THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIETAL ATTITUDES AND THOSE OF AMERICAN FICTIONAL AUTHORS IN THE DEPICTION OF AMERICAN INDIANS

THESIS

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This research examines the relationship between the attitudes of fictional writers and those of society toward American Indians from colonial America to the present.

A content analysis was used to validate the hypothesis. In order to show changing attitudes and different schools of thought, this research was arranged into four time periods: "The Ethnocentric Conquerors," "The Ethnocentric Romantics," "The Ethnocentric Acculturationists," and "The Revisionists."

The findings demonstrate that there is a close correlation between the attitudes of fictional authors and those of society during a given time period.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II The Ethnocentric Conquerors</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III The Ethnocentric Romantics</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV The Ethnocentric Acculturationists</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V The Revisionists</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Conclusion</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem in this research is to identify the changing attitudes of American fictional authors toward the American Indian and the roles they attributed to the natives from early America to the present, and to explore the relationship of these attitudes and prescribed roles to changing societal views about the native Americans.

From Captain John Smith's dramatic rescue by Pocahontas in the early seventeenth century down to N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1969), the American Indian has furnished inspiration to a multitude of writers. Specifically, the westward movement of an aggressive Anglo-Saxon culture left its imprint in the records of those who by force or superior cunning succeeded in taking the country from its original inhabitants. This tragic, yet colorful, drama imbues a large part of the literature that reveals the way American Indians have been portrayed to the reading public. Thus it is with the Indian portraits painted by some of the major writers in American fictional literature, and more specifically as they reflect the attitudes of society toward these original natives, that this paper is chiefly concerned.

The first American writers compared the background and
the mode of living of the Indians with the European ways of life in the seventeenth century and consequently felt the Indians were an inferior race. This notion of race superiority has been one of the most persistent themes throughout the history of American literature. An understanding of the racial problem must inevitably include the background and development of societal and philosophical concepts which have helped to shape white attitudes toward all races in this country.

This research is designed to record the varied attitudes found in selected American fictional literature and to note historical changes in these attitudes. Related objectives are to discover why these authors had certain racial attitudes, to note the literary use to which these ideas were put, and to show their value for solving present-day social problems. Racial differences in modern society can be understood more easily through awareness of how they came into being. Since changing attitudes tend to mirror a changing society, a history of the attitudes toward the native roles can be revealed, at least partially, through a survey of American literature.

Although the American Indian has formed a dramatic nucleus from which a sizable part of American literature has come, few writers have evaluated this nucleus in a comprehensive way. Albert Keiser has written the broadest examination of this material in *The Indian in American Literature*, and, while he examines both factual and fictional works re-
lating to Indians, he fails to correlate any attitudinal fac-
tors with the various character depictions of the Indian. 
Elsewhere, Roy Harvey Pearce, in *The Savages of America: A 
Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization*, looks at 
all literature that he feels has dealt with the Indian as a 
savage and concludes that the so-called "civilized" Americans 
measured their progress against the "savagism" of the Indians.

There have also been a few scholarly studies made on a 
smaller scale, but no study has dealt significantly with under-
lying social attitudes and none has attempted to show a corre-
lation between these attitudes and those advanced by writers 
of fiction.

Generally speaking, four attitudinal patterns have emer-
ged from this survey, and it will be seen that they correlate 
significantly with events and attitudes expressed in factual 
accounts. The literature of colonial America depicts the In-
dian as somewhat of a Satanic savage, a view held by most 
Anglo-Saxons, and that attitude was replaced by the nineteenth 
century version of the noble savage. The next pattern emerges 
during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, dur-
ing which time the white race attempts to acculturate the In-
dian into the white society. Finally, in our own time, chang-
ing values have produced a revised attitude which in turn has 
prompted authors to come to the defense of Indian rights and 
Indian culture. Indeed, the outpouring of novels from their 
pens consistently reflects a new image of the Indian, and
it is one of a viable and respected race.

Methodology

The research method used to solve the problem in this paper has been to read the works of selected major American authors who have written about Indians and who were representative of their time from the seventeenth century up to the present century. The writings include fiction, drama, poetry, history, and statements by public officials, as well as material from scholars who have reviewed these American authors. An attempt was made to include all major works of fictional literature, as found in literary histories, that reflected the prevailing attitude of society at a given time in history, and, when available, to include a description of the roles assigned to the native American.

General literary histories, literary monographs on the subject of American Indians, encyclopedias of literature, particularly The Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature, by Max J. Herzberg, and general literary anthologies on the subject of native Americans were used to determine the most frequently recognized writers of fiction and their most celebrated works. When an author was mentioned more than once in the above reference books as a leading and popular writer on the subject of Indians, an effort was made to include his work. The next task was to survey their contents in order to determine which, if any, dealt with societal attitudes. The books thus selected were then arranged in publication time periods
with the hope that they would offer recognizable patterns or schools of thought. A qualitative analysis was used to analyze the underlying connotations and implications found in the various fictional works and to correlate them to historical events and societal attitudes.

The following authors of fiction were accordingly selected: Philip Freneau and Charles Brockden Brown comprise one school of thought and the content of their works suggests the label, "The Ethnocentric Conquerors." Another group, "The Ethnocentric Romantics," includes writers like James Fenimore Cooper, William Gilmore Simms, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Joaquin Miller, whereas "The Ethnocentric Acculturationists" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries number among their group such authors as Oliver LaFarge, Hamlin Garland, Edna Ferber, Dama Margaret Smith and D'Arcy McNickle. The last, or contemporary, group, "The Revisionists," includes N. Scott Momaday, John Barth, Thomas Sanchez, Theodora Kroeber, T. C. McLuhan, and Jerome Rothenberg.

Finally, nonfiction works were used to validate the attitudes expressed by the writers of fiction during a given period of time and include such names as John Smith, Mary Rowlandson, Jonathan Dickinson, John Tanner, Francis Parkman, George Bancroft, Helen Hunt Jackson, Leslie A. Fiedler, and Dee Brown.

American Indian bibliographies and indices were found to be painfully limited. For example, there are no extensive
literary bibliographies on the subject of native Americans suitable for research or specialization. A few indices on the subject of contemporary Indian issues may be obtained from the Reader’s Guide to Periodicals or the Index to the Humanities and the Social Sciences, but for the periods of time before 1920 one is confronted with a serious paucity of bibliographical materials, particularly in the primary sources.

Jere L. Brennan's The Forgotten American: American Indians Remembered, 1972, is a feeble attempt at compiling a selected annotated bibliography. The book lists only thirty-three titles of fiction, many of which are obscure. A much better annotated bibliography has been prepared by Anne Lee Stensland under the title Literature by and about the American Indian, 1973.

The American Indian Studies Centers at Yale University; the University of Oklahoma; Northeastern State in Oklahoma, which offers a degree in Indian studies; the Universities of Arizona, New Mexico, and South Dakota will be able to offer increasing assistance as their studies expand. Elsewhere, Professor N. Scott Momaday, a distinguished member of the English Department at Stanford University, can be of considerable help in certain bibliographical areas. The researcher in American Indian literature will be disappointed in bibliographies from museums, societies, and associations, since their orientation in the past has been toward anthropology, ethnology, and history. Thus useful bibliographies and indices on the subject of Indians in literature during the eighteenth and nineteenth
centuries are yet to be compiled.

Before a researcher attempts a paper on the subject of native Americans, he should consult *The American Indian in Graduate Studies, A Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations*, compiled by Frederick J. Dockstader and published by the Museum of the American Indian, as well as William N. Fenton's *American Indian and White Relations to 1830, Needs and Opportunities for Study*. If there is a need to secure a grant for native American research, the candidate should first apply to the Heye Foundation at the Museum of the American Indian. Other possibilities worth pursuing include the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Department of the Interior, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Smithsonian Institute.
CHAPTER II

THE ETHNOCENTRIC CONQUERORS

The social and literary significance of attitudes toward roles assigned to Indians in American literature should not be overlooked. Indeed, these attitudes began to appear as early as the Jamestown settlement when John Smith was reportedly rescued by Pocahontas. And they were unwittingly given further emphasis by Smith's account of his own travels and relationships with the Indians in his book titled *New England Trials*. He wrote that "God made Pocahontas the Kings Daughter the meanes to deliuer me" (16, p. 263). In 1624 the details appeared in *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England and the Summer Isles*, where the following passage appeared:

At his entrance before the King... two great stones were brought before Powhatan; then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beat out his braines, Pocahontas the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevalie, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death; whereat the Emperour was contented he should live (16, p. 400).

The credibility of this dramatic rescue has interested historians and writers for generations and will no doubt continue to do so for some time. This romantic incident, whether fabricated from fantasy or from an actual episode, had a remarkable influence on the writing of American literature. In fact,
the theme reappeared for the next three hundred years in drama, prose, poetry, and fiction whenever writers were dealing with the subject of Indians.

Albert Kelser suggests in The Indian in American Literature that Smith's work is "true to Indian character"(8, p. 8), and, whether Smith exaggerated or not, he helped to lay the groundwork for the stereotyping of native roles in the minds of those unacquainted with the American Indian. Smith wrote that the Queen of Appamatuck was appointed to "bring him water to wash his hands," while another maiden "brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell to dry them." The maidens also "feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could"(14, p. 400), and upon another occasion, "Pocahontas with her attendants, brought him so much provisions, that saved many of their lives"(14, p. 401). Thus the belief that all female Indians play a subservient role to the men, despite their station in life, was given currency. In his Map of Virginia, 1612, Smith appraised the women as strong, nimble, and able to endure exposure to the heat. Of their general characteristics, he said: "Some are of disposition fearefull, some bold, most cautelous, all Savage. . . . They are soon moved to anger and so malitious, that they seldom forget an injury"(15, p. 67). He depicted the Indian male role somewhat differently when he wrote: "The men bestowe their times in fishing, hunting, wars and such manlike exercises, scorning to be seen in any woman like exercise; which is that the
10

women be verie paineful and the men often idle"(15, p. 67). Of the Indians in general, he expressed the opinion that they were "so many divels"(15, p. 112).

This early portrait of the American Indian helped to establish a tradition for the wealth of literature that was to follow. It stereotyped male and female characteristics and established an attitude recognizable throughout the history of American literature.

Whereas the American Indians provided adventure and flattery for John Smith, the early settlers, particularly the Puritans, saw them as the nemesis of God's chosen people. Indeed, as Keiser has written, "the Indians became enemies in the eyes of the Pilgrim fathers, who believed that the New World was the promised land which was theirs to possess even if every one of the Canaanites perished at the point of the sword"(14, pp. 10-11). Smith further perpetuated this attitude when he wrote his justification for taking land that belonged to "none but the poor savages"(13, p. 171) on the basis of God's creation of the earth for civilized man's inhabitation and cultivation. Thus the New England conscience was not troubled by any contrary scruples, for public opinion was practically unanimous in its approval of so-called Christian rights.

By 1637, the desire for expansion on the part of the Anglo-Americans was so intense that legislation was enacted by the General Court of Connecticut and subsequently caused
a war with the Pequot tribe. The court levied and provisioned a force of ninety men and placed them under the command of John Mason. Soon other colonies joined in these extreme measures aimed at the annihilation of the Pequots. In the subsequent battles, between six and seven hundred Indians perished, whereas the English loss was only two. It took the Indians forty years to regain any sort of order, and under the leadership of King Philip, a sachem of the Wampanoag, they attempted to overthrow white supremacy. The war continued for two years and ended with Philip's defeat, but not until he had succeeded in killing from six to eight hundred white settlers. These conflicts, the first known as the Pequot War and the latter known as King Philip's War, furnished the writers of the era and a multitude to follow with graphic descriptions of atrocities committed by Indians. These descriptions accordingly laid the foundation for the savage image ascribed to the Indian.

The early settlers and writers felt that God was helping them to destroy the Indians regardless of methods employed, which in turn caused them to rationalize that the actions of the Indians were brutal. By contrast, their own inhumane actions performed in quest of civilization and Christianity seemed justified. This anti-Indian attitude is depicted in practically all of the literature produced during the formative years of the colonies, and it is particularly evident in the works of Philip Freneau and Charles Brockden Brown.
The name of King Philip remained for many years on the
tip of writers’ pens and became the subject of numerous stor-
ies, poems, and dramas, some of which attained wide popularity.
Examples are "Yamoyden" and the play Matamora. Philip also
appeared a hundred and fifty years later in Cooper's Wept of
the Wish-ton-Wish as one of the three main characters of the
novel. The Puritans naturally looked upon him as the incarna-
tion of the devil. His character, however, has been variously
estimated by different historians, depending upon the role as-
cribed to him and the social significance attached to it.

By the end of the seventeenth century, narratives of cap-
tivities began to appear which perpetuated the brutal and
savage image of the Indians. The first widely read account,
for example, was The Narrative of the Captivity and Restaura-
tion of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, which appeared in 1682. Mary
Rowlandson, the wife of a minister, gave her first-hand account
of ordeals that were to become indelible reinforcements of the
notion of Indian savagism. She stated that "none can imagine
what it is to be captivated, and enslaved to such atheisticall,
proud, wild, cruel, barbarous, bruitish (in one word) diaboli-
call creatures as these, the worst of the heathen"(11, p. 116).
She further described their violence in the following manner:

There were five persons taken in one house,
the Father, and the Mother, and a suckling Child,
they knockt on the head; the other two they took
and carried away alive. There were two others,
who being out of their Carison upon some occasion
were set upon; one was knockt on the head, the
other escaped: Another there was who running
along was shot and wounded, and fell down; he begged of them his life, promising them Money (as they told me) but they would not hearken to him, but knockt him in head, and stript him naked, and split open his Bowels . . . Thus these murtherous wretches went on, burning, and destroying before them(11, p. 118).

This notion of Satanic savagery was perpetuated to the twentieth century when, in 1903, the editors of a facsimile of Mrs. Rowlandson's narrative praised her work as "an authentic and graphic contemporary delineation of the manners and customs of the primitive children of the soil"(12, p. i).

Among the subsequent captivity narratives, two meticulously delineate Indian characteristics and savage roles. Jonathan Dickinson wrote Narrative of a Shipwreck in the Gulph of Florida in 1699, and portrayed the Indians as hostile and ruthless as they snatched clothing from shipwreck victims in a "most barbarous manner"(3, p. 8). Dickinson's account also described the cold, hunger, and thirst suffered by the whites while captive of Indians. In 1830, The Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner continued to reinforce the notion of a "hostile savage running rampant upon the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of the continent"(17, p. 10). Tanner's work also furnished Longfellow with the basic theme of his Song of Hiawatha in 1855.

Meanwhile, the Puritan writers on the subject of Indians were less interested in their culture than in the fallen spiritual condition so manifest in that culture. They saw heathen Indians beyond rescue in a low level of civilization, and
reasoned that God was helping them to destroy these savages in their Satanic plot against "God's Chosen People" (7, p. 99). This attitude also remained a continuing theme in the works of writers during the colonial period in America. After the danger of attack diminished, some authors felt that the Indians might be absorbed into the Anglo-American civilization, but the notion of Indian Satanic savagery was well written by this time and would not soon change.

The clash between white and red cultures during the colonial period was the subject of a number of poems which dramatized the red man's unhappy fate. In fact, by the eighteenth century a real change in the beliefs and attitudes of the leading scholars in American literature had begun to take shape. Dogmatic religion was infiltrated by the restraints of reason, which enabled writers to see Indian culture in a new perspective and not simply as a threat to Christianity. Roy Harvey Pearce points out in *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization* that "this matter of the essential integrity of savage life . . . became increasingly the main concern of eighteenth-century Americans writing on the Indian" (10, p. 45). Furthermore, these new philosophical attitudes gave further impetus to the romantic characterizations of the natives in the nineteenth century.

At the time of the American Revolution, some Anglos had begun to view the Indian with more sympathy, which in turn eased the long and damaging stigma of savagery. Philip Freneau,
who has been called the "Father of American Poetry"(9, p. 13),
was a pioneer figure in the use of Indian material for poeti-
cal purpose, and his favorable characterization of native
Americans created lasting impressions. Reinforcing the roman-
tic notion of the Noble Savage, Freneau fashioned an appropri-
ate corollary to the belief in the natural goodness of man.
He saw the Indians as a doomed race, doomed because they were
simple lovers of nature and were therefore unable to compete
with the stronger, more aggressive, and technically more ad-
vanced white race. Their stoicism and spiritual orientation
would be of no avail.

Freneau also formulated an early concept of Indian char-
acter. He described it in terms of honesty, a belief in im-
mortality, and faithfulness. This emerging positive attitude
toward Indians had its roots in the naturalism of the period
and a poetic imagination truly romantic.

A similarly favorable light was cast upon the native
Americans in Freneau's first published work, titled The Ameri-
can Village:

And ravenous nations with industrious toil,
Conspir'd to rob them of their native soil;
Then bloody wars, and death and rage arose,
And ev'ry tribe resolv'd to be our foes.
(5, p. 10)

He offered another paean with the following praise:

Full many a feat of them I could rehearse,
And actions worthy of immortal verse:
Deeds ever glorious to the INDIAN name,
And fit to rival GREEK or ROMAN fame.
(5, p. 10)
Freneau felt that the Indians were innately honorable, and that they were driven to a warlike spirit by the Europeans who inflicted sorrow and suffering upon them while taking their homeland.

In Freneau's later work, the Indian is placed in a less favorable light, which in turn reflects the vacillating attitudes of the settlers during this transitional period. Materialism is the theme of a poem titled "The Indian Convert," in which Freneau portrays the native in a more domestic role. For example, it illustrates the skepticism with which an Indian male views the promise of "beautiful things in heaven" (6, p. 401) offered up by the Christian faith, but which are not as tangible as his fishing, fowling, or stealing. The following dialogue illustrates the keen, questioning character of the native American and his concern for rewards available here and now:

Said he, Master Minister, this place that you talk of,
Of things for the stomach, pray what has it got;
Has it liquors in plenty?—If so I'll soon walk off
And put myself down in the heavenly spot.

You fool (said the preacher) no liquors are there!
The place I'm describing is most like our meeting;
Good people, all singing, with preaching and prayers;
They live upon these without eating or drinking.

But the doors are all locked against folks that are wicked;
And you, I am fearful, will never get there:—
A life of REPENTANCE must purchase the ticket,
And few of you, Indians, can buy it, I fear.

Farewell (said the Indian) I'm none of your mess;
On victuals, so airy, I faintish should feel,
I cannot consent to be lodged in a place
Where there's nothing to eat and but little to steal.  
(6, p. 401)
Freneau most likely misinterpreted the Indian's preoccupation with the immediate needs for sustenance and the naturalism of his religion as rejections of spiritual values in life.

In the poem "The Indian Student," Freneau pens another example of the Indian's failure to accept the cultural values of the white man when he states that "He sought to gain no learned degree;/But only sense enough to find/The squirrel in the hollow tree"(6, p. 358). The Indian is not only independent and practical to Freneau, but he is also the "murderous Indian," the "cruel Indian," the "hostile squadrons" who is scornful of the Christian heaven. According to Harry Hayden Clark, this "bifurcated attitude toward the Indian . . . he [Freneau] shares with the eighteenth century viewer"(2, p. iii). Freneau introduces the reader to the value of the native American as nature's nobleman with individual dignity and honor, and he soon comes to realize that the Indian's hostilities toward the white man were directly correlated with Anglo societal attitudes and actions.

At the outset of the nineteenth century the Indian began to attract the attention of more writers as well as an expanded reading public. It was during this period that Charles Brockden Brown began to exploit the native American in fiction by casting him in a stereotyped fashion in order to add excitement to his tales. His book, *Edgar Huntly, or Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker* (1801), places the Indian in the role of a murderous savage. One should not be surprised to learn that Huntly's nearest
relatives and friends suffered injury and even death at the hands of Indians, and that Huntly narrowly escaped from a similar fate. Brown informs the reading public in his preface that he wants to "profit by some of the numerous and inexhaustible sources of amusement to the fancy and instruction to the heart peculiar to America, and to exhibit a series of adventures growing out of the conditions of the new country" (1, p. xxiii). The short of it is, he labels his story factual while depicting his Indians in fiction.

Brown characterizes an old Indian woman in the role of a strong-willed and strong-minded individual known as Queen Mab, who lives on public bounty, and who, because of fancied grievances, encourages her people to raid the offending white settlers. John Erskine states in Leading American Novelists that "Queen Mab represents a true Indian personality ... [and] probably the most characteristic in all Brockden Brown's writing" (4, p. 36). Brown's portrait of her seems at times to be from observation:

Though in solitude, her tongue was never at rest but when she was asleep; but her conversation was merely addressed to her dogs. Her voice was sharp and shrill, and her gesticulations were vehement and grotesque. . . . She seldom left the hut but to visit the neighboring inhabitants, and demand from them food and clothing, or whatever her necessities required (1, p. 218).

She felt that by remaining behind when her tribe left, she would become ruler of all the region and would then allow the alien English to occupy the land merely by her permission.
for her convenience. They were allowed to remain on the condition that they supply her wants and needs.

The whole affair stems from grim reality and reflects the growing hatred of a race that was being systematically driven from its hunting grounds by the advancing Anglos.

The encroachments of the English as well as the many injuries suffered by the Indians served as background for the schemes of revenge conceived by Queen Mab. For example, she incited visiting relatives to murder as a direct result of refusal on the part of the people of Chetasco to honor her royal claims. Thus her character is frequently described as a woman who demanded her just due from nature and life.

The opinions offered by Huntly, the main character, with regard to the Indians are no doubt in harmony with the attitudes entertained by the colonists. Huntly and his two sisters narrowly escaped death when Indians plundered, pillaged, and burned their home and murdered their parents and an infant. Keiser, for instance, expresses the belief that Brown "has the colonist's conception of the Indian as a murderous savage, whose every action if not closely circumscribed leads to tragedy" (8, p. 37). Brown creates a vivid impression of the physique and mentality of the Indian when he speaks of the "tawny and terrific visage," their "huge limbs inured to combat and war-torn" (1, p. 203), and with "sanguinary and murderous dispositions" (1, p. 187). He further emphasized the brutality of Indians with graphic descriptions like "... into the midst
of savages, to wage an endless and hopeless war with adepts in killing; with appetites that longed to feast upon my bowels and to quaff my heart's blood" (I, p. 234). These remarks about the Indian's bellicose behavior reflect the settler's general attitudes toward native Americans.

Thus, according to the ethnocentric conquerors of this early period, American Indians were uncivilized, unchristian, and ruthless. Since any other image of the Indian is rare for this period in history, it must be assumed that the Satanic savage symbol assigned to the native American by the writers of the era was in fact a prevailing societal attitude.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

THE ETHNOCENTRIC ROMANTICS

In 1820 a literary production about miscegenation was offered to the reading public by James W. Eastburn and Robert C. Sands in *Yamoyden, A Tale of the Wars of King Philip*. It is an epic poem based upon the noble role of the Indian, but it is more than that, it is also an indictment of the shameful treatment of the native American at the hands of the Anglo. Philip is placed in the role of a hero who is wise, bold, and true, and who

\[ \ldots \text{fought, because he would not yield} \\
\ldots \text{his birthright, and his father's field;} \\
\ldots \text{would vindicate the deep disgrace,} \\
\ldots \text{the wrongs, the ruin of his race;} \\
\ldots \text{he slew, that well avenged in death,} \\
\ldots \text{his kindred spirits pleased might be;} \\
\ldots \text{'Tis the death wail of a departed race,--} \\
\]

(8, p. 20)

Thus Eastburn and Sands depict a race sent down to destruction by the greed and acquisitiveness of the white man. The Puritan settlers are strongly condemned for their treatment of the Indian, whereas the native American is praised for his gallant battle. And by suggesting a change in societal attitude toward the Indian, the authors unwittingly helped to set the stage for the next step in the development of literature about Indians.

James Fenimore Cooper was particularly well known for his writings about the native American through his *Leatherstocking*
tales. Obtained in part from other writers and to some extent from observation, Cooper's portrayal of the Indian probably reflected the general consensus of the time. Keiser, for example, expresses the belief that Cooper did in fact mirror contemporary attitudinal feelings of his era. He states that "it is clear that Cooper carefully gathered all available material from what he considered the most authentic sources [and] . . . combined with his own observations this formed a respectable body of valuable material"(11, p. 103). He further wrote that "Cooper has given the world a remarkably complete and faithful picture of the character and life of the aborigines of primitive America"(11, p. 101). It should be noted, however, that John Erskine and Mark Twain, among others, felt differently. In fact, Erskine cautions that Cooper's works contain "more romance than reality"(9, p. 77).

The most notable critic of Cooper during the mid-nineteenth century was Francis Parkman, who was particularly harsh on writers given to the idealization of the native American. Indeed, Parkman believed that the Indian was an "irreclaimable son of the wilderness," and he admonished Cooper in a review in which he accused him of "fathering . . . those aboriginal heroes in our literature"(15, p. 151). In Cooper's estimation, which is in nearly every instance antithetical to Parkman's, the evil forces in man have made civilization destructive. Thus the extermination of the Indian becomes a moral issue rather than an economic and political expedient.
Cooper might be considered a social novelist since he attempted to preserve and nourish the moral values of an emerging enlightenment, and to have America use the new humanism in her treatment of the native Americans. He said that his objective in writing the tales was "to represent society, under its ordinary faces, in the act of passing from the influence of one set of governing principles to that of another"(4, p. vi). His most celebrated subject was the western frontier, where American society was trading in an old set of principles, or values, for a more modern and viable one.

It is sometimes difficult to understand Cooper unless one recognizes that his narratives were intended to reveal ideal modes of action. That is to say, Cooper was primarily a moralist, an expounder of a particular code of morality, not a philosopher seeking moral truth in the maze of the human condition. He strove to arouse interest, but he shrouded the interest and suspense in a veil of moral values and lessons.

Cooper's Indians generally represent uncorrupted morals indicative of the wilderness environment. David Brion Davis, in his essay titled "Deerslayer, A Democratic Knight of the Wilderness," turns to analogy in order to show that "the Indian maiden and her betrothed enjoy the original, sinless love of Adam and Eve before the fall"(7, p. 6). Furthermore, when the moral principles of the Indian maiden seem to be compromised by her acceptance of war and violence, Cooper reminds us that she is an aborigine and that her environment and values make
her a savage child of God.

Cooper's Indians are noble in their distaste of hypocrisy and in their fidelity to fixed natural values. And if their unique principles and spiritual values prevent them from reaching the upper limits of Christian morality, they successfully reconcile physical violence with an unshakeable faith in traditional law. Indeed, Cooper's Indians were governed by custom and natural law, whereas the Anglo pioneers, isolated as they were from the refinements of civilized society, were marked by a lack of restraint, ignorance, prejudice, and a bizarre code of honor. Davis believes that the Leatherstocking tales reflect violence with a theme of "killing Indians" (7, p. 15) and that they suggest the "abrupt intrusion of civilization and the imminent corruption of natural creation" (7, p. 12). For example, Cooper seemingly dwells upon the racial overtones of the colonial wars, where human justice was frequently suspended while the two races killed one another. Some forty years earlier, Charles Brockden Brown had referred to the killing of Indians by the whites as a "loathsome obligation" (2, p. 45) followed by remorse and guilt. In the frontier tales of the 1830's and 1840's, however, we find what might be called a ritualistic pattern of persecution and killing of the Indians by the whites, and this in turn was followed by retaliatory actions on the part of the native Americans. On the other hand, writers of the period might have claimed a kind of justification for having perpetuated the violence on paper
since it exemplified in no small way society's attitude toward the Indians.

In a similar vein, Cooper used the Indian in order to exalt the Anglo-American. For example, the native American served as a means to understand American progress on a comparative basis, for Indian culture was depicted on the whole to be morally inferior to Anglo civilized society. Pearce contends that Cooper was "taking them [Indians] as his culture gave them to him. And he was to give them back to his culture imaged so powerfully that they could never be rejected, yet imaged so powerfully that no one could doubt that they had to be destroyed" (16, p. 201). Thus, when approached from this point of view, the Indian ceases to be the main theme in Cooper's works, but rather he becomes a vehicle for measuring the progress of the white man's civilized life.

The Leatherstocking tales imaged more vividly than any of Cooper's other novels the notion of the native American in the idealized savage role. The tales revolve around a frontiersman who mediates between the savage and the civilized worlds. Never completely accepted in civilized society, Cooper's frontiersman takes refuge in the belief that he is far better than the lowly Indian. Moreover, the frontiersman believes that his somewhat exalted social position gives him the right to remove or exterminate the Indian.

The key to understanding the difference between white and Indian roles, according to Cooper, lies in their "gifts." This
difference, he further contends, is a result of the environment rather than innate factors, as can be seen in The Deer-slayer:

\[A\text{ natur'} \text{ is the creatur'} \text{ itself; its wishes, wants, idees, and feeling's, as all are born in him. . . . gifts come of sarcumstances. Thus, if you put a man in a town, he gets town gifts . . . and in a forest, gifts of the woods(4, p. 93).}\]

In the same Leatherstocking tale, Cooper did some rationalizing through his main character:

\[\text{God made us all, white, black, and red . . . he gave each race its gifts. A white man's gifts are christianized, while a redskin's are more for the wilderness. Thus, it would be a great offense for a white man to scalp the dead; whereas it's a signal virtue for an Indian(4, p. 64).}\]

Virtually all Indian traits found in Cooper's tales are rationalized in this fashion and in every instance they are found to be inferior to those of civilized Anglo life. Indeed, as Pearce has pointed out, "all of Cooper's Indian stories are civilized fictions in which the Indian is imaged as a measure of the noncivilized and is made to die as both Chingachgook and Leatherstocking have died"(16, p. 209).

Characteristically, Cooper's Indians are endowed with all the qualities of savagery, nobility, bravery, cunning, courage and artfulness, yet their character is diminished, in the views of Cooper, by their constant pursuit of hunting and warfare. He offers the following description of Indian character in the Introduction to The Last of the Mohicans:

\[\text{Few men exhibit greater diversity, or, if we may so express it, greater antithesis of character, than the native warrior of North America. In War,}\]
he is daring, boastful, cunning, ruthless, self-denying, and self-devoted; in peace, just, generous, hospitable, revengeful, superstitious, modest, and commonly chaste. These are qualities, it is true, which do not distinguish all alike, but they are so far the predominating traits of these remarkable people as to be characteristic (3, p. v).

The antithetical views demonstrate that Cooper was capable of painting a balanced picture of the Indian, but the predominance of the inferior-Indian syndrome throughout his works indicates that he was fully under the spell of ethnocentrism.

In *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, Cooper describes the Indians as "dying heroes" (5, p. 14), and then proceeds to pen a "study of Indian morality" (6, p. 1) in *Wyandotte*. The main character, Wyandotte, regains his savage manhood by killing his white master, and then proceeds to fulfill his manhood by returning of his own free will to serve his master's family. But, having come from the forest, Wyandotte can never attain the high standards of morality peculiar to his Anglo master.

*The Last of the Mohicans* is the only Leatherstocking tale that comes close to having an exclusively Indian theme. For instance, Cooper includes Indian customs, strategy, and even his faults and code of honor. Finally, he describes the qualities of the native American on the subject of romance, and concludes that this may well be the one dimension of behavior where the Indian is superior to the Anglo.

In *The Deerslayer*, celebrated as Cooper's finest work, white people are described as working and living in close contact with the native Americans, while the main character, Deer-
slayer, seeks to maintain the peace. The setting is the wilderness and the drama is provided by a young Mohican, Chingachgook, who risks his life in order to rescue his beloved Wah-ta!-Wah, a Delaware, from the Hurons and to defend his friend Deerslayer. This romantic adventure delineates key roles of individuals commonly found in the Indian culture. For example, Wah-ta!-Wah must carry her own papoose and perform the duties frequently assigned to the woman, whereas Chingachgook concentrates upon his prescribed role of warrior. Indeed, his role is played with what Cooper considers to be hereditary bravery and cunning.

According to Keiser, the attitude of Deerslayer's supposed friend, Hurry Harry, reveals the belief held by many of the colonists at that time when he states that "both considered the Mingoes as more than half devils, and to be dealt with as such" (p. 119). Another example of societal attitudes is revealed when Cooper mentions the use of a rich bounty offered by the colonial government for the scalps of Indians, with no distinction being made between warriors and helpless women and children. Furthermore, this notion was perpetuated by the various governmental agencies on and around the periphery of the frontier.

Acts of violence, according to Clark Wissler, inevitably "dominate the history of the frontier because they are the climaxes in the adjustment of the Indian to the white" (p. 16). This should not suggest that the Indians and whites did
not have mutual understandings and reciprocal trade agreements. In fact, records show that they exchanged goods, geographical information, and knowledge of agriculture and woodcraft.

Most fictional literature fails to treat the Indian as a member of a particular tribe, much less as an individual in the human sense, but rather it treats him as a red man in a dehumanized sense. It is written with the entertainment of the reader in mind and thus focuses on the spectacular and unusual. Washington Irving expressed the belief that the Indians of the early periods of colonization had been doubly wronged by the white man.

They have been dispossessed of their hereditary possessions by mercenary and frequently wanton warfare; and their characters have been traduced by bigoted and interested writers. The Colonist often treated them like beast of the forest; and the author endeavored to justify him in his outrages. The former found it easier to exterminate than to civilize; the latter to vilify than to discriminate (10, p. 96).

Indeed, vilification was less often the goal than an exciting narrative, but the result was the same.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the most frequent theme in literature about native Americans was how civilization, for all of its material progress and spiritual goodness, inevitably destroyed the fabric of savage nobility. The image of the Indian became meaningful, therefore, as a prime example of the tension between savagery and civilization. Pearce tries to explain this preoccupation of the popular writers by saying "they knew their readers wanted them to; that therefore the iteration and the obsession mark a deep need in
the collective American imagination of the second quarter of the century" (16, p. 216).

Southerner William Gilmore Simms was a contemporary of Cooper and used much the same theme. He wrote two full-length novels about American Indians as well as a number of essays, short stories, and poems. Writing from his own personal observations, Simms felt that his picture of the native was authentic and unbiased; and the uncivilized native was the framework upon which Simms created his most popular work, *The Yemassee*, in 1835. In this novel Simms maintains that the degrading and humiliating relationship of the Indian with the white man is not a true image of the native of the wilderness, but only of the Indian-white relationship within the civilized society. Moreover, Keiser endorses this belief when he gives Simms credit for writing "one of the most faithful portraits of the American native" (11, p. 154).

The subject of *The Yemassee* is the uprising in 1715 of the Yemassee Indians against the British colonists of South Carolina—a true historical event which Simms sees as significant because it represents one of the major obstacles that his southern nation had to face. The English established settlements in South Carolina on land desired by the Spanish but which the English nevertheless acquired from the Yemassee tribe both by barter and by treaty. The Indians had an unprecedented faith in dealing honestly in trade, but this innocence was soon discovered and exploited by the Anglo’s deceit in measuring land,
giving the Indian poor value for goods received, or by robbing while the Indian was drunk.

The colonies as far north as Virginia and as far west as Mississippi were claimed by Spain through priority of discovery; and in this area the Yemassee Indians were, at first, friendly to the white man, that is, until he took the major portion of their lands and introduced liquor among them. The Carolinians had advanced into this fertile, primeval land, and the Indians had become more stubborn about continued encroachment upon their ancient tribal preserve despite white attempts at "bartering." All of this led to conspiracies among the Indians against the white settlers, and ultimately to an alliance with the Spaniards against the English. It was this internecine strife that formed the framework for Simms' novel.

J. V. Ridgely says the book's major theme is "what the colonists and the Indians signify in terms of a growing civilization in the South, and he . . . weaves the facts of history into a wholly fictional main plot" (17, p. 52). Simms described this encounter between the old and new cultures, and the subsequent changes it brought to both peoples. For example, the altered condition of the Indian society is symbolized in the degradation of the chieftain's son, Occonestoga, whose body and will have been corrupted by the settler's liquor. John Erskine explains Simms' degradation of the son by rationalizing that "the younger nature is less fixed and more easily lured" (9, p. 144). As disaster overtook those unable to adapt themselves
to the relentless march of civilization, Simms maintained again and again that much of the treachery which we attribute to the aborigine was the result of his introduction to liquor.

For Simms, the role of the female Indian in society is much the same as the one perceived by Cooper—that is, a tender-hearted but strong-willed woman. Matiwan, the mother of Occonestoga and the wife of the chief of the Yemassee, is such a woman. For example, her most sterling qualities are revealed through her unshakable love for an errant son, devotion to her dying husband, as well as the courage necessary to carry through her convictions. Authorities like Keiser acclaim her as the "most noble and attractive woman in American literature" (11, p. 169), and the best example of Indian womanhood. Elsewhere, Jason Almus Russell sees Matiwan as the "great, fine, and pure type of Indian woman found in fiction" (18, pp. 152-153). Finally, Simms makes her the vehicle for saving Occonestoga from disgrace by allowing Matiwan to administer the fatal blow. This incident is felt to be both logical and true, since it is the one thing she would do. The paradox of such a deed, as the work of sublime love, lifts the episode to a plane higher than mere adventure, and simultaneously describes the character of an Indian woman.

The chieftain's death in the final battle signals the end of the Yemassee dynasty and thus is symbolic of the fate of the Indians. Although the reader is shown both sides of the struggle, Simms suggests that the Indians' territorial claims are
necessarily finished despite their prior claim to the land. In a lengthy argument over the Indian question between Hugh Grayson, a young colonist, and the Reverend Mr. Matthews, the settlement's minister, Simms expressed what he considered to be the recognized point of view of his fictional settlers, and most likely of society in general, when he wrote:

> It is utterly impossible that the whites and Indians should ever live together and agree. The nature of things is against it, and the very difference between the two, that of colour, perceptible to our most ready sentinel, the sight, must always constitute them an inferior caste in our minds (20, p. 325).

Simms' belief in white supremacy is clearly illustrated by the advance of the colonists through Indian hunting grounds, as well as in the degradation and degeneracy of any native who refused to leave an area wanted by the white man. There was no place for the Indian in civilized society, according to Simms, and he delineated this social attitude when one of his characters spoke of Indian inferiority: "When conscious of our superiority, and unfamiliar with our language, they are necessarily taciturn; as it is the pride of an Indian to hide his deficiencies. . . . He conceals his ignorance in silence" (20, p. 300).

Simms felt that the Indians must be driven westward to work out their own fates in their own seemingly classless society, and this attitude toward the Indian can be more easily understood when viewed against the social class structure of the colony. Simms, for instance, describes the colony's
social structure as having a leader, a middle class, and a lower order. The white renegade, or outcast, is representative of the third, or lowest, class, whereas the Indian is so low he is not even included in the class structure. Furthermore, since the white renegades and Indians are killed in the story, it should be clear that Simms is suggesting that such people had to be removed before society could perfect itself.

Simms also demonstrates a latent sympathy for the "inferior" race, but concludes that destiny evidently had to take its course:

> It is in the nature of civilization to own an appetite for dominion and extend sway, which the world that is known will always fail to satisfy. It is for her, then to seek out and to create, and . . . to weep for the triumph of the unknown. Conquest and sway are the great leading principles of her existence, and the savage must join in her train, or she rides over him relentlessly in her onward progress(20, p. 419).

The author is thus advocating that the Indian must set aside his defiance and try to adapt for the salvation of his race.

By mid-nineteenth century many native Americans had been sent west by the infamous relocation policy of the Jacksonian era, and, as a result, writers began to reflect a change in the thinking of many people toward native Americans. Far from the Anglos, many Indians began to gain relief from the ancient stigma as representatives of Satan. In fact, they soon began to assume an idealized image. Thus neither Cooper nor Simms created the Noble Savage of the nineteenth century; they merely reflected societal attitudes and called attention to
the Indian.

During the post-Civil War period, scholars began to search for a better understanding of the native American and, in part, to preserve some of the legendary material created by and about Indians. Furthermore, the behavior of the Indian was rationalized as the result of his experiences and his way of life, all with the conviction that the Indian might be regenerated or at least helped. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Joaquin Miller were leaders among those who started this movement.

Henry Schoolcraft was one of the first to compile a collection of Indian tales and legends, which was published in 1839 under the title, *Algic Researches*. This research started a trend which was to acknowledge the contributions of a disappearing race and furnished a source upon which future writers could rely.

Henry Longfellow gave Schoolcraft credit for having furnished the background material for his acclaimed poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*. A recent writer, Leon H. Vincent, sees the poem not so much as a commentary on the manners and customs of the Indian, but rather as "free handling of Ojibway legends drawn from Schoolcraft's *Algic Researches*"(21, p. 81). In Longfellow's poem, the negative side of Indian character is kept in the background, whereas his noble and picturesque qualities are brought to the front. Indeed, in this saga of a legendary hero who is sent as a benefactor to the American Indians, Long-
fellow promotes the notion of helping native Americans. Hiawatha is to meet with the various tribes, representative of the natives on the American continent, for a great council that is to stamp out the feuding and vengeance that have persisted down through the years. Furthermore, Hiawatha suggests that the implications from the internecine strife down through the years have made peace and tranquility impossible. Unity, he feels, is the key to survival. For example: "All your strength is in your union,/All your danger is in discord"(12, p. 166). Unity is further hoped for with a wedding which would unite two enemy tribes; however, Hiawatha's efforts end on an ineffectual note with his death. This epic also delineates an imagined history of the native Americans from the stages of hunting and fishing to the beginnings of agriculture.

The paradox of the saga by Longfellow is pointed out by Keiser when he states that "it is only with advancing civilization that these conceptions fade in the light of a more rational viewpoint. Thus there is maintained a consistent attitude reflecting the prevailing state of mind"(11, p. 204). Finally, the validity of the conclusions in the poem is reported on by George Bancroft, a famed historian of the nineteenth century, when he says that "as a whole it represents wonderfully well the infantile character of Indian life"(1, p. 101). Elsewhere, Schoolcraft credited Longfellow with treating the Indian as he really was. For example, "He is a warrior in war, a savage in revenge, a stoic in endurance, a wolverine
in suppleness and cunning. . . . He is as simple as a child, yet with the dignity of a man in his wigwam" (19, p. 145).

The Song of Hiawatha, therefore, represents a successful poetic delineation of the American Indian in the post-Civil War period. A free and independent native is wistfully portrayed, one who is just moving into the dawn of civilization, but still remains uncorrupted by contact with the Anglos. He is shown with a genuine concern for domestic relations, and for his social and civic life, both of which are sometimes beset with the discord that comes from war and stress that comes from an uncivilized existence. Hiawatha feels it all will end in disaster for large numbers without far-sighted leaders who can bring unity. Longfellow thus attempts to bring understanding to the reading public, and much of that understanding was the inevitability of the doom of a race whose intra-tribal strife rendered it incapable of defending itself from the Anglos.

Joaquin Miller has been described as a minor figure among those who wrote about Indians during the nineteenth century, but the fact that he lived among native Americans makes him significant to this research. In his Shadows of Shasta, published in 1881, a desire is expressed that "nothing be done to degrade the character of the Indians" (14, p. 40). After a stay in a Shasta Indian home during a storm, Miller saw noble qualities in the native Americans and reported that "They are the most honest, truthful, and reliable Indians ever known" (13, p. 108). Indeed, he saw the same qualities of character that
other authors of the Romantic school have mentioned, but he refined them and interpreted them with higher morals. In his poetry, Miller defends the Indians and their responses to the whites, because the latter brought injustices upon them. He feels, however, that the injustices done to the native Americans in the past could be remedied by a change in conduct and a reversal in attitude toward them. Although Miller does not absolve the Indians of all guilt, he does show a greater sympathetic and enlightened understanding than other writers prior to his time. As Keiser has observed, "His stand in defense of the Red Man is one of the most courageous and sweeping anywhere to be found in the annals of American literature" (11, p. 246).

Thus the most significant observations found in literature about Indians before the twentieth century are that writers emphasized the ruthlessness of the white race, the doomed fate of the Indian, and the stoic bravery and poetic appeal of his seemingly helpless condition. The most persistent theme of the Indian to this point in history was doubtless his decline from a noble and conquering race. Over one hundred treaties had been made, in addition to the removal of most Indians to lands west of the Mississippi River. Finally, it is evident that a public awareness of the Indian condition began to emerge in post-Civil War America, as reflected in the literature and legislation of the period.

Miller, Longfellow, and others, therefore, set the stage for the next phase in American literature, which might best be
described as ethnocentric acculturation. Indians had been treated as Satanic savages by the conquerors when they posed a threat to the colonists, and later as idealized savages by the romantics, depending upon the societal attitude at a particular time in history. By the end of the nineteenth century, society began to view the native Americans as a cultural group worthy of some concern. Accordingly, acculturation of the Indians became the recognized objective of society, writers and governmental agencies alike.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


By the end of the nineteenth century enforced acculturation had become a point of considerable interest and concern, a kind of enforced ethnocentric acculturation that refused to see the worth and the needs of Indian culture. Many writers challenged the efficacy and desirability of aggressive acculturation and called instead for gradual acculturation.

Before the twentieth century, the issues surrounding the Indian were rural in a society that was, by and large, agrarian in orientation and in reality. But with the turn of the century, the demographic emphasis had become urban. For example, the attraction of rural themes in literature had shifted to urban themes, but now the question had become one of gradual or enforced acculturation of the Indian into the urban sectors of the country. Education and acculturation became fashionable as scholarships were established in leading universities and federal grants were initiated for the schooling of Indians. Finally, legislation was enacted in 1924 to give full citizenship rights to all Indians in America.

Social and cultural disorganization, however, greatly reduced the effectiveness of the acculturation programs. As Peter O. Peretti has pointed out, "where sharp contrasts divide the economies of indigenous people from technologically advanced
conquerors, conquest usually shatters the former's social and economic order, reducing them to near pauperism" (11, p. 39).

Actually, acculturation goes back to the Civil War period. During that time the federal government assumed an active role in acculturation, by appointing Indian agents. Often exercising the power of dictators, these early bureaucrats enforced law and order and issued items like food, clothing, and farm equipment to the Indians at the agent's discretion. The agents also forced Indians to live in frame or log houses, to give up their native dress, and even attempted to force the men to give up their braids and wear short hair. Additionally, the Indian men were required to plow up their land and sow wheat and raise "civilized crops." These kinds of edicts not only ran contrary to the stated goals of the federal government, but they were in conflict with some Indian cultures where Indian men were reminded that farming was the work for women. According to LeRoy Mason, community development specialist with the Dallas Office of Equal Opportunity, the Indian man's power depended upon his role as a hunter, so when the white men took away his land and forced him to farm, they also took away his manhood.

Elsewhere, Gustavus E. E. Lindquist, a member of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, describes this early policy of enforced assimilation in greater detail:

The present policy of assimilating the Indian with the general population and citizenship of the country . . . results in the education, sympathetic understanding, patience, and fellowship . . . The civilization of the Indian has become educational.
teaching the language he must of necessity adopt, the academic knowledge essential to ordinary business transactions, the common arts and crafts of the home and field, how to provide a settled dwelling and elevate its domestic quality, . . . teaching him to see the future as a new era and one inevitably different from his past (9, pp. v-vi).

By forcing the Indian to accept these white cultural values society felt that it was civilizing him.

Conflict in values frequently caused problems in the government schools, which had been established in order to accelerate the acculturation, and perhaps assimilation, of the Indian children. The following excerpt brings into sharper focus some of the cultural conflicts emanating from education policy:

Suppose a primary teacher sets both boys and girls to making pottery. From her point of view this is an interesting and worthwhile class activity, for white persons do not make sharp distinctions between what six-year-old boys and girls should do. Yet this is as grievous a humiliation to a Navaho boy as a ten-year-old white boy would feel if he were made to appear in school in lace petticoats (5, p. 316).

Consequently there were frequent differences of opinion resulting in unfavorable reactions toward the Indians for not readily accepting white man's cultural values. These examples are cited in order to demonstrate what societal attitudes were at the turn of the century. By and large, society at that time felt the Indian should be acculturated, and some felt he should be assimilated, into the white man's culture, but the problem, according to Ronald Sanders, was that the Indian "refused to be assimilated, . . . insisting instead upon his own tribal identity" (12, p. 223). In the meantime, the policies of acculturation and assimi-
lation were under careful scrutiny by such notable writers as Helen Hunt Jackson, Hamlin Garland, Oliver LaFarge, and Dama Margaret Smith.

Jackson traced the history of America's treatment of the Indians from the time of the American Revolution and described what she found as a "century of dishonor" (2, p. i). Her book, published under the same name in 1881, called for full human rights for all Indians and inspired the passage of the Dawes Severalty Act in 1887. The Dawes Act was designed to hasten acculturation and citizenship by dividing up Indian lands to individuals. The crowning act of this new acculturation movement came in 1924, when all Indians were given full citizenship rights. But Jackson did not live to see even the passage of the Dawes Act—she died in 1885.

Failing in 1881 to gain enough support to secure full rights to the Indians, Jackson published Ramona, a novel that would go through three hundred printings. She wrote the story as a means of propaganda to improve the condition of the Indians in California, and it made her a dawn star of the writers of the late nineteenth century who tried to show the detrimental effects of enforced acculturational attempts by the whites. Ramona is the story of a half-breed Indian girl whose mate is driven to insanity and a tragic death by the influx of ruthless American settlers. In a way, he becomes a symbol of the fate of his race. Jackson sees the Indians, by and large, as a "wretched lot, who are miserable, half-starved creatures, grown incapable
under the paternalistic care of the dominant white race"(3, p. iv). According to Keiser, their tragic situation is "a continuation of that decay of the missions which had set in with the despoiling under the Secularization Act"(4, p. 252). In a similar vein, Jackson's description of the Indians' loss of all possessions at a mission exemplifies the dispossession of the Indians in real life. She is thus showing that society was systematically eliminating the less civilized in order to make room for the more efficient civilization. In short, all had to conform to the new standards of white civilization or be swept away by the march of progress.

Other cultural conflicts faced by the native American in his attempt to follow the code of morals and way of life of the dominant race are offered by Oliver LaFarge in Laughing Boy. The story depicts the life and ideals of a young Navaho, Laughing Boy, and his mate, Slim Girl. Laughing Boy's work in the fashioning of silver and turquoise bracelets; and his wife's rug weaving, their contact with other Indians and with traders, and a more sinister contact with the white civilization form the background of this novel. Laughing Boy sells his jewelery to other Indians and tourists, while Slim Girl spends part of her time in town working for a white family. Discovering that she leads a double life, Laughing Boy shoots and wounds his wife with an arrow. Slim Girl, meanwhile, blames her downfall on her "abandonment by the Christians" in her "hour of distress" during her youth, and the "kindness of the
bad white woman" who has caused her "confusion in values" (32, p. 208). According to Mary Fender Duke, Laughing Boy arouses "an interest and appeal in the Indian character as it really is" (1, p. 75).

LaFarge treats the subject of Indians again in The Enemy Gods, and offers other problems facing the full-blood Indian in his struggle with enforced acculturation. It is the story of a Navajo boy taken from his home at the age of six in order to be educated in a mission school. His Indian identity is taken from him and he is given an American name. Later, he is discouraged from going home during summer vacation on the belief that he will return to his Indian ways once again. Understanding is further diminished when the school fails to notify the parents that the students may be reclaimed, while communication is made difficult by the nomadic habits of the parents. Eventually contact between parent and child is completely lost. This fate of the Indian youth may be seen in the following dialogue between an old Indian man and a young native:

I think you are making a mistake. . . . If you learn all the white man's way and forget the Navajo, if that happens to our young men, then we die, we are destroyed, as surely as if by warfare. The man who will serve his people in the years to come, the man who will strengthen them, is the man who can learn all of the one without losing the other. That is what we are hoping for, we who used to be warriors and leaders, and who still wear the old fashioned clothes (6, p. 46).

The Indian boy had been at the school so long that he had to relearn Indian ways. For example, he had to learn how to ride horseback and how to sleep on the ground rolled up in a blanket.
The Indian youth finally chooses to sever his relationship with Christianity and returns his allegiance to the Navajos.

LaFarge demonstrates here, as elsewhere, that any attempt to put the Indian into another environment cannot be successful. In many cases the Indian is torn between his own ancestral values and customs and those urged upon him by teachers, missionaries and other whites of society. The result is a social breakdown.

Some of the personal values of whites, like cleanliness, were embraced by the Indians, but the traditional ways of doing things sometimes presented a problem, as witnessed by the following excerpt:

The grandmother, when she was a girl, returned from school and removed the dishes from under the stove to a soap box nailed to the wall; the mother puts them in a china closet; the daughter puts them into the pantry or on the mahogany sideboard. Thus we witness the transition from the old to the new (8, p. 82).

There is inevitably an unfavorable reaction when any group of people is pushed into a new course of action or a new way of doing things, and the Indians were no exception. This is reflected in both fiction and nonfiction. LaFarge and Jackson are conspicuous in their use of white interference and its adverse effects on Indians.

Dama Margaret Smith offers a significant contribution to the understanding of Indians in *Hopi Girl*. And her message is in harmony with those of LaFarge and Jackson. Smith shows the many social customs followed in the life of a Hopi girl, named
Polamana; and the subsequent detrimental effects of white schooling during the formative years of her life. In this case, the Indian child is forced to leave home for several years and is held rigidly under the values and educational training of the conqueror. This training in turn causes her to be unprepared to return to her native tribe to assume her expected role in the tribal organization. In fact, as Smith points out, the Hopi girl, upon returning as a young woman to her tribe, "can accept only those customs and practices which will conform to her white training" (13, p. 98). Polamana could not imagine herself following and caring for the herd of sheep for twelve hours a day; nor could she be one of those who sat around a pot of stew on the hogan floor, dipping their unwashed hands into the stew. Nor would she tolerate such uncleanness as lice, or dishwater thrown on the hogan dirt floor to settle the dust. On the other hand, she would welcome the artistic crafts and handwork and do what she could to carry on such work. She would gladly return to group-welfare and shun acquisitiveness and selfishness and live in harmony with all forms of nature and with all mankind. The short of it is, Polamana could never return to complete primitivism with its unattractive aspects, but she could profit by the physical, social, and spiritual concepts. Implicit in the thesis of this book is the notion that education must be brought to the Indian in his own setting and through his own values, not the other way around. The suggestion, for example, is that the better plan would be for the
whites to go to the Indian villages and show the members of the families there improved methods of sanitation and agriculture, while the Indian is permitted to pursue his own way of life.

The role of the Indian female is also going through a period of change in the story, as illustrated by Polamana's inability to choose Singing Long Time, who would place her in a subservient role; but she still admires him. She could, however, marry Hugh Swift Wind, who would accept her and her newfound ideals.

It was altogether fitting and natural that this contact of two races of such diverse cultures should play a significant part in the fictional literature of the post-Civil War period. The chief interest of the authors seemingly was the difficulty, and the undesirability, of forcing the Indian to adapt to the white man's way of life, and, to some extent, the inability of some Indians to adapt to a new culture. As a result of this inability, many full-blood Indians have fallen to a level of distressing poverty under the Anglo's economic system.

Another popular writer of the period was Hamlin Garland. Describing the native American as a typical human being who can meet a variety of situations, many of which are not of his own making, Garland seeks to defend the Indian in his stories. His realism pictures the native American as having difficulty in following the white man's prescribed role. Keiser praises the work of Garland when he says that, generally speaking, his
stories "reveal the Indian as a human being and neighbor who is finding it hard to forsake his own ways and to travel the white man's trail, but whose problem can be solved by justice, sympathy, and tact on the part of his more advanced white brother"(4, p. 285). Garland's purpose in writing these accounts was not so much to admonish the white man as it was to encourage him to offer better opportunities to the Indian and to treat him in a more humane manner.

Elsewhere, President Theodore Roosevelt commended Garland's book, The Captain of the Gray Horse Troop, and even made some of his suggestions federal policy. Somewhat similar to authors of his time, Garland delineates in systematic fashion the problems native Americans have in trying to follow white man's ways. For example, he sympathizes with the Indian's refusal to sell ancestral lands or to give up their ideals in exchange for blankets and food. The thesis of this story is best described by Keiser: "The natives are physically, mentally, and spiritually submerged by the rising tide of an alien race"(4, p. 282). Garland subscribed to acculturation and assimilation for the Indians, but he wanted these processes to come without destroying the Indian's own identity.

In 1923 Garland again crusaded in behalf of the native Americans in his poem, "The Silent Eaters," a story of the life and death of Sitting Bull. Beginning in 1854 when the Indian tribal chiefs were summoned to a conference by the white leaders, the poem shows the growing problems of assimilation
that led ultimately to the battle of the Little Big Horn. According to Garland, a new day was beginning to dawn for the native Americans at the turn of the century, one in which the race would evolve from hunters to farmers. Recalling that the game upon which the Indian relied had vanished, Garland emphasized the need for Indian acculturation into an agrarian society.

Roy Pearce is one of the most perceptive students on the subject of Indians in American literature, and, after having studied the period of acculturation, offers a slightly different slant in the following interpretation: "Americans had set out to comprehend the Indian in such a way as to establish a meaningful relationship between his savagism and their civilization" (10, p. 232). Writers of the period did not have to crusade for the Indian in order to catch the eye of the reading public, but many did it out of an interest and concern for the deteriorating race.

Where Jackson, LaFarge, and Garland described the agony of Indian society under enforced acculturation, Edna Ferber, in Cimarron, and D'Arcy McNickle, in The Surrounded, attempted to show the deterioration of the individual Indian under the influence of enforced acculturation. Cimarron is the story of the transformation of Indian Territory into the state of Oklahoma. Starting with the land-rush days in 1889, the novel is notable for its delineation of the disinherited Indians who came into bewildering wealth from oil discoveries on their land. And it further describes the greed of the whites who managed
to obtain much of the new-found oil wealth and to grab up much of the land awarded to the Indians by the Dawes Act. Once again the Indian was reminded by the story that where the white man rules the native American must subordinate his ambition.

McNickle uses *The Surrounded*, a story of Indians in Montana, to challenge the enforced acculturation of native Americans. In fact, the general tendency of the Indians described in this story is to revert from the white man's concept of education, with its ordered, law-abiding life, to the primitive freedom, customs, and religion of their past. But McNickle also shows in tragic detail the fate of the Indian race as symbolized by the conflict within the principal character between his desire for certain customs of the whites and the traditions of his own tribe. The title of the book is significant because it refers to the "Mountains of the Surrounded" where the Indians had been attacked and destroyed.

The short of it is that subjugation and enforced acculturation by the white race caused social and cultural disorganization within the Indian culture. Furthermore, the Indian land holdings were systematically reduced by the multi-exploitative activities of the Anglo American. As observed by Peretti, "When the Indians began to experience the white man's characteristics of individualism and competition, there began to be a disregard for kinship ties and tribal unity"(11, p. 39). The Indian had been part of a group, which worked as a unit before the influence of the white man appeared, but then the loss of Indian lands and freedom, compounded by enforced acculturation contributed in no small way to the complete social breakdown in Indian society. Lindquist offers the following causes for the social disintegration:

Territorial expansion, involving new trade routes and new sources of revenues; the displacement of the fishing industry by the fur trade, with that trade penetrating the continents ever more deeply in search of new varieties of fur-bearing animals; the fact that hunting Indians were soon left without food resources; the introduction of rum, powder shot, and firearms, often used as gifts to curry favor; the influence of monopoly assumed by the fur companies on Indian trade; the involvement of the New World in the wars among European states and the use of Indian fighters largely as pawns under the guise of "alliances"--these are some of the factors that inevitably led not only to what has been termed the "loss of a continent" but to what proved to be of far greater significance--the displacement of a way of life(8, p. 13).

One of the most significant early Supreme Court decisions concerning Indian relations was issued by Chief Justice John Marshall when he ruled in 1828 that the native American tribes
were "domestic dependent nations." This decision in essence said that the Indians were capable of handling affairs inside their tribes; however, it did not allow them to control anything outside of their tribes, such as treaties with other countries, or enter into a buying or selling agreement with any other country. In order to enforce this ruling, the Indians were confined to reservations, where they met with economic, political, social, and biological defeat. In 1871 congress ended further treaty-making with Indian tribes, but recognized as legal all existing treaties.

The Indian was sentenced to further economic ruin when he was forced to adhere to the white man's concepts of farming. He had survived for centuries with such crops as maize, beans, and squash, but the federal government viewed these crops as uncivilized and urged the Indian to plant wheat and other crops favored by the white man. The hunting Indian in particular had difficulty adjusting to farming. Eventually, this practice was discontinued due in part to the dissatisfaction of the Indian and due in part to the acquisition of the Indian farm land by whites who used any means available to obtain the property. The subsequent policy of the federal government encouraged the Indian to farm lands held by the government but under the control of Indian agents, a practice that continued until after World War II.

Meanwhile, the military activities of the post-Civil War period, and their application to the issues surrounding the
Indian in the trans-Mississippi west, were seemingly inimical to the stated goals of the federal government and the desires of society, at least that sizable portion of society in the east. Indeed, the ill-advised military solutions to social and political problems, when pursued by men like General Philip Sheridan and Colonel George A. Custer, were anachronistic aftermaths of an earlier era. More in concert with the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments, passed during this period, was the announced Peace Policy of President Ulysses S. Grant, which was designed to hasten the acculturation of Indians without military interference. Gradual acculturation apparently was the real goal of the federal government. Furthermore, in subsequent years men in high office like Secretary of Interior Carl Schurz, President Grover Cleveland, and later, President Theodore Roosevelt, joined the forces advocating peaceful acculturation and justice for the native Americans.

On the other hand, honorable as their intentions may have been, the attitudes of the writers and of society of this period turned out to be laden with ethnocentrism. For example, the "Indian citizenship movement" of Helen Jackson, as well as the suggestions of her fellow writers, were designed to bring the Indian into the superior white society just as soon as he was ready. Few if any entertained the notion of permitting the Indian to choose his own destiny. Even the well-meaning Dawes Act placed a stigma of incompetence on the native American by forcing him to place his land in a condition of trust under the
federal government.


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CHAPTER V

THE REVISIONISTS

By the time of the Korean War, a significant number of Americans had discovered that "color prejudices" were emerging as issues, and that the Indians still received a full measure of this kind of discrimination. The new Indian awareness that had its genesis in the late nineteenth century gained even more force as the 1960's approached. For example, writers began to cast Indians in more favorable roles, legislators began to work in behalf of Indians, and native Americans themselves began to resurrect their once-proud belief in tribal identity. Literature still predominantly reflected Negro problems, but the ill effects of urban sprawl were also agonizingly in evidence, and this in turn caused many people to turn once again to the romance of the rural life of the Indian. But even more significantly, Indians began to articulate their own history, social values and cultural needs in a literature of their own—a talent that has been described as vital to any group wishing to rediscover its cultural heritage and reaffirm its human rights in an alien society. In the meantime, the new Indian movement was influenced by the success of the black power revolution. As a natural corollary, there seemed to be a need on the part of Anglos to ease a troubled conscience that had been kept in abeyance by the myths of the past. Whatever the reason,
there suddenly appeared a flowering of literature on the subject of native Americans that was enthusiastically supported by the reading public. Notable among these revisionist writers are Dee Brown, N. Scott Momaday, Theodora Kroeber, John Barth, and Carlos Castaneda, who have spoken with unprecedented candor in order to extol native American culture, namely, their history, the distinctiveness of their race, languages and their genius of contributions.

Dee Brown is one of the major literary champions of the American Indian, and his book, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, won instant acclaim. Described by Brown as "An Indian History of the American West," this book enables the reader "to see the poverty, the hopelessness, and the squalor of a modern Indian reservation and possibly understand the reasons why"(2, p. vii). The book exemplifies a contemporary attitude that is most favorable to the Indian. Its subject is the Indian wars of the West from 1860 to the Wounded Knee massacre of 1890; and its narrative is lucid and arranged in chronological order. Literary analysts like Ronald Sanders view the book as America's attempt at self-flagellation. Sanders wrote that "It is clear that the general American public is interested in seeing something more . . . [done] to provide general popular introductions to the subject of the American Indians and their history"(10, p. 227). He credits Brown with giving the American reading public such a book. Indeed, after having read Brown's book, one is better equipped to understand just what it is that nags at
Covering a span of thirty years, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* describes the conditions under which the West was won and the culture of the Indians was lost. Brown's thesis suggests that there was nothing the Indians could do, short of suicide, that would have appeased white Americans or checked their relentless and systematic destruction of Indian life. Indeed, the tribes could neither avoid nor evade their oppressors. According to Brown, no treaty was binding to the whites, no official word was good, nor was any arrangement ever made for the benefit of the Indian. He identifies General William T. Sherman as one who "gave them war and hell" (2, p. 346), and General Philip Sheridan as the one who not only thought but said, "The only good Indians I ever saw were dead" (2, p. 166).

The author compiled his book from council records, occasional autobiographies, first-person accounts, and other sources that reflected the Indian point of view.

Brown documents a pattern of manipulation and intrigue on the part of the whites that persisted throughout the thirty years. For example, the federal government made land agreements that seemingly meant nothing to Washington, and in some ways were obscure to the Indians: "One does not sell the earth," complained Crazy Horse (2, p. 267). Meanwhile, treaties clearly warned that whites were not allowed on Indian treaty land without the consent of the tribes, but representatives of the railroad, miners, speculators interested in timber and minerals,
and land-hungry Anglos in general disregarded the rights of Indians. Finally, the pressure from all the killing, coercion, imprisonment and chicanery mounted in Washington until such time that another treaty was signed which relocated the tribes. These and other dealings like them provoked violent and bloody reprisal from the Indians, which in turn was put down in an equally savage manner.

Brown suggests that most whites of the nineteenth century felt that the Indians had neither a culture, a language, a religion, nor a tradition worth preserving. This attitude was further reflected by the irony of Indian policy that was made in Washington, or at least the policy that was implemented in the West. For example, the Comanches of Texas had a long and cherished history built around an agricultural economy, but when land-hungry Texans moved in, the military drove the Comanches north, where they were told to learn buffalo hunting. Ironically, when politicians wanted the lands of these same Comanches, they spent considerable time and energy lecturing them on the virtues of emulating the whites, i.e., by becoming farmers. The self-serving piety of politicians, missionaries and do-gooders is further illustrated in the following statement by Senator John Logan, who was addressing a group of Indians:

You are on an Indian reservation merely at the sufferance of the government. You are fed by the government, clothed by the government, and all you have and are today is because of the government. . . . The government desires to teach you to become farmers, and to civilize you, and make you as white men(2, p. 400).
Brown points out the ludicrousness of this statement and further suggests that it represents the kind of attitude that persisted during much of the nineteenth century.

Another example of the white man's refusal to recognize the Indian as a human being can be seen in the following edict by the Governor of Colorado, Frederick W. Pitkin. The year was 1879:

Unless removed by the government, they [the Utes] must necessarily be exterminated. . . . The state would be willing to settle the Indian trouble at its own expense. The advantages that would accrue from the throwing open of 12,000,000 acres of land to miners and settlers would more than compensate all the expenses incurred(2, p. 366).

Now after almost one hundred years the American public finally may be able to assess governmental action and policy from a less prejudiced point of view and acknowledge Indian identity from a more enlightened knowledge of history. In a way, Brown's book speaks for all of those Indians of the nineteenth century who wanted to retain their own tribal ways free from outside interference.

N. Scott Momaday, a Kiowa, is probably the most notable Indian novelist of our time. His book, House Made of Dawn, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969. It portrays the life of a young Pueblo Indian who attempts to reenter the culture of his people after having been acculturated into the white man's way of life via the military. Indeed, it is the story of a young Indian caught up in two worlds, that of the reservation and that of America at large, and he is left bewildered and embittered by
the disjuncture that this cultural dichotomy has caused in his life. Returning to his Indian home, Abel, the main character, becomes our tortured guide as we see his Indian world of "pollen and rain," "houses made of dawn," "feasts and rituals to placate the gods," "orchards and patches of melons and grapes and squash," and a world of "wonder and exhilarating vastness of wantlessness" (7, pp. 134-135). Characteristically, the old grandfather symbolizes the long and static continuity of tribal tradition which ultimately is destroyed, whereas Abel symbolizes the forces of change. Abel eventually suffers from cultural shock and runs afoul of Anglo jurisprudence, which has no laws covering Pueblo ethics, and is paroled to a Los Angeles relocation center where, for a time, he tries to cope with the new environment. He consoles himself with sex, drugs, and alcohol, and tries to emulate his Navajo roommate, who has, by and large, accepted city life and treadmill jobs. Eventually, Abel feels contempt and is almost beaten to death by a sadistic "cop," but, in the end, he is permitted to go home in time to carry on tribal tradition for his dying grandfather.

Marshall Sprague sees Momaday as a singular force in cultivating an awareness of the "mysteries of cultures different from our own" (11, p. 5) in the reading public. We also become aware of Indian attitudes as a feeling of despair is expressed in the following lines: "They [Indians] had been an easy mark for marauding bands of buffalo hunters and thieves. They had endured every kind of persecution until one day they could stand
no more and their spirit broke" (7, p. 18). The agony of that broken spirit is further delineated in the following excerpt:

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. ... 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 he was too dumb to be civilized (7, p. 135).

Momaday's main concern here is a kind of disturbing ambivalence emerging in the Indian as he assesses the conflicting cultures of the army and the reservation.

The broken spirit theme, which is the product of acculturation efforts by the whites, is again portrayed by Momaday in The Way to Rainy Mountain. Using old tribal legends along with the experiences and memories of his grandmother, augmented by his own experiences among present-day Kiowa, Momaday recreates the great migration of the tribe from what is now Montana to the Southern Plains. His people progress from a weak and ineffectual group into masters of the plains, becoming hunters, raiders and warriors. They kill the buffalo only for sustenance and use, suggesting that it is not likely that anything the Indians could have done in the last centuries would have left the natural resources in the condition they are in today. The Indian-white relationship similarly diminished the Indians to the point that the Kiowa lost their reason for being.

Momaday does not write with bitterness, although he is Indian by birth. He does, however, seem to convey the prevailing societal belief that almost demands a new image and a square
deal for the Indian. Indeed, Momaday is calling out for knowledge and understanding as he speaks of humiliation suffered by the Indians, and the forces that caused them to pillage for survival. For example, the United States Cavalry pursued the Kiowa tribe until they were forced to "abandon their crucial stores to pillage and had nothing then but their lives" (8, p. 6). Additionally, no reader can help but see the unforgettable travesty of the last buffalo hunt as two old Indian men on work horses chase a dispirited captive buffalo acquired for the occasion (passim, 8, p. 55). His object in this event is to demonstrate how white men castrated the Indian in the past, but Momaday couches it in a satirical framework. The vitality of this book suggests that the emerging Indian literary sensibility may yet find its genius in something other than the traditional fictional forms.

Less popular than House Made of Dawn, but nevertheless important, The Sot-Weed Factor, by John Barth, represents the best example of revised attitudes during the sixties and seventies. Barth has taken the old Pocahontas story and given it a new slant. For example, Captain John Smith is depicted as the exploiter and Pocahontas as the virgin upon whom he preys. Leslie Fiedler refers to the book as a "myth-busting novel" which is purported "to relate what really happened between Pocahontas and Captain John Smith" (3, p. 150). Barth has created a counter-parable or antistereotype of the Pocahontas-Smith relationship. Smith is portrayed as a collector of pornographic art
illustrating scenes like "Ladies and Gentlemen, mother-naked, partaking of sundrie amorosites one with another"(1, p. 165). On the other hand, Smith is the person who saves the "womanhood" of the Indian princess. Pocahontas suffered from a physical condition that prevented coitus in her puberty rite, but Smith, armed with a secret aphrodisiac formula, succeeds in "deflowering" her. According to Burlingame, one of Smith's crew, "Straight leapt my Captain to his work . . . [and] did what none had done before! . . . He [the emperor] declar'd my Captain victorious, [and] rescinded the decree of death hanging over us"(1, p. 783). Thus the Smith of Barth's novel saves his own life.

The Smith-Pocahontas relationship is not one of compassion or pity, as writers of the eighteenth century would have us believe, but rather, according to Barth, one of sexual assault. Leslie Fiedler sees the incident as "a sexual encounter so mechanical, so bestial, that it seems an assault rather than an act of love--and, therefore, a truer metaphor of our actual relations with the Indians than the pretty story so long celebrated in sentimental verse"(3, p. 152). Fiedler's interpretation fits well in the mainstream of revised societal attitudes emerging today.

Similarly recognized for their revised attitudes and lessons are Carlos Castaneda's, The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Life (1968), A Separate Reality: Further Teachings of Don Juan (1971), and Journey to Ixtlan: The Lessons of Don
Juan (1972). Within the span of four years, society is represented by Castaneda as progressing toward a greater understanding and acceptance of the Indian's culture.

Elsewhere, Little Big Man, by Thomas Berger, Nobody Loves a Drunken Indian, by Clair Huffaker and Chant of the Hawk, by John and Margaret Harris, are but a few of the many fictional books depicting revised attitudes toward the Indian way of life and their battle against white acculturation. In a similar vein, Thomas Sanchez offers a 1973 version of the acculturation crisis in Rabbit Boss, a novel that deals with future values that emerge through the "rebirth of the Indian's spirit" (3, p. ii). All of these contemporary novels have one thing in common: society's acknowledgement of the right of the Indian to his own tribal identity and to the right to be heard.

Several less recognized books published in the last decade serve to further illustrate the inner reaches of the native American character as well as revised contemporary societal attitudes. They contain a wide selection of poetry, speeches of protest, revised interpretations of old stories and laments for the past treatment and current condition of the Indians.

A prime example of the new awareness and respect for native Americans, particularly in prose, can be seen in Touch the Earth, compiled by T. C. McLuhan. Her book is a collection of original Indian poems and statements, which shows both personal and tribal honor and casts the loss of honor as the main cause of Indian downfall from the beginning. The whites, on the
other hand, are the direct cause of Indian impoverishment. For example, "Much of their present economy is based upon reaction and adjustment to racism. . . . Recent events . . . indicate a possible disturbance of this equilibrium" (6, p. 173). Furthermore, in contemporary literature, the Anglo author consistently accepts full responsibility for the Indian's present economic condition, which is another indication that attitudes are being revised.

Indian poetry has a special kind of reality, as illustrated by Jerome Rothenberg, who edited *Shaking the Pumpkin*. He states in his introduction that "each moment is charged: each is at a point at which meaning is coming to the surface, where nothing's incidental but everything matters terribly" (9, p. iii). The notion of relativity and importance of everything can also be seen in Robert Frost's "The Vanishing Red," in which he illustrates the past insensitivity of the white man toward the Indian. He reminds us that we ". . . can't get back and see it as he saw it" (4, p. 92), which connotes the changed attitude prevailing today. The emerging wealth of revisionist poetry reflecting white societal attitudes toward the native American will no doubt be viewed in the future as a kind of watershed for both races--liberation for the Indian and enlightenment for the white.

Another trend of the late sixties and early seventies is the appearance of biographical work couched in the framework of a novel. One of the leading writers of this kind of litera-
tured to be Theodora Kroeber, who based her tale on anthropological material furnished by her husband, the eminent Alfred L. Kroeber. It was embellished by her imagination in order to make it more readable. The story of Ishi as portrayed by Ms. Kroeber in *Ishi in Two Worlds* delineates the conflicts in the Indian as he tries to reconcile his own spiritual values with those of the Anglo materialistic world. She purports to cast Ishi as "the last wild Indian in North America" (5, p. i) and follows his life from an attempt at white acculturation to his return to his native wilderness. If the plot sounds familiar, the conclusion is at least symbolic of a newer scientifically-oriented society. For example, Ishi becomes a ward of an anthropology department, lives in a museum, and ultimately becomes a scout to guide an archaeological expedition back into his home territory. In the wilderness, he demonstrates how he had once lived, but his subsequent death and the dispute over the "preservation of his brain for scientific observation" (5, p. 235) serve to modernize the tragic concept that the native is an object for the scientific world to study, at least in the views of some anthropologists. The author's central theme of apology reminds us of the mistreatment of the Indians, first at the hands of trigger-happy pioneers and then at the hands of data-hungry scientists. Sanders points out that Ishi's great humanity grows throughout the story and that he "will find his rightful place in American consciousness" (10, p. 236).

Vine Deloria, Jr., a Standing Rock Sioux, fits comfortably
in the revisionist school of writers. Outraged over the past
treatment of his people, he has written two nonfiction books
that chronicle the instances of injustice in Anglo-Indian re-
lations. His most celebrated book, *Custer Died for Your Sins*,
(1969), traces in shocking detail all of the white intrigues,
removals, and killings that persisted to the twentieth century.
And where the Indians survived during the nineteenth century,
federal administrators and missionaries destroyed their culture
and manhood. A year later, Deloria wrote *We Talk, You Listen*
in which he offers a formula designed to make his people finan-
cially independent and free to return to their tribal way of
life with its communal center and security—the sense of be-
longing and the sense of identity that come from membership in
a tribe.

The modern image of the native American, therefore, has
experienced considerable change as it has moved from the notions
of the ethnocentric acculturationists to the wisdom of the re-
visionists of today, and this change has affirmed a new and
fresh belief in the need for cultural pluralism.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research has been to note the different attitudes toward American Indians expressed in the fictional works of selected major American authors who were representative of the thinking of their time, and to explore the relationship between their attitudes and those of society. There exists a close correlation between these two sets of attitudes, and the method used to validate this hypothesis has been to read selected books, chosen for their popular appeal as best sellers, and to compare the attitudes found in fiction with those in nonfiction of the same era.

Literature was used for this study mainly because it is the oldest discipline that has the most extensive treatment on the subject of native Americans. Thus age alone makes literature, and fiction in particular, a significant source for collecting samples of cultural norms of the people during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This paper has demonstrated that Anglo-American attitudes toward the native American changed radically from colonial times to the present, and that change was, in no small measure, influenced by the location and availability of land. Indeed, until recent times, the worth of a man was measured by the
amount and location of land that he held, and, if we put credence in the hypothesis advanced by Professor Frederick Jackson Turner, the development of the frontier land even civilized and democratized man. The Indian by contrast had no concept of private ownership in land. He practiced communal ownership, which theoretically meant that land could not be sold for private use: a custom which the frontiersman did not understand. But the frontiersman knew what he needed in order to be somebody, and rushed forward to seize land that had been opened to settlement by false treaties; and in spite of the intrigue, the frontier-farmer carried with him the unshakable belief that God was on his side. And when the free land was gone and the last frontier was officially closed in 1890, the hostility of the Anglo-American society toward the Indian began to diminish, but still there were Anglos who wanted even the reservations opened to settlement. This is the crux of many of the problems of native Americans today. That is to say, they are trying desperately to keep their reservation land in one piece in the face of Anglo leases and mining operations.

If we keep the above motivation in mind, we can begin to see why the Anglo-Americans armed themselves with the ethnocentric belief that their culture by comparison was superior; and the colonial and nineteenth-century solutions at which they arrived seemed inevitable. The Satanic savages, whose presence and culture stood in the way of "progress," would have to be driven out or be exterminated.
According to most literary scholars, Captain John Smith created the first Indian image in print and thereby furnished the nucleus from which writers have fashioned tales, poetry, and drama for three hundred years. These literary works, having been adapted to the prevailing attitudes of each successive era, have left us with a myriad of Indian images.

Smith depicted the Indian as a savage who was a brutal agent of Satan. In a similar vein, the ethnocentrically-oriented Anglo society at this time viewed the native American as uncivilized and anti-Christian; God, therefore, would condone any action used to suppress him. In the works of Freneau and Brown, the Indian continued to be characterized as a brutal savage who was totally uncivilized. An impulse toward captivity narratives also flourished during this Satanic period and reflected the same prejudiced anti-Indian attitude.

The strong surge of ethnocentrism among the "Conquerors" can be explained in part by looking at their class structure. For example, the notion of a distinctive class structure was transported to the new world by European immigrants and persisted until the time of the American Revolution. Controlled by persons of title and property, this medieval stratification of society closed its doors to native Americans. Indeed, they were not even accepted onto the lowest rungs of the social ladder where the indentured and permanent slaves rested uneasily. At least the slaves, it was felt, represented and even produced a form of wealth. Thus when viewed from the high reaches of the
worlds of titles and property, the property-less Indian was seen as hardly human.

Christianity added another dimension of dehumanization to the native Americans. Puritan ministers like Cotton Mather and in subsequent years Christian missionaries in general inadvertently planted the seeds of hate among Anglo settlers by describing the polytheistic religions of the Indians as pagan and without significant moral lessons.

A dramatic change occurred during the first four decades of the nineteenth century. As the West opened up in the wake of the Louisiana Purchase and the War of 1812, Anglo-American society developed a new interest in Indians. This new and romantic image of America's first inhabitants cast them as more noble and less hostile, and was particularly prominent in the works of Cooper, Simms, and Longfellow. The American native could still be cruel; but, through a budding sense of cultural relativism, society rationalized such behavior as idealized savagery. Still far from being accepted as an individual, the Indian, nevertheless, was aided by laws passed by Anglo legislatures. An exception to the "Romantics" could be found on the cutting edge of the frontier where the military forces were reminded by history that the Indians, by and large, had fought on the side of the British in the American Revolution and in the War of 1812.

A new plan for peaceful acculturation was put into motion during the Grant Administration, when the President announced
his Peace Policy, but in application on the distant frontier the spirit of this policy was consistently distorted and turned into enforced acculturation by both federal and state officials. For example, in 1877 the forces of aggressive acculturation were successful in removing the Nez Perce tribe to Indian Territory, where the native Americans would be forced to learn farming and Anglo ways of life. Similar ill-advised acts of enforced acculturation led to recurring violence and war that persisted until the battle of Wounded Knee. Peaceful acculturation, it was felt, took a giant step toward fulfillment in 1887 when the Dawes Severalty Act, sometimes known as the "Allotment Act," was passed in Congress, but it virtually destroyed tribal ways by dividing up reservation lands to individual Indians. Finally, the crowning act of peaceful acculturation was announced in 1924 with the enactment of a law that provided for citizenship for all native Americans. In addition to these instances of acculturation, the federal government attempted acculturation through education of the young, medical aid programs, agricultural training programs, and federally appointed Indian agents.

Exceptions to the acculturation movement of the post-Civil War period might be seen in the federal Indian act passed in 1803, which appropriated $3,000 to civilize and educate Indians; and in the passage of the "civilization fund" in 1819, designed to provide an annual appropriation of $10,000 to civilize and educate native Americans. Similar legislation was passed by
Congress in 1834 under the name of the Reorganization Act. This last piece of legislation permitted the Army to quarantine Indians for a period of thirty years so that they might assimilate enough civilization in order to take their place "in the mainstream of American life." These were indeed preliminary attempts at acculturation, but their impact was too feeble to be considered with the post-Civil War movement. For example, the funds appropriated before and during the "civilization fund" were too meager to make a significant difference, and the Reorganization Act of 1834 failed because some Indians were not by custom farmers and because most Indians were quarantined on land that was too poor to farm. Perhaps even more important was the fact that native Americans preferred their own tribal customs and folkways to those of Anglo-Americans.

Enforced acculturation frequently caused cultural shock among Indians. Although the Anglo missionaries and teachers were sincere in their desires to help native Americans, their programs often led the Indians to a state of anomie in which Indian religion and culture were seriously weakened. When the Indians did not follow Anglo social customs, religious dogma, economic patterns, and academic endeavors, a prejudiced Anglo society regarded them as uncivilized. Even after forcing them to attend Anglo schools for long periods of time, society had difficulty understanding why the native Americans still preferred to return to their own people and cultural norms. Helen Hunt Jackson, Oliver LaFarge, and Dama Margaret Smith spoke out
with the clearest voices in opposition to the deadening effects of enforced acculturation.

The last two decades, that is to say the fifties and sixties, have witnessed the emergence of what many consider to be a long-neglected striving for the civil and tribal rights of the Indian. The native Americans have banded together on regional and national levels to make their goals known and to try to win the understanding and support of a majority of the Anglo-Americans. Many of the politically active Indians are seeking more progress in cultural pluralism in which the federal government will allow Indian tribes to secure their reservation lands and resources and will recognize treaty and historic obligations, and states will protect the civil rights of native Americans as a matter of human decency. They also seek economic development to raise the general level of Indian life, as well as respect for native American cultural and social distinctiveness. They believe that the twentieth century Indian is the product of Anglo exploitation, enforced acculturation, and perennial misunderstanding, which, it might be added, is the main theme of fictional literature of the present era.

N. Scott Momaday, Dee Brown, Thomas Sanchez, and T. C. McLuhan are but a few of the fictional authors mirroring contemporary revisionist attitudes. Furthermore, it would seem that the time is right when writers who defend Indians are recognized and respected in the literary world and in society. And indeed they are. For example, LaFarge's *Laughing Boy* and
Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* both won Pulitzer Prizes, and more books in defense of native Americans have made the "best-seller" list in the last twenty years than in the previous one hundred. In fact, according to the *New York Times* best-seller list, Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* was in the top ten for fifty-seven weeks consecutively.

Brown's book is merely one of many in a substantial Indian literary revival that has been taking place in recent years, and, if its acceptance by the reading public is a measure of concern, then more people than ever are interested in seeing human rights prevail over political and economic expediency.

Thus we see that from the beginning of American literature until recent times, the Indian was shown not so much as he was in reality, but as he was in the minds of Anglo conquerors and society in general. They read into him the character and traits they wished to find, that is, the character and traits that most suited them in their dealings with the native American. It was much easier to justify the exploitation and extermination of a "heathen" or "pagan redskin." If the Puritan settlers and writers had been more reasonable and tolerant, it is possible that the United States might not have been so cruelly built upon the bones of the native Americans. Needless to say, the content of the literature of any period must be looked at with cultural relativism in mind; that is, the culture, or the literature that portrays it, must be measured in the context of the time that
produced it. A better understanding of Indian conditions today can best be gleaned from an overall study of attitudes found in the literature about Indians in general.

Since the racial problem is a major issue in the world today, students need an understanding outlook upon the whole racial problem and reasons for our attitudes and prejudices. This research has been limited to only a small portion of the issues surrounding the American Indian, but it has demonstrated the changing attitudes that have emerged from economic developments and philosophical growth, and has revealed the fact that people see problems primarily in terms of the circumstances and values of their own times. And, perhaps more significantly, that notable writers merely interpret the beliefs of their own time. Thus there is a close correlation between the beliefs of society toward a given ethnic group and the attitudes that writers of the same era advance toward that minority. It is believed that the data assembled in this paper clings firmly together to validate the above hypothesis or conceptualization.

No paper of this scope is possible without incurring certain limitations of a subjective nature. That is, the content analysis of data and conclusions in this paper represent the interpretations of the researcher, and it is recognized that another person might draw slightly different conclusions, than the exceptions already cited, from the data.
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