from within me. I was as distant from myself as a hawk from the moon" (2).
The first half of the novel describes the narrator's half-hearted attempts to find Agnes, the Cree girl "who was thought to be my wife," who had run off with his electric razor and gun. The narrative present seems disjointed, as in an "alcoholic haze" the narrator drifts from bar to bar seeking Agnes, more to retrieve the possessions she has taken than for any other reason. The narrator feels detached from his surroundings and the people he meets during what Welch has described as his somewhat "picaresque" (Bevis 165) wanderings. After several beatings and unfulfilling sexual encounters with lonely women, the narrator finally dismisses his "quest": "I had had enough of Havre, enough of town, of walking home, hung over, beaten up, or both. I had had enough of the people, the bartenders, the bars... but mostly, I had had enough of myself. I wanted to lose myself... to stand beneath the clouds and have my shadow erased, myself along with it" (125).

Throughout much of this part of the novel, drinking is portrayed as one means by which the narrator attempts to lose himself.

Yet not all drinking in Winter in the Blood takes place in white-owned bars. Drinking is also portrayed as an integral part of Native American socializing. When the narrator's mother Theresa gets married to the "good old farm boy" Lame Bull, the narrator notes, "That night we got drunk around the kitchen table" (13). Likewise, when the narrator's grandmother dies, the family commemorates her by drinking (135). When the neighbor Ferdinand Horn comes to pay his respects at the grandmother's death, he "remembers his manners" and offers the narrator a beer (163). Indeed, we might even argue that drinking plays a role in one of the most constructive encounters in the novel, the second meeting between the narrator and the old blind man Yellow Calf.

Emotionally detached from the present, the narrator is moved only by memories from his past—the death of his father, drunk in a ditch, and the death of
his brother, struck by a car years before when he and the narrator were rounding up their family's cattle. Yet it is the narrator's relationship with his grandmother which perhaps plays the most crucial role in jarring him from his desire to "erase" himself. At the outset of the novel the narrator feels distant from her, as he feels distant from everyone else. He sees her as a decrepit 100-year-old woman, spitting and rocking in her chair all day. But he can recall what she had told him and his brother years before about her life as a young woman, of her first marriage to Blackfeet Chief Standing Bear, who had led his band westward into the region of Montana where the narrator and his family now live. Then the Blackfeet were trying to avoid the Long Knives, U. S. soldiers. The grandmother had been taken as a girl bride, the youngest of Standing Bear's wives. Standing Bear was soon after killed in a futile raid on the Gros Ventres as the Blackfeet tried to survive the cold, harsh winter and she had been left a young widow. The grandmother claimed that the Blackfeet women subsequently shunned her because they were jealous that she had been a wife of a great chief, and that the men shunned her because they were intimidated. The young girl somehow survived—the narrator had always wondered how—and the narrator had grown up with the disparity of the tragic, exciting image of his grandmother as a young, abandoned widow and the mundane present reality of the debilitated old woman.

Yet near the end of the novel, after he learns that his grandmother had died while he had been wandering around Havre, the narrator is moved to visit old Yellow Calf, whom Lame Bull had taken him to see (and drink with) shortly before and to whom he remembers his father First Raise had once taken him. The narrator brings the old man an almost full bottle of wine: "I pressed the bottle into his hand. He held his head high, resting one hand on his chest, and drank greedily . . . 'And now, you,' he said" (150). Loosened up, partially because of the wine, the narrator
informs Yellow Calf of his grandmother's death and, when he discovers that Yellow Calf was of the same Blackfeet band as his grandmother, begins to ask the old man questions about her past life. He is especially curious about that hard first winter, the one when the rest of the people abandoned her. Yellow Calf tells him the real story—how after the death of Standing Bear, and the harshness of the winter, the people thought that the young girl, recently brought into the band, had brought with her “bad medicine.” Yellow Calf explains, “When you are starving you look for signs. Each event becomes big in your mind. [Standing Bear’s] death was the final proof they were cursed. The medicine man, Fish, interpreted the signs. They looked at your grandmother and realized that she brought despair and death” (155). Then the narrator realizes that it was the young Yellow Calf who had helped his grandmother survive that first harsh winter, that it was Yellow Calf who fathered Theresa, that Yellow Calf was in fact his own grandfather. “And so we shared the secret in the presence of ghosts, in wind that called forth the muttering tepees, the blowing snow, the white air of the horses’ nostrils” (159).

Jack Davis notes that through the discovery of the identity of his grandfather and his expanded understanding of his grandmother's life, the narrator “has retribalized himself” ("Restoration" 42). Kathleen Mullen Sands writes of the book, "The author sends the protagonist on a literal and psychological journey through the landscapes of Montana and tribal and personal history to bring him home again, sober, matured, and ready to claim his kinship with the land and his family” (78). The distance within himself that the narrator describes at the beginning of the book does seem to have (at least to a significant degree) closed, yet this does not necessarily imply that the narrator will now become a teetotaler. He does seem to leave off the kind of “self-erasing” bar drinking that characterized his actions throughout much of the first part of the novel, yet his sharing of the bottle of wine
with Yellow Calf, partly a gesture of politeness, apparently helps to bring about the closeness between them, opening the way to his crucial discovery of their blood relationship. While certainly not glorified, drinking in itself is not portrayed in Winter in the Blood as necessarily destructive; rather the motives for drinking determine its effect.

The Death of Jim Loney presents a less ambivalent portrayal of drinking, primarily because of the different fate of its protagonist. Like the narrator of Winter in the Blood, Jim Loney feels dissociated from the world around him, cut off from his past; Loney yearns for a meaningful order in his life. The Death of Jim Loney examines the last few weeks of Loney's life, beginning shortly before Thanksgiving and ending around Christmas. Loney is 35 years old and lives alone in Harlem, Montana, with his dog Swipesy. He has very few friends and no steady income, working odd jobs every once in a while when he needs some money. Otherwise he sits around his house and drinks, trying to figure out how he ended up where he is now, in what seems to him a meaningless existence:

He had tried to think of all the little things that added up to a man sitting at a table drinking wine. But he couldn't connect the different parts of his life, or the various people who had entered and left it. Sometimes he felt like an amnesiac searching for the one event, the one person that would bring everything back and he would see the order in his life. But without the amnesiac's clean slate all the people and events were as hopelessly tangled as a bird's nest in his mind... But he would not concede that his life had added up to nothing more than the simple reality of a man sitting and drinking in a small house in the world. (20-21)

Drinking offers Loney a steady, though not pleasant, sense of escape, a feeling of "controlled oblivion" (59).

Loney is the unwilling object of competition between the two women in his life. Rhea Davis, Loney's white lover, had moved to Harlem to teach school two years before in order to escape her life as a debutante in Dallas, Texas. She urges Loney to move to Seattle with her, thinking that a new environment might jar him
out of his listlessness. Loney's sister Kate, from whom he has been separated for over 20 years, wants to take him back to Washington with her, where she works as an activist for Native American education in the Education Department. Yet despite his despair in Harlem, Loney refuses both offers:

'I can't leave,' he said, and he almost knew why. He thought of his earlier attempts to create a past, a background, an ancestry—something that would tell him who he was. Now he wondered if he had really tried. He had always admired Kate's ability to live in the present, but he had also wondered at her lack of need to understand her past. (88)

Yet unlike the narrator of Winter in the Blood, Jim Loney, whose mother was Gros Ventre and father was white, has no mentor to make the past become real for him:

It always startled Loney that when he stepped out of his day-to-day existence he was considered an Indian. He never felt Indian.... When Loney thought of Indians, he thought of the reservation families, all living under one roof, the old ones passing down the wisdom of their years, of their family's years, of their tribe's years, and the young ones soaking up their history, their places in their history, with a wisdom that went beyond age. (102)

Loney muses miserably that "He had no family and he wasn't Indian or white" (102), and thus continues his aimless existence sitting and drinking.

In fact, drinking indirectly contributes to Loney's death. Myron Pretty Weasel, one of Loney's old high school friends, returns to the reservation and reaches out to Loney in his isolation, inviting him to go hunting. Loney passively agrees and brings along some cheap wine, which the two drink steadily. Out in the fields, Loney, more than half intoxicated, mistakes Pretty Weasel for a bear, and shoots and kills his friend.

Loney reacts to this death in a queer manner, wandering around for several days deciding if he really meant to kill Pretty Weasel, trying to make some sense of what is apparently a meaningless accident. In a scene which seems a direct counterpoint to the narrator of Winter in the Blood's climactic encounter with
Yellow Calf, Loney decides to confront his father, Ike, who had returned to Harlem after an absence of many years. When Loney was a young child his mother had left the family, and several years later Loney's father "went out drinking one night and didn't return for twelve years" (15-16). Ike, who like his son has developed a reputation as a drunk, is surprised to see his son, and gets out some Polish vodka to mark the occasion. After Loney tells his father that he has shot Pretty Weasel, he probes his father about his own past, trying to discover why both his parents had left him. "They sat and drank slowly. Once Loney said, 'Don't you think we could have done something together—if you had stuck around, if we had stuck together?" And Ike said, 'Shit, what would we have done but drink ourselves to death?" (149).

Loney subsequently orchestrates his own death. Knowing his father will tell the authorities about his killing of Pretty Weasel (Loney shoots out one of Ike's windows to make sure Ike will tell), Loney says goodbye to Rhea, and, taking a bottle of Scotch with him, drives into the mountains, purposely leaving a conspicuous trail. Steadily drinking the Scotch, he waits for the reservation police to come, intending to provoke them to shoot and kill him. Yet even in the midst of such a despairing act Loney expresses a desire to be remembered in a positive light. He tells a passing dog, "You tell Amos [a Native American boy Loney knew] that Jim Loney passed through town while he was dreaming. Don't tell him you saw me with a bottle and a gun. Give him dreams" (167). Though he himself is unable to rise above his situation, Loney still holds the ideal of a meaningful, hopeful existence, one beyond "sitting and drinking in a small house." For Loney, drinking is more a symptom than a cause of his "decline," one aspect of the larger meaningless, inescapable ruin that he sees as his life.

A number of critics have generalized from *House Made of Dawn*, *Ceremony*, *Winter in the Blood*, and *The Death of Jim Loney*—all written in the late 1960s and
the 1970s—in characterizing the contemporary Native American novel as a "study of alienation," the typical Native American protagonist being an "alcoholic" male who longs for a sense of greater connection with the traditional life of his people.

James Welch's third novel, *Fools Crow* (1986), represents a definite break from this perceived pattern. *Fools Crow* is an episodic historical novel dealing with a fictional band of Blackfeet from 1867 to 1870, when the Blackfeet began to realize that they could not prevent Euramericans from taking their lands. Welch acknowledges that he read several historical and anthropological accounts of the nineteenth-century Blackfeet while working on the novel, as well as drawing upon stories told to him by his father. In a 1984 interview he described his process of writing *Fools Crow*:

> I'm trying to write from the inside-out, because most historical novels are written from the outside looking in. My main character is a member of a particular band, and I'm talking a lot about camp life and ceremonial life, those day to day practical things that they did to survive—and to live quite decently, as a matter of fact. (McFarland and Browning 4)

The historical framework that Welch chooses for *Fools Crow* affords him an opportunity to examine Blackfeet culture before the onset of the reservation system in western Montana—before, in fact, there was much extensive intercourse between Euramericans and Blackfeet. At the time of which Welch writes, "firewater" was still pretty much of a novelty for many Blackfeet, allowing Welch to observe how alcohol initially affected this group of Native Americans.

The novel first mentions alcohol when a band of Blackfeet warriors are on a raiding party against a Crow village. Eagle Ribs, a young Blackfeet scout, observes a group of white trader's wagons beside the Crow village: "That the white men came to the Crows to trade in such numbers was something new. Usually the Indians went to the trading houses. From the boisterous nature of the camp, Eagle Ribs knew there was much of the white man's water [i.e., liquor] being passed around.
That would be good" (26). Yellow Kidney, the leader of the Blackfeet raiding party, later recounts, "The [Crow] camp was as large as a valley . . . There were Napikwan (i.e. whites) there too, traders or hide hunters. They were thick with the Crows, many of them sitting at fires in the camp. But finally it grew quiet. We had let the last of the drunken revelers wear themselves out" (73)—a strategy somewhat reminiscent of Slaughter and Forrester's raid on Black-Vulture in Bird's Nick of the Woods, which illustrated how drinking incapacitates the Native American warrior.

Welch refers several times to the opening of the whiskey trade into western Montana. A group of whiskey runners had chosen their particular route to Canada, we are told:

because of its proximity to the Blackfoot camps. Although most of the shipment was due for the Canadian posts, they were not above selling whiskey to the camps en route. Most of the whiskey was in its pure state in the sixty-three gallon hogsheads lashed down in the wagons. But there were also several kerosene tins of doctored stuff that they would sell right off the tailgate. The drovers had mixed capsicum, molasses and tobacco before leaving Fort Benton; then they had filled the tins up with river water and whiskey. There was enough whiskey to make the Indians drunk and enough water to make it profitable. (293)

Indeed, there are a number of allusions that at least some of the Blackfeet had developed a taste for liquor. At a treaty negotiation, Euramerican general Alfred Sully complains to a group of Blackfoot elders, "it seems that my messengers found most of your chiefs delirious with drink and not in any condition to speak with seriousness . . . One of my men almost lost his life at the hands of the Never Laughs. Fortunately, they were too drunk to see straight, much less shoot straight" (283). The novel provides virtually a chorus of refrains from different Blackfoot elders lamenting how liquor has dissipated their youth. Mad Plume says, "We are a leaderless people now. . . . Look around you . . . do you see many of our young men? No, they are off hunting for themselves, or drunk with the white man's water" (97). Three Bears later observes:
It is clear to me that our days of following the blackhorns where we choose are numbered. I see the signs all around me. Many of our young men go off on their own. They do not listen to their chiefs. They drink the white man's water and kill each other. Some of our young women already stand around the forts, waiting to fornicate with the seizers [i.e. soldiers] for a drink of this water. (256)

These quotes suggest that one of the most destructive effects of drinking among the Blackfeet is the undermining of communal values, the drinker substituting his own momentary physical pleasure over what is deemed good for the group. 4

Fools Crow most clearly demonstrates this trend through the exploits of Owl Child's renegade band of young Blackfeet men. This handful of youth are comprised of individuals who have forsaken their families, breaking from the traditional tribal structure and authority. They represent a threat to many of the Blackfeet, not only because of their rejection of the communal values of their people, but also because of their indiscriminate raids on neighboring Euramerican homesteaders and traders, raids which prompt reprisals by soldiers against all of the Blackfeet. The protagonist Fools Crow muses about the actions of Owl Child and his band: "As long as one thought of himself as part of the group, he would be responsible to and for that group. If one cut the ties, he had the freedom to roam, to think only of himself and not worry about the consequences of his actions. So it was for Owl Child and Fast Horse to roam. And so it was for the Pikunis to suffer" (211). Not surprisingly, one of the prominent characteristics of Owl Child's band is their frequent drinking: at several points in the novel the band attacks white whiskey traders in order to steal their liquor.

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4 Which perhaps recalls Laughing Boy's isolated drinking in La Farge's first novel.
Yet not all of the drinking in the novel occurs in such disastrous contexts. Indeed, Fools Crow, who conceives of his communal existence among the Pikunis as an integral part of his being, at several times indulges in drinking. By no means an habitual drinker, he is still somewhat mystified by what he and his people term "the white man's water." The first instance occurs at his wedding feast, when he still carries the name White Man's Dog: "That night the families and friends feasted on boss ribs and tongues and buffalo hump. One of the men had brought a tin of the white man's water, and the feast soon turned loud and boisterous. White Man's Dog drank the liquor and talked and laughed" (107), and later, when he steps outside the lodge for some fresh air, he realizes that his "head was fuzzy with the liquor" (108). The next instance occurs at his naming ceremony, when he is awarded the name "Fools Crow" for purportedly tricking a Crow warrior by playing dead, allowing him to kill the Crow. Waking up hungover the next morning, Fools Crow immediately begins to berate himself for his exaggerated boasting at the previous night's celebration: "If only he hadn't drunk the white man's water. He remembered sneaking out of the big lodge three or four times and drinking the harsh liquor out of a tin with some others. He remembered with shame how he had acted out his encounters with both Crows, how he had made the warriors laugh and moan with the ups and downs of his confrontations" (151). "Fools Crow wept and cursed himself for being wicked, for drinking the liquor" (153). These instances of drinking counter some of the other references to drinking by Native Americans in Fools Crow, preventing the novel from echoing any pat stereotypes about "the drunken Indian." While Fools Crow seems to have enjoyed the physical sensations drinking had afforded him, he is clearly in no danger of becoming "addicted"; the relatively harmless (indeed, almost comical) consequences drinking has for Fools
Crow suggest that not all Native Americans who tasted liquor became renegades or sots.

Indeed, while Welch suggests in Fools Crow that drinking has served as a destructive influence among the Blackfeet, undermining tribal structure, it is presented as only one factor among many in the complex interactions between Euramericans and Native Americans. Overall, smallpox and U.S. soldiers are shown to afford more of a threat to the Blackfeet than alcohol. Though Fools Crow acknowledges the serious problems drinking has brought to Native American communities, it by no means supports a monolithic vision of “the drunken Indian”; the different responses to drinking in the novel suggest a more complete awareness of how drinking has affected Native Americans historically than is included in many stereotypical, popular assumptions about Native American drinking.

The Indian Lawyer (1990), Welch’s most recent novel, also marks a break from the “alcoholic” protagonists of his first two novels, though in it Welch returns to a contemporary. Sylvester Yellow Calf, the “Indian lawyer,” has achieved a good measure of success in “mainstream” Montana society. A star basketball player at the University of Montana, he has become a successful lawyer in Helena, making full partner in a reputable law firm. Indeed, he is even approached by the Democratic National Party to become a candidate for congressman. He has succeeded in a role that not many of his people have been offered, in a society that has been taught to view Native Americans as incapable of such achievement. His white girlfriend Shelley, daughter of a former state senator, recalls how surprised she had been when she had first begun her relationship with Sylvester: “She couldn’t imagine what she could have in common with an Indian. There were very few Indians around Roundup; the few she saw were ranch hands who drank in a particularly rank bar” (116).
Yet despite (or perhaps because of) his material success, Sylvester feels uneasy about how separated he has become from his “roots”—the reservation where he was born and raised. "He had left so many people behind, so many friends and acquaintances, to live in a world that had little to do with his people" (38). Sylvester sits on the state parole board and during "his first couple of years on the board he would bring the whole disheartening mess home with him—...the abused who became the abusers; the paint-sniffing, brain-fried Indians who hadn't any opportunities, any chance. Now Sylvester could leave most of it at the prison and he didn't like himself any more for being able to do so" (38-39). At one point Sylvester admits, "I've lived in Helena for ten years now. That's about five or six years longer than I expected to stay.... I had planned on going back to my reservation and working there, but one thing and another kept coming up" (70).

The Indian Lawyer in several key sections contrasts Sylvester's life in Helena with life on the reservation he has left. Sylvester at one point returns to the reservation town where he grew up to visit his grandparents and his former school teacher Lena Old Horn. Lena lives next to a field, which "was a convenience she would rather not have had, for men, and some women, often drank in the alley off the field. She could look out her kitchen window and see men at all hours of the day passing a bottle around" (168). Lena is greatly troubled by the destroyed lives she sees around her, feeling increasingly ineffectual in helping her people:

She didn't go out back anymore, not since she had seen a woman, practically passed out, being raped by two men. Lena had called the police, then gone back to the window. The men were gone, and the woman lay against a building across the alley, with no shoes, pants, or panties, reaching for an empty bottle lying on its side.... Lena went out and helped the policeman pull the woman's jeans and sneakers on. Then she helped put the woman in the backseat of the patrol car. It stank of liquor and vomit. She recognized the woman.

Interestingly, Welch himself has served on Montana's parole board.
She was the mother of one of the boys she had counseled a few years back. (169)

Sylvester acknowledges the problems that alcohol has caused for many Native Americans. When he announces his candidacy at the Pinehurst School for Children, he makes a special point of "presenting certificates of achievement on behalf of the Indian Alliance to several young people who had gone a whole year of alcohol and drug abstinence. He had promised in his speech to mount an all-out war on all intoxicants on all reservations and Indian communities" (295). Not surprisingly, Sylvester himself has no drinking problem. In fact, as if to further underscore the apparent differences between Sylvester and many of his people, Welch has Sylvester take a drink numerous times throughout the novel, primarily in social situations with his coworkers, and certainly never to excess. In one of the first instances of Sylvester's drinking, during a party his boss had arranged in order to introduce to Sylvester a representative from the Democratic National Party—Welch notes that Sylvester "didn't care what kind of beer he drank, he didn't drink that much" (47).

Yet drinking has deeply affected Sylvester's life, for like Jim Loney and the narrator of Winter in the Blood, Sylvester's father (and mother) drank heavily, in fact abandoning him when he was a young boy. His father's negative example has not only prompted him to strive for a life of "respectability" and material success, but has also created within him a certain dread that he might not be able to escape the expectation of failure, the legacy of "the drunken Indian." At one point when Sylvester is tracking someone who is attempting to blackmail him, he enters a neighborhood bar, feeling uneasy about the connotations such a place recalls for him:

Sylvester had never been a bar drinker, other than going out with his colleagues once in a while after work. After two drinks most of them, including Sylvester, left for their own worlds of wives, kids, girlfriends, food, more work. It had never occurred to him that he
could stay and drink until the bars closed, that he could go out night after night, that he could end up like the silent drinkers at the end of the bar. There was always too much going on, too much to do. He had heard stories about his father, before he was born, when his father was still around, stories that made him sick to his stomach. The stories did not come from his grandmother; they came from acquaintances, old drinking partners, old drunks around Browning who bummed Sylvester for a dollar or two. They always began with "I remember the time me and your old man..." and Sylvester remembered the sick feeling and the burning shame, even as a young man, as he listened to stories of binges, that took his old man to Great Falls or Spokane, car wrecks, hopping freights, waking up in strange places with his boots or watch gone, lying in puke or shit—Sylvester shuddered and closed his eyes and took a long drink of his beer. He had learned to hate his father more and more the older he got; each story filled him with hatred and fear—fear not only of and for his father, but fear for himself, what he might become if he slipped. (248-49)

Welch suggests how this expectation of failure, this fear of slipping, has not only spurred Sylvester's desire to succeed, but has for other Native Americans helped to contribute to their despair, and their drinking. At one point in the novel, Sylvester reflects back upon his days as a high school basketball star, particularly on an editorial in which sportswriter Ray Lundeen had singled him out. Lundeen had written, "Many of your teammates, Sylvester, will have had their brief moment in the sun and will fall by the wayside, perhaps to a life of drink and degradation—so much a part of Indian experience—but you will, must, carry the torch... a winner for all minorities who fight the endless battle for respect and honor" (103). Lundeen's editorial had been intended to help motivate Sylvester to "rise above" his surroundings, but it had also reminded his teammates and others on the reservation how little was expected of them. Though Welch does not directly state that Lundeen's was a self-fulfilling prophesy regarding many of Sylvester's teammates, he does imply that the prediction of failure for and among many Native Americans helps to create a predominant atmosphere of despair, of which drinking becomes a symptom. Sylvester tells Shelley, "More and more I feel like I've gone on my merry way and the people who meant something to me have fallen by the wayside..."
There was always somebody there to open another door, to say, 'Come on in, it's warm in here.' then they seem to shut the door on the faces of people I came from' (58). This shutting of the door has contributed to the kind of self-destructive drinking behavior in Browning that Welch describes in *The Indian Lawyer*: by contrasting Sylvester's pattern of drinking with that of those who drink in the field beside Lena Old Horn's house. Welch suggests that it is not drinking alone which plagues Native Americans, but that drinking is prompted by (and conversely can help to perpetuate) a despair born of hopelessness, of a lack of the kinds of opportunities Sylvester had been offered.

As this brief survey suggests, Native American writers have certainly not shied away from depicting many of the unpleasant realities that face many Native Americans. Remarks that these authors have made in interviews indicate their awareness of many of the stereotypes regarding Native Americans that have predominated (and continue to predominate) in Euramerican society, including notions about "the drunken Indian." Indeed, a number of these writers maintain that one of their goals in their writing is to educate all their readers about Native American cultures. Their frequent portrayals of drinking by Native American characters tend not to support but rather to help subvert existing stereotypes. Drinking behavior is depicted not merely as an addiction, but as an unfortunate source of temporary solace for individuals who feel cut off from their society. Drinking is often shown as a sign of despondency, often serving to exacerbate and perpetuate despair for Native American characters. It is significant that several Native American characters are able to overcome their self-destructive drinking to the degree that they develop or strengthen their sense of cultural identity, as they realize a connection with their Native American culture.
Overall, drinking is shown to bring about no single, "programmed" reaction among Native Americans. The varied portrayals of drinking by Native American characters suggest that while drinking may accompany (and intensify) consistent problems among Native Americans, it does not inevitably bring disaster. Drinking is acknowledged as having an overwhelmingly negative impact upon Native Americans: yet drinking is not isolated as the sole, or necessarily leading cause of misery. It is presented more as a symptom, a consequence of distress among Native Americans. Contemporary Native American novelists have thus candidly dealt with problems associated with drinking while countering stereotypes of "the drunken Indian."

Conclusion

Throughout the history of their contact with Native Americans, Euramericans have generated numerous myths about "Indian character," many of them involving alcohol. Dwight Heath summarizes the "firewater myth" that has long been used to characterize Native American drinking patterns: "It is generally thought that [Indians] become intoxicated more readily and on smaller quantities that Whites, that they are more antisocial in their drunken behavior, and that they stay drunk longer" ("Alcohol Use" 350). Implicit in the "firewater myth" is the assumption that Native Americans are inherently morally inferior to Euramericans because of their supposed susceptibility to excessive drinking. Yet while frequent drinking has been observed as prevalent within many Native American communities, numerous anthropological studies have found little to support many of the stereotypical assumptions commonly associated with the notion of "the drunken Indian." "the stereotype of 'the drunken Indian' is not generally accurate today, and appears never to have been in history" (Heath, "Alcohol Use" 383). How then can we
account for why "the drunken Indian" has remained such a pervasive feature of many Euramericans' conceptions of Native Americans?

This dissertation suggests that popular Euramerican conceptions of Native American drinking behavior, as they are reflected in Euramerican texts, virtually from the outset were governed more by assumptions about intercultural relations than by "scientific" observations within Native American communities. Assumptions about "the drunken Indian" were often part of broader, for the most part unexamined sets of theories regarding "Indian character" which sought to characterize Native Americans by their perceived differences with Euramericans, differences which many believed were "deficiencies." A writer's "mode" of textualizing Native Americans often greatly influenced how he or she portrayed drinking among Native Americans.

Historically, the most popular has been the epic mode, which celebrates Euramerican movement westward across North America, the "taming of the continent." Many Euramericans had conceived of their "mission" in America as divinely inspired (or at least divinely sanctioned) and thus characterized any perceived obstacle to the settlement, and (later) to the territorial expansion of the United States, as necessarily "evil." In epic mode texts, Native Americans are often characterized as an enemy whose defeat helps insure Euramerican success; the Indian is automatically cast in the role of antagonist. Epic texts first appeared as purportedly true accounts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, mostly in the form of war or captivity narratives; these narratives helped to create a phenomenally durable narrative paradigm which helped to inspire frontier romances in the early nineteenth century, frontier and western dime novels in the later nineteenth century, and even influenced the development of the modern western in the early twentieth century. Portrayals of drinking by Native
Americans vary considerably across epic mode texts, perhaps reflecting popular confusion about just how alcohol affects Native Americans: in some cases liquor is shown to infuriate a villainous Indian warrior, while in others, drinking incapacitates a "red savage," assisting his defeat by the white hero. Yet in virtually all cases, epic texts use portrayals of drinking (often consciously) to demonstrate the inferiority of Native Americans to Euramericans: depictions of Native American drinking purport to prove the ultimate incompatibility of "savagism" and "civilization."

Texts in the ethnographic mode, generally neither as numerous nor as popular as those in epic mode, were often based upon a much different perspective towards Native Americans. Ethnographic texts were less concerned with chronicling the spread of "civilization," and instead more engaged with studying and attempting to understand the American environment, including its native inhabitants. Because of its absence of a powerful unifying convention such as the war and captivity narrative paradigm, which in a sense has reproduced itself from the colonial period virtually to the present day, the ethnographic mode has tended to include an even more varied collection of assumptions about alcohol and Native Americans than the epic mode. Yet ethnographic writers from the beginning have often tended to perceive drinking not so much as an ingrained, inherent "Indian trait," but rather as a malleable habit, one which reveals more about Euramerican trading practices than "Indian character."

The reform movement in the late nineteenth century which sought to reshape federal Indian policy helped to inspire a new narrative paradigm, one born of a revised conception of relations between Euramericans and Native Americans. As the Plains Wars drew to a close, as virtually every Native American tribe was assigned to reservations, Native Americans were increasingly seen not as
obstacles to "manifest destiny" but as under the stewardship of Euramericans.

Writers who considered themselves as advocates for "the red man" tended to focus on what they believed was their unfair treatment by Euramericans, and in the process often consciously sought to change what they saw as harmful Euramerican stereotypes regarding Native American, including those involving "the drunken Indian." Thus changes in the portrayal of Native American drinking were inspired not so much by additional ethnographic information, but by a different understanding of the relations between Euramericans and Native Americans. Some of the first writers under the reform paradigm simply avoided dramatizing any incidents of drinking by Native Americans; later, portrayals of Native American drinking were handled in such a complex manner as to combat any simple, easily stereotyped notions concerning "the drunken Indian."

More recently a number of notable Native American writers have begun publishing to a wide audience. These writers have sought in part to provide contemporary readers with a more knowledgeable, culturally sensitive perspective of Native Americans, one which hopefully will contribute to a more informed understanding of Native Americans by all Americans. Far from shrinking from unflattering portrayals of their people, these Native American writers have frequently depicted scenes of drinking by Native Americans. Yet they have done so in such a fashion as to frustrate any pat stereotypes; indeed they have tended to portray Native American life in general in such a manner as may hopefully help readers increasingly recognize fallacies in many of their own notions concerning alcohol and Native Americans.
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