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Indian agencies: Native poetics of resistance in a bureaucratic landscape

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INDIAN AGENCIES: NATIVE POETICS OF RESISTANCE IN A BUREAUCRATIC LANDSCAPE

by

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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To my grandmothers,
whose presence and stories have guided the course and flow of my life
in their own ways. I know not for which sea I head.
GV.

Writing engenders in us certain attitudes toward language. It encourages us to take words for granted. Writing has enabled us to store vast quantities of words indefinitely. This is advantageous on the one hand but dangerous on the other. The result is that we have developed a kind of false security where language is concerned, and our sensitivity to language has deteriorated. And we have become in proportion insensitive to silence.

N. Scott Momaday
The Man Made of Words

From the government's point of view, the only way you can tell an Indian is an Indian is to look at that person's history. There must be ancestors from way back who signed some document or were recorded as Indians by the U.S. government… In other words, being an Indian is in some ways a tangle of red tape.

Louise Erdrich
The Round House

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation offers a transdisciplinary exploration of the relationship between settler-colonial bureaucracy and Native artistic production. Employing methodologies from literary, media and rhetorical studies, public health and organizational studies, I argue that the settler compulsion to manage Native people, formalized in the bureaucratic model, precipitated the twentieth-century development of a Native poetics of resistance. A managerial presence has always permeated U.S.–Native relations, as bureaucrats regulated Native activity, maintained records, instructed in Anglo-Western values and habits, and reported on Native progress toward assimilation. Bureaucratic parlance contained a crucial contradiction: the "Indian agency" and "Indian agent" originated at the start of—and for the purpose of—the erosion of Indigenous agency. I investigate how authors exploit these as tropes in deconstructing Native administrative subjectivity. Two faces of this presence emerge: the *agent*, instrument of surveillance and managerial practice; and the *agency*, management's projection in space, creating a bureaucratic landscape that impairs Native health. Within all representations of bureaucracy linger traces of the *unmanageable*, an Indigenous fugitive presence that eludes classification, regulation, and narratives of control. I analyze these tropes in four realms of settler-bureaucratic practice, where a transmedia poetics develops within the field of Native arts that engage with administrative systems and discourses. I begin with expressions of therapeutic insobriety that defy Anglo-Western models of addiction and treatment; in chapter two, I delineate a wiindigoo poetics that critiques the management of Native foodways. A poetics of truancy surfaces in chapter three to express a dynamic of escape from representational closure by settler education. I argue finally that, in stories of sexual violence against Native women, there arises a poetics that privileges experiences of violence over legalist records that efface those experiences.

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

During the twentieth century, Native and First Nations writers and artists working across several media developed aesthetic strategies for critiquing U.S. and Canadian bureaucracy and their effects on Native life. Bureaucratic institutions compulsively managed Native people by way surveillance and management practices designed to instruct in Anglo-Western values and habits and report on Native progress toward assimilation. I argue that administrative language captured an important contradiction: the "Indian agency" and "Indian agent" originated for the purpose of limiting the self-determination of Native people. I investigate how authors use these two figures in stories of bureaucracy: the *agent*, who performs surveillance and management; and the *agency*, management's manifestation in space, creating a bureaucratic landscape that impairs Native health. Within all representations of bureaucracy linger traces of the *unmanageable*, a fugitive presence that eludes classification, regulation, and narratives of control. I analyze these figures as they appear in Native arts that engage with four areas of administrative practice and discourse. I begin by considering stories of Native insobriety that defy Anglo-Western models of addiction and treatment; in chapter two, I examine stories that critique the U.S. and Canadian management of Native food cultures. In chapter three, I illustrate how stories express a dynamic of escape from the narratives of federal Indian boarding schools. I argue finally that, in stories of sexual violence against Native women, authors privilege experiences of violence over legalist definitions that erase those experiences. My project aims to situate these within a larger field of Native advocacy strategies.

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INTRODUCTION: NATIVE POETICS AND THE SETTLER-BUREAUCRATIC APPARATUS

> She hated Chato, not because he let the policeman and doctors put the screaming children in the government car, but because he had taught her to sign her name. Because it was like the old ones always told her about learning their language or any of their ways: it endangered you.
>
> —Leslie Marmon Silko, from "Lullaby" in *Storyteller* (1981)

> Dear Mister Master
> Under precisely what conditions
> can I get you to tell me the truth?
>
> —Gordon Henry, Jr., from "Letter to the Agency Superintendent" (2007)

Native writers have long battled U.S. bureaucracy as spiritual leaders, political activists, and journalists—even from within as bureaucrats themselves. While Sarah Winnemucca's 1883 *Life Among the Paiutes* stands out as an early critique in story form, only in the twentieth century did literary artists begin to interrogate how bureaucracy's underlying language, ideology, and structure disrupt Native life. N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1968) became a catalytic text upon publication and sparked a new critical interest in Native literatures; it also precipitated a tide of literary explorations of Native subjectivity within the U.S. bureaucratic system. A constitutive positionality frames this experience, marking Eurowestern modernity's basic misinterpretation of Native people,[1] as the institutions of settler-colonial bureaucracy mistook their effects on Native life for essential *Indian* identity.[2] Bureaucrats understood little of how their positionality deeply framed not only their view of the world but also the epistemic model by which they produced knowledge. Since the early twentieth century, Native authors have attended to these effects on Indigenous bodies and spaces, yet language has remained a unifying entry point. Abel, *House Made of Dawn*'s archetypal silent protagonist, finds himself "word by word … disposed of in language" in several bureaucratic contexts (102). Momaday uses similar language to describe the plight of Plenty Horses—a former student at Carlisle Indian School charged with murder—who would not speak at his trial, "as if he was not there. … He

was the center of a ritual, a sacrificial victim; the white man must dispose of him according to some design in the white man's universe" (*The Man Made of Words* 102). Such moments reveal a persistent concern for settler bureaucracy's "design" as it "disposes of" Native people. They signify a discursive response to rationalized language and procedure, which are among several methods of actualizing settler-colonial definitions of Natives. Many writers and filmmakers followed Momaday, telling stories of Native subjects confined and silenced by the hierarchical rules of bureaucratic language games.

In 1755 the British established an Indian Department to monitor Natives and regulate their interactions with white settlers. This would carry into the U.S. when the new Congress claimed "the exclusive right" to manage Native affairs.[3] After charting administrative districts, officials adopted familiar bureaucratic parlance: "agencies" became staffed by "superintendents" and "agents," who like their predecessors would regulate Native activities, instruct in Anglo-Western values and habits, maintain records, and report on Native progress toward assimilation. Early bureau argot thus embodied a crucial contradiction: the "Indian agency" and "Indian agent" originated at the start of—and for the purpose of—the erosion of Indigenous agency in North America. As time passed, new administrative positions were instituted and settler bureaucracy expanded, diffusing and therefore preserving the ability of offices at all levels to affect policy relative to their purviews. The U.S. Indian Office became the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1824, embodying the values of Eurowestern bureaucracy: instrumental rationality and procedural management provided an optics and a method, respectively, for optimizing social efficiency. Administration relies on subordination, and in the colonial world this principle grew from an assumed "right to manage" non-white peoples.[4] Research has shown how management practices on ante-bellum plantations reinforced this right and shaped the

signature “managerial identity” of bureaucracy (Cooke 1911). Rather, this identity was forged in the fires of the “Indian Problem,” where the BIA formalized a relationship between settler official and Native ward. Like the naming of the “American Indian,” which came to exemplify imperial incompetence, the office of the Indian agent bears within it a paradox of meaning, ethics, and practice. This paradox grounds my project, for the storytellers featured here exploit agency and agent as tropes toward an indictment of settler bureaucracy as well as a narrative realignment of Native bureaucratic subjectivity.

The title of this project, *Indian Agencies: Native Poetics of Resistance in a Bureaucratic Landscape*, reflects an attempt to capture this contradiction. I chart a history of Native literature, cinema, and other arts alongside histories of Native interaction with (or against) settler agencies. Bureaucracy provided the core organizing model for Eurowestern modernity, infused with the Enlightenment values of rationality, scientific management, and social progress. As it naturalized colonial categories and discourses, settler bureaucracy emerged as one axis of contact between European and Native peoples. Joan Weibel-Orlando emphasizes that bureaucratization “as a governing and managerial form was [known in] practice among Native American tribal groups before contact” (98). But Indigenous managerial systems relied on contrasting values, and settler officials rarely consulted them. Native nations resisted the imposition of strict adherence to depersonalized rationality in the formation of the reservation system and its agencies.[5] It enacted an imperial relationship in which the Eurowest produced a vision of itself by recording and regulating the Native Other—a vision that would govern the broader U.S. surveillance state nearly two hundred years later. The only thing left to do was bring Natives under the jurisdiction of the bureau. By the mid-nineteenth century, the BIA had set down its accumulated hierarchies,

protocols, and policies in an official manual, marking a new textuality that would define the reasoning and behavior of its agents.

Situated on the border between an organizational model and a media network coordinated for the management of Indigenous people, settler bureaucracy institutionalizes a collection of discourses, narratives, and procedures under an administrative ideology. The early dynamics between the Bureau and Native peoples would pervade later agencies, such as the Indian Health Service (IHS). This relation would remain consistent throughout key federal policy shifts in the twentieth century. The "right to manage" expresses structurally and discursively: chapter one reveals how reformers, politicians, and bureaucrats alike perceived insobriety and intemperance in Native communities, leading them to regulate Native drinking habits and access to alcohol. Such invasive management also surfaced in Indian education policy, the subject of chapter three, even into the mid-twentieth century. Bureaucracy grounded the U.S. approach because its hyper-rational organizational model was thought to be instrumental in what Zygmunt Bauman calls "the civilizing process" of modernity (28-9). This became increasingly inconsistent in the late nineteenth century, where a "vanishing policy" designed to completely assimilate Native people on all fronts was in full force via a massive expansion of federal power that left settler agencies ubiquitous in Native life. Any move to civilize the Native—through temperance or education, for instance—would be actualized through bureaucratic practice. According to Cherokee historian Tom Holm, it became clear as the Progressive Era dawned that vanishing policy had "failed to amalgamate, acculturate, or even marginalize fully the Native American population" (xvii). Reforms were enacted in the early twentieth century, when a core progressive contradiction arose in settler bureaucracy: administrative optimization was always at odds with individual freedom and self-sufficiency, causing growing disagreement in the management of Native life. As the

central agency for supervising assimilation, the BIA bridges the gaps between these abstractions and individuals' lived experiences of urban and reservation bureaucracy.

This presents a second paradox. A hallmark of settler-bureaucratic practice emerges in purposely mediocre management as a way to justify the continued existence of agencies whose budgets grow exponentially with territories and tasks. Steve Nickeson explains that there are "visible" administrative structures and several "invisible" areas of structure: "The visible one is represented in the Bureau's mercurial organization manual and flow chart. These documents … can be misleading because they show little more than a thin, single dimension of an organization that does not always work according to its schematic design" (62). Rather, despite its structure, settler bureaucracy operates as "a mass of human beings bound by regulations, politics, loyalties, fears, ideals, and ambitions." (62-63). Through all of the legislative changes to the BIA—moving it from the War Department to the Department of the Interior, or creating new offices for specific concerns like education or health—the BIA has remained resistant to structural and discursive change. One of these problems can be located in the "true structure" of the BIA: "two centuries of policy structure and the power of all those who have a vested interest—professionally, personally, or ideologically—in maintaining the present system" (Nickeson 62). Maintaining the system often requires actions that contradict its emphasis on regularity and optimization. The stories explored here show how settler bureaucracy often *doesn't* effect the changes it intends. They help make the results of this failure visible.

A bureaucratic specter has haunted the discourses that comprise U.S.–Native relations from the start. It therefore pervades the legalist scenes in texts like *House Made of Dawn*. Settler bureaucracy denigrated Indigenous values and modes of organizing life and, in a mutually constitutive process, implanted this bias into the institutions from which it drew knowledge: law,

science, history, as well as the arts. Its language operates not reciprocally but one-directionally. It distributes interpretation as mere data, rather than recognizing that knowledge is best produced in conversation. With this mode of address, the bureau silences Native story practices and social paradigms. This dynamic of silence works on a number of levels through the following chapters: Anglo-Western conceptions of therapeutic expression and testimony, for instance, silence substance dependents just as they silence victims of violence, as shown in chapter four. Mining Native works for how they dismantle the language and procedural landscape of bureaucracy demands a transdisciplinary approach that engages critical debates in literary and media studies, critical health studies, organizational studies, and Indigenous studies. This helps to reassemble the body of Indigenous knowledge that has been dissected and compartmentalized by Anglo-Western institutions. This settler-colonial epistemic violence effects both real and imagined disappearances, together a historically significant process.

Native authors speak back against the bureau. As they remain entangled in expressive forms that signify their oppression, their voices exist inside and outside of bureaucracy. Artistic visions of administrative injustice surface to create a transmedia Native poetics. At a base level, representing bureaucracy allows authors to critique its values and discourses, but also to envision new narrative routes toward self-determination. Across four chapters and contexts, I delineate two faces of the bureaucratic presence that emerge in this relationship: the *agent* or bureaucrat, embodiment and instrument of managerial practice; and the *agency*, an administrative spatial projection, which accumulates in the formation of a bureaucratic landscape that in turn limits Native autonomy and well-being. These dynamics manifest across time in many forms. Indian agents and agencies populate early stories, as these figures handled most tasks in early settler-bureaucratic practice. They operate as administrative mechanisms relative to top-down textual

practices like compiling and mobilizing forms, records, and archives, which reinforce a settler power disparity. As bureaucracy expanded to fit a Progressive Era milieu, other faces surface in the polyvalent signs of agent and agency: school superintendents and Indian boarding schools, researchers and treatment programs for substance use, even investigative agents and the FBI. Authors unravel the procedures of bureaucratic silence by deploying these as narrative figures, exposing them as institutional actor and site for the conversion of Native into anonymous *Indian*. In the space between agent and agency emerge the technologies of management that effect this conversion. Whether written, printed, or digitally displayed, varied textual forms enable graphic capture and distillation of individual into stereotype. Media historian Lisa Gitelman argues that "bureaucracies don't so much employ documents as they are partly constructed by and out of them" (5). Administration legitimizes itself via classification and documentation. Qualitative and experiential Native data, then, defy settler bureaucracy and its capability as an epistemic model. Within all representations of it linger traces of the unmanageable, a fugitive Indigenous presence that eludes administrative structures, spaces, and discourses of confinement.

Much has been made of the early contact between written European cultures and the (primarily) oral cultures of the Americas, but organizational studies provides a fresh rubric for exploring this axis of settler violence. Eurowestern literacy undergirded the broad narrative of social progress, and in this sense writing was central to the genesis of the "right to manage" as well as managerial structure itself. Alexander Styhre claims that writing gave bureaucracy the ability "to store, share and reproduce information," enabling networks of official discourse that excludes others (40). As the written word proliferated, it lost meaning but gained power. Its use became a mark of difference between Eurowestern and Native societies, reverberating in present-day organizational paradigms. This reflects Michel de Certeau's idea of the "scriptural economy"

in the modern Eurowest, where a "vast program" of reproducible documents accumulated legitimacy as they accumulated in number (132). In *House Made of Dawn*, Rescue Mission worker and self-styled "Priest of the Sun" Tosamah preaches on the subject:

> "In the white man's world, language, too—and the way in which the white man thinks of it—has undergone a process of change. The white man takes such things as words and literatures for granted, as indeed he must, for nothing in his world is so commonplace. On every side of him there are words by the millions, an unending succession of pamphlets and papers, letters and books, bills and bulletins, commentaries and conversations." (95)

Somewhere in this shift "[b]ureaucracy silences language," according to Ralph Hummel, by determining what counts as speech. The bureau "is at war with language. Its aim is to silence speech by making language inaccessible" (132). It uses rhetorical forms framed and legitimated by bureaucratic authority in order to control the definitions of information—to be used as evidence within a given rationalized context. The textual genres that circulate in these contexts constitute organic but highly regulated topographies of language, as they may be understood as "ongoing and changeable practices of expression and reception that are recognizable in myriad and variable constituent instances at once and also across time. They are specific and dynamic, socially realized sites and segments of coherence within the discursive field" (Gitelman 2). The system exerts yet more control by limiting discursive access. Here, I explore four contexts relative to bureaucratic language. While critics from Max Weber to Peter Berger and beyond have articulated how bureaucracy distorts social relations with instrumental rationality and procedure, few consider this effect with regard to Native communities. This presents a special problem, as the legitimacy of settler institutions is always suspect and violent. A hierarchical model of communication assures that nobody speaks against the regulations.

Bureaucratic discourse constitutes the instrument by which settler biopower deafens us to Native voices, functioning even more insidiously in written form. Its rules and procedures make

good earplugs. Hummel notes that "[i]f you want something from bureaucracy, …you've got to say it on their terms. Write a letter, fill out a form" (138). The system confuses the structural import of a text for the legitimacy of the information it contains. All the same, such documents function as "epistemic objects; they are the recognizable sites and subjects of interpretation…, evidential structures in the long human history of clues" (Gitelman 1). The bureau thus limits the questions we may ask of it. The opening lines to Gordon Henry's poem, "Letter to the Agency Superintendent" (2007), mark this unique problem: "Dear Mister Master / Under precisely what conditions / can I get you to tell me the truth?" (70). Settler-bureaucratic contexts and institutions rely subaltern silence, too, akin to Jean-Francois Lyotard's concept of the "unspeakable," where the silenced "victim" cannot testify to her experience because she has been effaced—in body or in discourse, as through bureaucratic language games. This effect automatically redacts subaltern stories from the administrative record. The many Native characters who refuse to testify because they will not be heard resonates also with Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor's exploration of how Natives are representationally erased in the narratization of Eurowestern modernity, a state that Native people may acquiesce to in what he calls "victimry." Rather, some make visible the Native victim: if not missing, then struck dumb by institutional language games yet punished for her silence. Relative to substance (ab)use treatment, education, and violent crime in particular, I analyze resistances to how settler bureaucracy silences Native testimony via what Vizenor calls "terminal creeds," the closed narratives that impose cultural simulations of the "Indian" (*Fugitive* 146)—games of language, image, and story that victimize Natives.

Much of this silence actualizes as social programming through textual forms constitutive of agency practice. In "Letter to the Agency Superintendent," Henry renders in poetry a missive written from a resident to the manager of a reservation, mocking the Eurowestern obsession with

literacy. Following its opening lines, a litany forms in the writer's repetition of "You give me / a book" after each inquiry into the agent's values and beliefs:

> …
> I ask about your creator
> You give me
> a book
> I ask about your leaders
> You give me
> a book
> I ask about your
> people, the old ones
> the sick, your women
> your children
> You give me
> a book.
> The days go on.
> I come to the agency.
> You send me away
> … (70)

Here, books oddly divide "civilization" (via literacy) from what is civilized: stories about one's people; caring for the sick, dying and young; even basic subsistence. The poem ends with an implication that the Native writer will burn the books for warmth, for the agency has done nothing to aid the community's survival except provide alphabetic kindling: "I have a house full of / books now / It's getting colder / Food is scarce. / I'm looking for ways / to make fire" (71). The agent becomes a figure of irrational management; the book, a powerfully symbolic yet ineffectual artifact relative to day-to-day subsistence. Literary texts like these illustrate how administrative positions become entangled with particular textual forms: schoolmaster or matron may appear with a roll book or textbook; a judge or FBI agent with a case file; or an "Indian agent" with his records and reports, as in James Welch's *Fools Crow* or Stephen Graham Jones' *Ledfeather*, where a nineteenth-century agent to the Blackfeet only appears though epistolary passages—his own typewritten letters. Agents may even appear as well-meaning social workers

or physicians, like Milly and her unquestioning belief in psychological exams in *House Made of Dawn*. These signify the deaf ear and hand of bureaucracy.

The historical presence of settler management surfaces in texts as diverse as rulebooks, treaties, census records, letters, invoices, requisitions, museum tags, and the bureau archives that collate much of this data. The textual instruments of bureaucracy emerge within self-legitimizing supervisory practices, where, as media scholar Friedrich Kittler claims, writing "stores the fact of its authorization" (5). Such documents figure prominently in Native stories: agents appear as both masters of writing and as addicts directed by a compulsion to record and catalogue Natives, even to their own detriment. They become what Weber called "automata of the paragraphs," slaves to written procedure (1395). Agents serve "civilization" as its pen-carrying gatekeepers. This paradigm moves seamlessly across broader sociotechnical shifts in writing and recording technologies, from the typewriter (which makes an early 1880s appearance in *Ledfeather*) and photography (which features prominently in several texts explored here) to film, video, and the Internet. Bureaucracy subsumes each technological development, making analogous internal shifts in communicative and organizational form. By the 1950s, Abel must fill out form after form for agents managing his mind, body, and daily life—lawyers, psychologists, and social workers. Yet they play a more complicated part than mere antagonist, marking their position as middle management. Their texts constitute an archive that "captures" Abel, who must answer their inquiries in the process, securing his complicity. Conflicts between Native individuals and communities and the administrative mechanisms that constrain them provide the narrative engine for a body of Native literatures of bureaucracy.

Information storage relies on an internal contradiction: just as nostalgia requires amnesia, archives require redaction. The written, printed, and digital artifacts that constitute the archive

signify eternal, comprehensive documentation as well as the ephemeral, bounded nature of texts; archives also take on this contradiction. Yet nowhere than in settler administration does Kittler's axiom (drawn from Foucault) express itself more fully: "all power emanates from and returns to archives" (5). Data collection and storage limits itself in form and classification, particularly regarding the relations of Eurowestern methods and Indigenous persons, communities, cultures, and epistemes. This contradiction is built into the language: as defined, redaction is "the working or drafting of source material into a distinct, esp. written, form," a definitive and authoritative account, an "abridged version" ("Redaction" def. 1)—in this, it also connotes erasure. Jacques Derrida notes that "*every* archive … is at once *constitutive* and *conservative*" (7): by compiling and editing material into a so-called official version, data is erased—names, etiologies, and so on. The diversity of events, people, and conditions of Native life are distilled into a singular explanation for prefigured disappearance. The agent perpetrates what Derrida calls "archival violence" as he acts out his bureaucratic compulsions (7). Relative to settler bureaucracy, this violence remains shaped by the devices of information capture.

Avoiding a strictly deterministic view, this project explores how bureaucratic order and textuality mutually inform settler processes of control. Bureaucratic ideologies of information and inscription have grounded settler-colonialism in the U.S., yet Michael Wutz's perspective also holds: he argues against a diffusion model in which technology hierarchically determines life, in favor of a view that recognizes how "media technologies themselves are never prior and autonomous but rather the expression of these confluent and divergent power relations that have contributed to their coming into being as well as their changing use" (6). Bureaucratic violence, then, activates at the nexus between power structures and the media technologies that emerge to facilitate their operation. A balanced conception of this settler-bureaucratic apparatus allows for

a clearer vision of the penetration of bureaucracy in Native life, while also highlighting acts of contestation and negotiation by Native storymakers. A subsequent fugitive from cultural and corporeal erasure writes her way into a new body of Native texts, where storiers deconstruct narratives of redaction.

The stories examined here engage with bureaucratic mediality via its textual forms and their assembly and circulation. These become a key marker of managerial identity, as both tool of the trade and fetish object. This work symbolizes the condensation of Native people into an exchangeable simulation of ethnicity. Even Milly, a rare example of a sympathetic bureaucrat, "believed in tests, questions and answers, words on paper" (*House Made of Dawn* 107). Other stories pivot on agency reports or missing tribal enrollment files, texts vital to disentangling the injustices they enable as mechanisms of bureaucratic conversion. This reaches back to the first texts bureaucracies relied upon: treaty agreements. Ojibwe scholar Scott Lyons explores the Native signature as a mediating symbol, the "x-mark," which operated as "a sign of consent in a context of coercion" (1)—that is, political mediation between Native nations and a monolithic Eurowestern bureaucracy and military force. This mediating trope surfaces in stories of treaty negotiations as well as contemporary contexts of consent or testimony, in which violence hinges on Native complicity: in "Lullaby," for example, government officials coerce a Native mother into signing her children away; the child narrator of *The Round House* must sign his testimony for the FBI. These early signatures differed from Anglo-Western signatures because they marked Native persons as illiterate, and they subsequently imposed sameness and anonymity—"Indian," not "Red Cloud"—as well as limited authorship and agency. This silence remains produced and broken through the Native signatory mark, as it has projected itself across contemporary federal Indian bureaucracy and its growing media arsenal. Buried within Lyons' analysis is the paradox

that the x-mark "signifies power and a lack of power, agency and a lack of agency" (2-3). The texts and stories examined here supersede written closure and provide a new route for Native agency beyond the controls of management.

Agent and agency feature in a contemporary Native poetics of resistance that does not run on simple oppositions. Native men and women took positions in the BIA as the twentieth century opened. A growing number of Native professionals became political advocates and bureaucrats and went on to birth numerous advocacy organizations, like the Society of American Indians in 1911, the National Council of American Indians in 1926, and the National Congress of American Indians in 1944. The SAI was the first successful intertribal organization that brought together both national and local community leaders on reservations. Historian Cathleen Cahill notes that some of these individuals, such as Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai-Apache), criticized Natives who worked from within the BIA. Montezuma twice turned down an appointment as commissioner of Indian affairs, believing that "while the problems faced by Native people were principally the fault of the government, Indian employees also deserved part of the blame" (104). Participation in U.S. bureaucracy certainly lent further legitimacy to a violent settler-colonial system. Yet many members of advocacy organizations like the SAI had experience working for the BIA—including Montezuma.[6] Still, Native bureaucrats and educators sought to effect change from within the BIA, like Ruth Muskrat Bronson; Ella Deloria, who wrote the ethnographic novel *Waterlily*; and Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Ša), author of *American Indian Stories* (1921). A sharp divide among advocates about the role Native people should play in the U.S. bureaucratic system makes the Native agent a fruitful figure for exploring the complexities of settler administration, particularly when these officials engaged in surveillance practices as law enforcement officials, judges, and even school employees. Their complicated positionality is difficult to track.

In our contemporary moment, as agencies rely on significant input from Native people who in turn exercise some agency in determining the course of administration, artists continue to express a concern for bureaucracy across all media. In July 2015, the Native Canadian electronic music group A Tribe Called Red (ATCR), whose "powwow step" dance music genre detonated in 2007 and has circulated via performances and viral Internet distribution since before their first album release in 2012, remixed and digitally released Cree recording artist Buffy Sainte-Marie's 2008 song, "Working for the Government." Their free song download immediately lit up Native cyberspace. Over a pounding ATCR beat, Sainte-Marie's vocals rise to mark the complicated identity of the Native bureaucrat. On the one hand, she sings of his strategic use of power—"He get you elected. / He take the heat y'all. / He know the plan, yeah."—yet she also sings of his anonymity and separation from the community: "He keep his mouth shut. / Nobody know him. / He G.I. Joe, yeah." Sainte-Marie speaks to how Native communities view the transformation that comes along with working for the agency. She underscores the problem by finally naming him "Mr. Invisible."

Within each of four contexts, I explore how settler administration projects subjectivities onto Native individuals via an interpellation shaped by settler-colonial forms of mediality. As a core concept in the Eurowestern theoretical tradition, *interpellation* has rarely been applied to Indigenous contexts. Linguists Gilmore and Smith cite numerous Native scholars to explain how Natives people are even now "oppressed by theory," including theoretical neglect; they "identify research and theory as significant sites of struggle between the interests and ways of knowing of the West, and the interests and ways of resisting of the 'other.'" (70). I thus remain sensitive to the critiques of Indigenous scholars and their negotiation of Eurowestern models, including the organizational, surveillance, and public health theories detailed in the following chapters, and the

ways that operable concepts like interpellation bridge these fissures. My intention is to open concepts previously used to explore only "modern" sociological contexts, where the perceived anachronism of Indigenous people and cultures contributes to neglect.

An analysis of the methods of settler-bureaucratic surveillance forms a core thread of this project. Oversight operates structurally as what Vizenor calls "ethnographic surveillance," which unites diverse practices in generating a commodified simulation of Native cultures (*Fugitive* 145-146, 156). Together, administrative technologies construct images of difference rather than truly collect information. The supervision of Native bodies reflects the ways that Natives were long ago designated the "institutional objects of knowledge and political power" (Vizenor, *Native* 124). Through managerial practice, agents generate identities of surveillant—superintendent, researcher, social worker, etc.—and the object of such observation. This separation remains operative in a range of contexts, resonating with Andrea Smith's assertion that "[t]he Western subject is a universal subject who determines itself without being determined by others," while the Native seeks self-determination through assimilation (209). As these chapters attest, settler surveillance is rooted in textual control, whereby the bureau regulates representation relative to legitimizing these aspects of bureaucratic practice.

I examine administrative surveillance as it emerges historically in tandem with health surveillance in a number of settler contexts. As it has expanded across the U.S. federal and state agencies involved in Native life, public health surveillance may be defined as the "systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of outcome-specific data essential to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health practice," according to researchers Robert Hahn and Donna Stroup (7). Settler surveillance converts data into readings of Native culture, behavior, and biology. Examining this process means deconstructing the ways that settler

bureaucracy talks back to itself through simulations of the *Indian*, who must be monitored and then addressed—treated (as in alcohol use), fed (as in subsistence), or educated (as in boarding schools). A uniform textual field emerges to reinforce each subjectivity through a "rhetoric of surveillance," where data collection generates new discourses of supervision (Vizenor, *Fugitive* 146). Here, redaction follows from the watchful eye of the agent-archivist. This follows media theorist John Johnston's exploration of postmodern U.S. literature relative to the organization of information in an era of data saturation, noting how "the forms of subjectivity produced by new regimes of information production, storage and communication" may be expanded into new realms of expression—including Native-created content (5). Derrida labels this compulsion "archive fever," which in the framework of this project may be understood as an image-making process that transforms Native into *Indian* and preserves her in what Vizenor calls the "archives of dominance," a power relation that occludes Indigenous knowledge and expression (*Fugitive* 145). This illuminates the counterintuitive entanglement of surveillance and redaction in the production of the archive. At its most pervasive, settler bureaucracy procedurally reconfigures categories of knowledge through the transmission and storage of texts (Danius 3). At its most insidious, as in gender-based violence, victimized women experience a secondary violence by being excluded from surveillance via several bureaucratic mechanisms, from the discursive to the jurisdictional to the fiscal.

These simulations and silences have justified bureaucratic expansion over Native peoples in all dimensions of life. In chapters one and two, I chart a history of bureaucratic expansion over Native eating and drinking habits since the nineteenth century. I examine how settler surveillance mobilized discourses of health, illness, and treatment in the process. Medical anthropologist Naomi Adelson claims that these "experiences and understandings of health and well-being are

always historically and culturally mediated" (3). Battling willfully blind quantitative approaches to human well-being, contemporary scholars now conceptualize health as "a constituted social reality, constructed through the medium of the body using the raw materials of social meaning and symbol" (Adelson 5). The Native body itself mediates settler-bureaucratic oversight. The exploitation of Native bodies and communities in surveillance practice, then, helps generate a settler-driven social world. Narratives of alternate health practice, like those expressed by authors like N. Scott Momaday, Louise Erdrich, and Stephen Graham Jones, become part of "a larger strategy of cultural assertion and resistance in dynamic balancing of power between the State, the disenfranchised group, and the individual" (Adelson 9). Native stories, which tend to view public health as a site of ideological conflict, inform decolonial strategies in a range of Native media that take aim at settler surveillance practices. These practices developed spatially, as the modern settler state claimed territorial sovereignty and an absolute right to surveillance within its expanding borders. Thomas Biolsi conceives of this totalized control as a "panoptical sovereignty" (240). Administration actualizes within this hegemonic sphere of observation and interpretation, between an array of health, education, and law enforcement officials, as well as the professionals in those social spheres.

Native storytellers adopt recalcitrant stances against the discursive mechanisms of settler surveillance. Often this means transgressing the bounds of procedure. A central tension between bureaucratic discursive power and Native media lies in the protocols for representation and who monitors whom. In the four realms of administration explored here, Native responses proliferate in the late twentieth century to assume distinct strategies of inverse surveillance or sousveillance, where authors and artists develop new ways of interpellating their hierarchical superiors. In these stories, writers "counter the surveillance and literature of dominance with their own simulations

of survivance" (Vizenor, *Manifest* 5). The expanding bureaucratic archive constitutes a meta-genre of the literatures of settler dominance, a hegemonic field that Native U.S. and Canadian literatures of bureaucracy position themselves within and against. Visionary simulations disrupt the closed images of Natives produced by settler bureaucracies.

Both administrative oversight and acts of inverse surveillance mobilize within a changing settler-bureaucratic landscape. Stretching across all chapters, I theorize an interrelation between the spatial and discursive constructs that constitute such a multi-dimensional landscape. Given its hyper-regulatory expressions, alternative geographies of movement that facilitate Native motion in body and language comprise one important axis of resistance. This element surfaces in each of four anti-bureaucratic poetics detailed here. While it becomes most visible relative to truancy and the federal Indian boarding school system, figures in each chapter find themselves contained in space and discourse by constructs deployed by bureaucratic power. A landscape of substance use and treatment, for example, regulates the movement of Native persons until they break free via disrupted definitions and acts of insobriety; whereas my final chapter explores how jurisdictional forces silence Native women by restricting their recourse to justice after violence. I expand on a framework of the settler-bureaucratic landscape's manifestation by way of agency reinscriptions and reorganizations of space toward the oversight of Native life. The contradiction of regulated motion and confinement inherent in these policies produces an aesthetic gesture toward escape. Native authors write back to these settler constructions of space, which produce a landscape of bureaucratic violence.

Rather than draw a line between recalcitrant or relinquishing texts, this project surveys the historical conventions of tribally-specific—yet simultaneously intertribal—negotiations of settler narratives. As settler administration is translocal, so too is the defiant positionality these

writers explore, in parallel with broader activist movements and political advocacy. Many, as in the case of Erdrich, speak for communities that have declared states of emergency in the face of epidemics of sexual and domestic violence, hunger, or suicide. Their works reflect movements like Idle No More that demand not just attention but action from settler governments. In charting new aesthetic resistances, each chapter marks a specific poetics within the larger field of Native literatures that engage with administrative systems and discourses. I begin with a thunderbird poetics that expresses a therapeutic insobriety against Anglo-Western models of addiction; this formal strategy reflects a sense of unmanageability and indefiniteness. In chapter two, I delineate a wiindigoo poetics that representationally deploys bureaucratic consumption and cannibalism to critique the settler management of Native subsistence. Similarly, a poetics of truancy surfaces in the third chapter, expressing a dynamic of escape from regimentation and discipline—and, more abstractly, escape from representational confinement through the narratives of settler education. Lastly, I argue in chapter four that, relative to Native literatures of violence against women, there emerges a poetics of visibility that privileges women's experiences of violence over legalist records that efface those experiences. The victim becomes visible and heard. This offers a twist on the previous three poetical models, because it demonstrates how Native women instead go strategically *unwatched* rather than surveilled like the rest—still, in accord with other chapters, the "real" Native becomes visible. Ultimately, each text explored here expresses a medicine of unmanageability or recalcitrance against bureaucracy.

This research offers a reading of Native transmedia formal conventions that reflect the interpermeations of settler administration and Native experience and expression. A constellation of Native media deployed for the purpose of advocating for struggling communities remains tied by patterns of remediated representation of life under settler bureaucracy. This defamiliarized

mediality produces an interlinked poetics of resistance to bureaucracy that engages with several administrative dimensions and images of the *Indian*. This manifold Native poetics explicates a set of principles by which artists working in many mediums renegotiate Native bureaucratic subjectivity. Film theorist David Bordwell explains how such principles "lie at the intersection of conceptual distinctions and social customs," where each mutually reproduces the other (15)—poetics, then, remains deeply engaged with the political. Unlike many principles of form and genre, the motifs I examine here are not regulative, since they are expressly positioned against regulatory discourse. While mapping a historical poetics, my project asks how and why certain conventions emerge in Native arts, and within what political, institutional, and technological contexts they develop. Bureaucracy heavily contours these realms of influence. Perhaps most operative is Bordwell's observation that an "*institutional* dimension of practice forms the horizon of what is permitted and encouraged at particular moments," where artists make art "within a social and economic system of production" (28). Native writers construct texts relative to the monolithic institutions of U.S. and Canadian settler bureaucracies, which form, in Bordwell's language, "the proximate conditions of production (agents, institutions, and communal norms and practices)" (32). This research demonstrates how settler-bureaucratic ideology bears a heavy impact on Native narrative strategies. Throughout, I investigate the routes by which such stories circulate as contestations of settler-bureaucratic violence on its discursive, narrative, structural, and architectonic fronts. They become a site in motion, where readers may question the static yet shifting images so formative to the popular national narratives of settler societies.

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CHAPTER ONE: REGULATING THE "THUNDERBIRD DRUNK": SETTLER SURVEILLANCE, THERAPEUTIC EXPRESSION

> Yet, to-day, whisky is the one great curse of the Indian country, the prolific source of disorder, tumult, crime, and disease, and if the sale could be utterly prohibited, peace and quiet would almost uniformly exist among the Indians… Most Indians will drink whisky whenever and wherever they can get it. Under its influence they are savages in deed as well as in name.
>
> —Hiram Price, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1882[7]

> "Cheap wine is the sustenance of immortality. … Drunks live long, healthy lives with it. The formaldehyde preserves their innards like frogs in science class bottles. … Compare them to the sober but ill senior citizens…"
>
> What Pat said bore a certain amount of truth. There were far more elderly abusers of alcohol than those who had abstained. Along the riverbottoms there were pockets of silver-haired men who drank three to four days in a row. On weekdays they were seen on the road, cotton-mouthed, walking to the state liquor store. The next day they would be at the tribal offices, requesting and receiving court help automatically from the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center. In exchange for signing with the program, intoxication and jail terms were suspended.
>
> —Ray Young Bear, *Black Eagle Child: The Facepaint Narratives* (1992)

The juxtaposition of the above passages—one written by a late-nineteenth century bureaucrat,[8] the other by a late-twentieth century Meskwaki novelist—reveals an enduring ideological incongruity between the supervision and experience of alcohol use among Native people in the United States. Both perspectives remain nested in bureaucratic regulation, but their positionality regarding its structures and discourses produces different conceptual frames. Commissioner Price construes alcohol as a "curse," which unlocks a defective nature and transforms "Indians … [into] savages in deed as well as in name"; prevention lives only in strict prohibition. Ray Young Bear's *Black Eagle Child* instead offers an ironic portrait of alcohol as Native ambrosia, offering eternal life through a cycle of dependency perpetuated by state liquor stores and federally-funded treatment centers. These frames focalize around a history of managerial discourse and regulation of Native health, reaching back before their codification in the U.S. Constitution,[9] the Office of Indian Affairs and, since 1955, the Indian Health Service. Researchers have begun to address the effects of substance use on Native communities in the

context of this web of institutional mechanisms that, in conjunction with socioeconomic factors, produces "substance use disorders" (SUDs)—patterns of use causing functional impairment. These patterns are more prevalent among Native people than other segments of the U.S. population, although recently these generalized findings have been contested due to documented variations by age, gender, region, and/or tribal affiliation. Nevertheless, due to both popular stereotypes and the broad kinship obligations in reservation and urban communities alike, "no one is left untouched by the scourge of SUDs (and associated adverse sequelae, such as diabetes, heart disease, cirrhosis, accidents, injuries, and suicides)" (Gone and Looking Calf 292).[10] Since the formation of the Indian Office, U.S. agents and Natives have constructed divergent stories about their struggles against these conditions.

As the Bureau of Indian Affairs emerged in 1824 to embody instrumental rationality and procedural management as means to ethnoracial progress, it became an apparatus for optimizing social efficiency (as viewed in Anglo-Western cultures) in Native communities. Settler officials supervised the assimilation process through this model, with temperance as a chief virtue. In the process, they naturalized colonial discourses about a Native inability to moderate consumption or behavior. Native nations resisted the imposition of a strict adherence to procedure in actualizing "optimal" health during the nineteenth century establishment of the reservation system. By the twentieth century, despite high reported levels of alcohol dependence, Natives were "served by the country's most complicated behavioral health care system," which failed to effect much change (McFarland et al.1469). Based in a biomedical paradigm, treatment programs largely targeted the behavioral and genetic elements of dependence.

Bureaucratic regulation and treatment, in turn, narrativized Native alcohol use according to colonial stories about the deficiencies of Native cultures and bodies. This problematic

approach followed decades of surveillance by officials, physicians, educators and journalists of the negative effects of alcohol use on Native communities that disguised its systemic determinants.[11] The medicalization of Native drinking patterns, distilled through settler discourse by Hiram Price and other Commissioners,[12] helped create a narrative of ethno-racial pathology, which reproduced popular beliefs about inherent Native propensity for alcohol abuse. This established the most enduring image of Native illness in U.S. literature and media: the figure of the "drunken Indian."[13] Native writers have battled this image since the colonial era as spiritual leaders and political activists,[14] but only in the twentieth century did they begin to explore how Indigenous subjectivity within the U.S. bureaucratic system impairs Native personal and communal health.

The first elaborate attempts at such an interrogation came when N. Scott Momaday and Leslie Marmon Silko crafted a countervision of Native alcohol use, revealing it to be embedded in a landscape of settler regulation and discourse. Their debut novels, *House Made of Dawn* (1968) and *Ceremony* (1977), articulate how bureaucratic management generates rather than ameliorates substance abuse. They establish a motif of movement away from dysfunctional regulated spaces and discourses in the transformation from dependence to sobriety. *House Made of Dawn*, first viewed as a story about postcolonial alienation and the struggle of the *Indian* to adapt to the modern world, reveals more about Relocation-era regulation.[15] Abel, a WWII veteran from Jemez Pueblo living in Los Angeles after his release from prison, persists in an urban settler bureaucracy where officials mandated to supervise relocated Natives instead produce patterns of illness. A friend in the city observes that Abel seems to fare well enough in his assimilation,

> …but they wouldn't let [Abel] alone. The parole officer, and welfare, and the Relocation people kept coming around … and they were always after him about something. They

> wanted to know how he was doing, had he been staying out of trouble and all. I guess that got on his nerves after a while, especially the business about drinking and running around. They were always *warning* him, you know? (*House* 139)

A web of surveillance signifies Abel's bureaucratic subjectivity, implying cumulative damage from a supervision that motivates by rule and threat, not mutual accountability. The novel frames insobriety politically, not behaviorally: rather than cultural or personal deficiency, Abel's problem lies in the narrative and structural confinement of settler regulation.

A generation of texts since the '90s furthers this critique by reclaiming insobriety for a sacred unmanageability that it lends against the strictures of bureaucracy. In *Black Eagle Child*, Natives drink "for the specific purpose of being blessed with [the] divine intervention" of their ancestors (220). In the works of satirists, oral story traditions assist in creating the resultant "thunderbird drunk," who functions as a visionary figure capable of subverting regulation. The "thunderbird drunk" achieves transformation via alcohol and traditional medicines, both of which double as illicit substance and antidote to institutional memory—the administrative archive. This evokes nineteenth-century quack medicines sold by traders on reservations for their alcohol content after the BIA prohibited liquor sales. (The Bureau tried and failed to regulate these medicines, too.)[16] Agency discourse polices these subversive practices and expresses dominance through diagnosis and treatment, reproducing itself via what Gerald Vizenor calls a "rhetoric of surveillance," so present in *House Made of Dawn* (*Fugitive* 146). This vision would govern the broader U.S. settler surveillance state, which grew up around Native cultural and economic life. Multigenre authors Gordon Henry and Sherman Alexie show how this discourse reveals its own racist compulsion to identify and archive the *Indian*, as well as its failure to effect positive change through administrative supervision. Alexie's fiction debut, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (1993), has become a seminal text in this regard. Finally, in a larger

post-‘60s anti-bureaucratic literary movement, Native characters call forth unfettered “thunder songs” to combat narrative closure as addicts, resisting a paradigm of institutional intervention and therapeutic expression. These texts emphasize that Native people must restore a vision of well-being for themselves beyond the bounds of bureaucracy.

The story of Native substance use remains entangled with a legacy of popular and institutional representation that emerged from a trustee relationship between settler-colonial governments and Native nations. Agencies composed a false story of this use and over-rationalized regulation efforts despite their failure to effect consistent sobriety. Regulation materialized at the interstices of government, medicine, and religion, as the Bureau of Indian Affairs was for a century heavily staffed by members of the Protestant temperance movement, charmingly known as the “Benevolent Empire.” Many believed that Christian ideals would prove to be the cure for Native alcohol use. Native nations sometimes assumed these temperance ideals, too, for their political expediency. The Empire’s progressive politics drew it to medical colonialism, where “civilization” could be disseminated and enforced through its biomedical paradigm, Christian values, and narrative of social progress. Agents preached a deficit model of addiction: addictive behavior results from an essential weakness of character, culture (e.g. religion), or biology (e.g. genes). Treatment requires cultural and political assimilation. Yet substance use disorders in reservation and urban communities worsen with administrative presence, thanks to the mountain of negative images of Native behavior shaped by scientific and religious discourses.

The combination of paternalistic sympathy and scientific derision generated, according to Joseph Gone, “a cottage industry devoted to the surveillance and management of the “mental health” problems of Native Americans,” which mushroomed in the early twentieth century

("Dialogue" 310). *House Made of Dawn* spotlights this industry, as Abel lives in an administrative system that constantly interpellates him as pathological. Abel remains caught in a network of documentation—psychological evaluations and diagnoses, legal briefs, and the reports of police officers and social workers. Lisa Gitelman argues that "[i]n the modern era documents have cultural weight mostly according to their institutional frames" (5); Abel's positionality within these frames helps determine his experience. Administrative textuality indicates one facet of Native life, which spatializes in the realms of law enforcement and health treatment. The narrator notes that Abel "could remember very little about [his] trial. There were charges, questions, and answers; it was ceremonial, orderly, civilized, and it had almost nothing to do with him." (89). The process projects an essential image onto Abel for the sake of management. In this way, surveillance actualizes itself through "orderly" spaces; natural and/or motive places have the power to disrupt the imposed order of supervision. Bureaucratic subjectivity codified in the Reservation Era shifted seamlessly into the eras of Termination and Relocation (1940–1960) and Self-Determination (1960–present), even as federally-recognized tribes now have some control over health programs. Gone notes that "[t]he attention of clinically concerned researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to an indigenous "patient" or "client" base" installed a specific cultural politics of racial pathology ("Dialogue" 310). This relation has endured, reproduced through the surveillance rhetoric of officials who form the connective tissue between Native communities and agencies.

In the twenty-first century, Native sovereignty movements have been able to effect a larger "vision of administrative control" in the treatment of substance use disorders (Gone, "Red Road" 188). Yet Erica Prussing calls attention to how certain elements preserve a web of institutional paralysis, especially "federal funding, bureaucratic organization, and accreditation

requirements [which] impose both material and discursive constraints that interfere with reservation health programs" ("Sobriety" 355). Reconfigurations of Native space under settler administrative regimes—sociospatial enactments like removal, reservations, allotment, and relocation policies—have historically actualized these elements. These reconfigurations permit disparities in resource allocation, inducing health disorders and disguising them with racial and cultural deficits. Administrative procedure links these policies and their correlated conditions with the narratives that underpin them. It is in this landscape where the thunderbird drunk dances, disrupting images of Native pathology and disappearance.

Firewater Narratives and Figures

The story of Native susceptibility to alcohol has been marked by "firewater" since in the eighteenth century, when the concept emerged as a way to capture the volatility of the "drunken Indian" figure. The term finds its first literary appearance in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), a historical novel set in 1757 during the French and Indian War. Cooper emphasizes essential Native savagery, but the violent and drunken villain of the novel, a Huron chief named Magua, partly undergoes his transformation thanks to the Canadians who "taught him to drink the fire-water, and he became a rascal" (121). This hints at the ways European settlers modeled harmful patterns of alcohol use by engaging in their own bouts of intense drunkenness (Beauvais 253). The opposing Mohican sagamore (or chief) in the novel, Chingachgook, also observes alcohol's role in Native land loss, though he blames Native intemperance and superstition rather than European strategies of dispossession.[17] As a substance of conversion, firewater enabled land theft by settlers, traders, land speculators, and government officials, who worked to control and exploit Native drinking in the formation of the United

States.[18] The mutually constitutive relationship between settler regulation, treatment, and Native substance use reified what Richard Thatcher calls the "firewater complex," an "integrated and patterned set of culture traits" (129). Novels like *The Last of the Mohicans* helped replicate these traits via firewater discourse, which generates a new "generalized self-image and local norms" for Native communities; users become influenced into destructive behavior by popularized constructs of misuse. Thatcher maintains that prefigured firewater stories deny "personal and community empowerment [through a] generalized style of explanation and problem solving [that] promotes a sense of dependency and disability" (131). Such stories limit possibilities for transformation, tying the health of Native bodies and polities to their ability to achieve sobriety in a Eurowestern therapeutic model.

Native drinking appeared in the formative documents of the U.S. as a justification for continental takeover by demanding regulatory and (later) therapeutic intervention. This reveals a contradiction in the Euro-American deployment of temperance, which allowed settlers to project immoderation onto the *Indian* in order to obscure their own intemperate consumption of Indigenous territory. In his *Autobiography* (1791), Benjamin Franklin codified for a Christian audience this foremost trope of the firewater myth. He described the "drunken Indian" as a figure whose disruptions of civil society "formed a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagined" (154).[19] As an early commissioner for the BIA's precursor agency, Franklin identified alcohol as a cause of Native extinction, making a cultural-behaviorist argument that disjoins Natives from the land by establishing addiction as part of "the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for cultivators of the earth" (154). American Indians would self-destruct from their basest instincts and an inability to become productive in civilized society, the story goes. They would eventually vanish.

From the start, settler agencies confounded three different goals: Native assimilation, Native well-being, and Native extinction. Each carries a distinct relation to settler culture. This confusion produced several ironies in substance use treatment, since "conventional clinical approaches harbor the ideological danger of implicit Western cultural proselytization"—especially Christian doctrine—where the chief aim is not to heal or treat, but convert (Gone, "Dialogue" 310). Contradictions surfaced in rhetoric that painted a double-sided image of Natives as both pitiless and pitiful. Franklin emphasized savagery, while historian Fergus Bordewich, son of an executive director of the Association on American Indian Affairs, writes that the image of the alcoholic Native "encapsulates within it a widespread perception of modern Native Americans as fundamentally pathetic and helpless figures, defeated by a white man's world with which they cannot be expected to cope" (246). The "drunken Indian" trope synthesizes several discourses, and from this synthesis emerge persistent and persuasive "ideas of universal susceptibility" associated with the stereotype (Gone and Prussing 383)—despite evidence to the contrary. Euro-Americans made little attempt to understand why Native people chose to drink, instead finding answers in familiar colonial narratives. Maia Conrad notes that Native drinking was a social activity, and that as early as the seventeenth century the Iroquois, for example, drank to achieve "complete insobriety"— a deprivation of senses that "takes them out of themselves" (6). Over time, Native drinking became an active response to bureaucratic subjectivity, a way to forget the experience of constant oversight and regulation.

Native writers who received popular notice in the early twentieth century gave an equally double-sided response to the narrative of Native assimilation and social progress. John Joseph Mathews' *Sundown* (1934) presents a racial uplift story, wherein a young Osage man named Challenge Windzer must overcome his alcoholism and alienation in a deteriorating landscape of

oil development. Situated during the Native statehood movement in 1905, when tribes in Indian Territory fought the dissolution of their governments with a failed proposal for the establishment of a new U.S. state of Sequoyah, Mathews associates political sovereignty with the civilizing triumph of temperance—a *challenge* but not an impossibility. Though noting classic Native objections to Eurowestern modernity (such as ecological damage), authors like Mathews trusted in the power of civilization to transform Native health. But after federal termination and relocation policies in the 1940s eroded Native rights and exacerbated substance abuse, a generation of Native authors born after the Progressive Era began to question years of social and public health engineering rooted in Taylorist efficiency.[20] As the American Indian Movement ignited in 1968, these authors produced a new poetics of Native illness. The so-called "Native American Renaissance" partly cohered around their depictions and conceptualizations of Native alcohol use.[21] Their literary vision expressed institutional oppression as a prime correlate for insobriety among Native men and women. A recognition by health scientists that socioeconomic and political marginalization indeed contribute to SUD rates aligned with this vision. These authors spoke against predominant discourses by portraying the ways that addiction proves to be systemic, not primarily behavioral, cultural, or genetic.

Contemporary Native authors use satire to deconstruct firewater discourse and expose the structural determinants of substance use. Sherman Alexie remains the most widely recognized and criticized for his depictions of drunk Natives, the central figure in what he calls his "alcohol-soaked stories" (xxv)—so much so that some Native critics labeled him a "cultural traitor" (Evans 48). They censured him for pandering to modern fantasies of Indigenous disappearance. Yet *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, Alexie's story collection about several Native characters' attempts to transcend history, loss, and insobriety on the Spokane Indian

Reservation, set a third-wave literary construction of Native drinking in motion, alongside a revised reprint of Vizenor's *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* in 1990 and 1992's *Black Eagle Child*. Twenty years on, writers continue to explore the historical relationship between bureaucratic oversight, representation, and Native substance use.[22] Concerned with the politics of Native drinking, their stories illustrate how U.S. agencies still struggle to comprehend the impacts of administrative structures and discourses. Against these forces, Native authors cast alcohol and other substances as double-sided symbols of addiction and transformative capriciousness. This satirically claims intoxication as a Native tradition of systemic illness and resistance, reframing its effects on mind and body counter to a moralized Eurowestern deficit model. An ironic poetics of insobriety emerges to unwrite settler narratives of transformation, juxtaposing them with Native notions about the efficacy of art to posit the same transformations outside official treatment and regulation. From within, the many complex Native spheres of "meaning and social experience that shape how [treatment] programs figure in … transformations from drinking to sobriety" surface (Gone and Prussing 380). The prime third-wave strategy has involved disrupting the progressive illness–health continuum to achieve positive movement under an alternate paradigm of well-being.

Native texts aim at two components of settler bureaucracy's influence on substance use. The first operates spatially, as administrative constructs shape access to alcohol and treatment and therefore promote cycles of addiction. This may be seen in what characters in *Ceremony* call "going up the line." Protagonist Tayo returns to Laguna Pueblo after surviving the Bataan Death March during WWII and being treated for post-traumatic stress disorder in a VA Hospital in Los Angeles. He and fellow veteran Harley—who "had done a lot of drinking and raising hell" after the war (20)—go looking for booze in an arid and dusty landscape, but they are "twenty-five or

thirty miles from the bars on the other side of the reservation boundary line. People called it 'going up the line,' [visiting] the bars … built one after the other alongside 66" (22). Lines drawn by laws like the 1851 Indian Appropriations Act, for instance, which instituted reservation policy, promote patterns of economic development that prey on Native communities. This may be read as a precursor to the cycle of movement between state liquor store and treatment center in *Black Eagle Child*. "Going up the line" spatializes patterns of use, illness, and treatment.

Gerald Vizenor explores similar dimensions of firewater discourse in his critical story, "Firewater Labels and Methodologies" (1983), in which the bar becomes a site where such Native travelers are emplaced and exiled by addiction. The narrator introduces several characters who disrupt institutional spaces and discourses with specific angles of motion. Samuel "drinks gallons of cheap beer and tells trickster stories in the best oral tradition; he is a fine teacher in a small college, and he is a problem drinker" (30). Samuel's insobriety and storytelling problematize an official educational space. Vizenor also mines the space between divergent healing paradigms: "Ramon is a medical doctor, the first in his tribe to earn the high honor of becoming a biomedical healer; and he is an alcoholic. He practices medicine on the road, at tribal social and cultural events, and at the back of tribal bars in the cities" (30). "Medicine on the road" injects mutability into an otherwise static treatment structure; medicine "at the back of tribal bars," too, merges contrary spaces and discourses. Other authors similarly disrupt space by making visible those substance users banished to roaming marginalized urban spaces—dark alleys, abandoned homes, culverts—where each might otherwise vanish according to old firewater narratives.

The second component of settler bureaucracy's effect on Native substance use operates via the language of public health surveillance. Over time, this administrative sphere emerged

through several textual genres designed to monitor Native identity and behavior—from the reports of health researchers and social workers, to psychological examinations, to treatment program literature. These genres form an ever-expanding archive against which Native substance users must negotiate their identities and well-being, since it deploys "exhaustive" and "mutually exclusive" racial categories in the performance of health surveillance (Hahn and Stroup 11). Though designed to facilitate movement toward sobriety, this new textuality narratively limits possibilities for such movement. *House Made of Dawn* offered the first serious indictment of this paradox. The management of Abel's behavior through legal and medical discourses works to pathologize and place him in a progressive arc by narrativizing the conversion of firewater addict to sober, civilized American Indian. He resists this conversion, instead recovering by Navajo and Pueblo ceremonial practices, including a run with "the runners after evil [who] ran as water runs" (91). He sees their swift, dark bodies and the river on the horizon as he sings and runs through slanting rain in the final pages (185).

This discursive tension persists in Eddie Chuculate's 2010 story collection, *Cheyenne Madonna*, in which the Coolwater family resists a legacy of alcoholism ironically prefigured by its very name. Protagonist Jordan Coolwater frames this legacy as a joke that activates through dispossession: "It's said the drinking didn't begin until the Coolwaters came to Indian Territory, present-day Oklahoma. You can trace the progression of alcoholism in my family like a flying arrow and I'm the bull's-eye" (68). The spatial and the linguistic converge as Jordan watches his family fail to transcend their firewater selves while in tribal housing, on remote allotments, in public city spaces, or traveling as nomads on the highway. This situates Native substance use within a bureaucratic landscape yet recalls a Five Tribes temperance tradition of "cold water men" and "cold water places," terms which signal a syncretic but still distinctly Native path to

sobriety. Where settler bureaucracy manages Native bodies, dependence follows; natural movement in twentieth-century ceremonial contexts, which cannot be regulated in the same way, elicits healing. Chuculate recrafts the "drunken Indian" into a figure that transcends administrative control. Though influenced by Christian theology, the Five Tribes tradition of "going to the water" reflects traditional understandings of the relation between place and health. Native authors portray water ceremonies, like "going to the water" and "thirsty dance lodge" traditions associated with the thunderbird figure, as medicine. Water sites and water language help cleanse body, mind, and spirit of addiction and administration.

The "thunderbird drunk," who appears by figurative name in Gordon Henry's *The Failure of Certain Charms* (2007), surfaces at the convergence of the progressive narrative of sobriety, ancestral stories about spiritual transformation, and the visionary capriciousness bestowed by hallucinogens like peyote in *House Made of Dawn* or the Meskwaki "Star Medicine" in *Black Eagle Child*. Taken from the name of a potent spirit entity in many Native story traditions, "thunderbird" now doubles as the name of a fortified wine that only the most dysfunctional users drink. This doubling occurs in *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. Victor, the protagonist in "Amusements" (and much of the collection), refers to himself, a Native woman, and the Native drunk they have been teasing as "twentieth-century fancydance[rs] [and] court jesters who would pour Thunderbird wine into the Holy Grail," while a group of white bystanders surround them in judgment (56). Native dance and story traditions cohere and build tension in juxtaposition with the Christian foundation of classic twelve-step substance abuse programs. Motion and humor offer transfiguration, away from moral judgment. Henry's poems likewise depict characters who flirt with but side-step victimization: in "The Second Door: I as Traveler I," they "wander in and out of / north suburban

factories, / universities, / thunderbird drunk and in trouble; / where we guzzled and smoked / against the wall of the Teepee / liquor store" (29). Brazen and wandering, the thunderbird drunks seem to tempt fate beside the ironically named liquor store. Other authors, too, allude to settler-colonial fears like those expressed by Benjamin Franklin: used to ply Native representatives during negotiations, liquor's "disorderly" effect on Natives also presents a threat by making them less manageable, less amenable to signing away their lands (Franklin 153). In his description, Franklin expresses a concern for the dangers posed by Native bodies in motion, construed as sign of an unruly and unpredictable nature.[23] Expressions of motion in Eurowestern depictions of Native intoxication belie a secret recognition of disorderly motion and voice as potentially visionary elements.[24] Yet it is important to resist stereotypes about lone Natives using alcohol "as a shortcut to visions and dreams" or "a way to become possessed by a spirit," which became common in the second half of the twentieth century (Conrad 1). Rather, representations of alcohol use in art and literature mark a tradition of expressing community transformation in the context of the "drunken Indian" narrative.

The thunderbird drunk figure works on two planes. In the realm of the spatial, the figure's erratic motion disturbs a settler-bureaucratic landscape, wherein officials read Native substance use as a marker of ethno-racial pathology. This associates drunkenness with a visionary movement that interrupts bureaucratic subjectivity by exposing regulatory violence. Moreover, this motive expression of identity defies discursive confinement by medicalization and treatment. The thunderbird drunk's emergence as a contemporary Native formation follows from a long history of "stories of natives on the move," in the parlance of Gerald Vizenor; such stories have always carried "the natural traces of native transmotion" (*Fugitive* 49). For Vizenor, these "natural traces" are a trademark Native presence in stories, which offers a natural

disruption of simulations of *Indians*. Transmotion materializes when Native characters move between supposedly fixed sites, states, or images. Literal and figurative motion resonate together in these stories, as Native roadmen and other travelers become vectors for the "thunder songs" and "thirsty dances" offered to substance users for restoration. Thunderbird medicine activates in diverse practices of memory and expression. Hallucinogenic substances like the Star Medicine, or "*Anaqwamikettiioni*," in *Black Eagle Child*, for example, work as an antidote to bureaucracy: they allow users to both *forget* their image in the archive as well as *remember* Native practices and poetics beyond regulation that move in and out of bureaucratic language games, dis-remembering and dismembering the administrative presence in their lives.

This trace of transformative potential takes aim at bureaucratic textuality: for Momaday and Henry, "substance abuse reports" and other documents become signifiers for discursive closure through the institutional memory of the settler-bureaucratic archive. Native epistemes construe stories as "active agents within a relational world," according to Margaret Kovach always situated relative to community practice, embodied history, and political relations (94). Anchored first in body and voice, narrative lends itself to "the fluidity and interpretive nature of ancestral ways" (Kovach 94). The dances and songs of the thunderbird drunk becomes most operative in a process of continuous re-interpretation. Illicit substances become a positive force in their social use, for they spark a broad communal expression that interrogates the therapeutic expressive modes of Euro-American treatment programs, which construe truth-telling in an individualistic context that ignores systemic and historical determinants and projects insobriety solely onto the *Indian*. Instead, communal expression establishes what Prussing calls "multiple discourses for representing self and self-transformation," a diversity vital to discussions about substance abuse and sobriety ("Sobriety" 355). The stories and poems explored here, crackling

with dance, song, rivers, and rain, express local Native understandings of transformation from addiction to a sobriety outside the bounds of administrative spaces and stories.

"Going up the line": Spatial (Mis)management of Substance Use

The administrative practices imposed upon Native communities and lands have always gone hand-in-hand. Institutional discourses informed these entangled practices, justifying oversight of person and environment by redefining them according to constructs like "wards (of the government)," "domestic dependent nations," "uncivilized/uncultivated," and so on.[25] These classifications persist as expressions of biopower that materialized through settler agencies, where bureaucratic drift presents an added degree of separation between legislative intent and the enactment of law (which has "drifted" from its original directive). This produces a disjuncture as agencies dilute or alter the spirit of policies according to their own goals as unelected bodies—one of which is their continued necessity. Erikson explains that uneven biopower seen in "the state's regulatory control over [a] population as a whole" operates via "population-level health regulation and policy, [but] also … environmental regulation," as control of the natural and built environment facilitates other vectors of control (466-67). This remains true of settler–Native relations as they endure in federal Indian policy, where Indian agencies, boarding schools, national parks, and IHS jurisdictions, for example, allow broad control over generalized Native bodies and cultural practices via constructed environments that reinscribe the meanings and functions of space. The shifting meta-institutional environment that flowered from colonial administration and metastasized to the public health sphere generated a bureaucratic landscape ever-present in rural and urban Native life.

Late-twentieth–century Native novels defy the modern narrative of Native alcohol use in a signature manner: *House Made of Dawn, Ceremony*, *Winter in the Blood* and others, situated alongside the American Indian Movement's political action, chart Native oppression and alcohol use in a U.S. bureaucratic context. These texts employ a stereotypical realism to reveal the ways "pathological" drinking is embedded in administrative spaces and methods of surveillance and regulation. From the 1960s onward, authors problematized the progressive "racial uplift" narrative of earlier Native modernists, where seeds of doubt had already been planted. Momaday wrote in a 1964 essay, "The Morality of Indian Hating," about the failures of a "[f]ederal management of Indian affairs [that] has always been expressed in general and uniform policy" (57). Rather than help Natives toward "civilization," he argued, "reservations had at last become contagious colonies and concentration camps" ("Morality" 69). This reflected the failures of control-by-space, when applied through the racial simplifications of settler biopower. Such spaces of exclusion had long been sick, fomenting a variety of acute and chronic illnesses. In *House Made of Dawn*, Momaday similarly identified bureaucratic alienation as a determinant in the disorders seen in urban and reservation communities. This set the stage for later explorations, like *Ceremony*, where Silko depicted how interactions between bureaucracy and neocolonial market forces promote harmful economic development that in turn encourages marginalized people to follow the "lines" of setter administration in their alcohol consumption. Emergent substances—liquor substitutes like Listerine; huffing spray paint, glue, and so on—have been assimilated into these patterns. Such substances have in turn appeared in Native expressions of dependence.

The spatial axes of substance use play out in literatures from all regions, situated in distinct political and socioeconomic histories. A bureaucratic landscape provides the backdrop

for stories set in the Pacific Northwest (by Sherman Alexie), the Great Plains (by James Welch, Ray Young Bear, Stephen Graham Jones), the Great Lakes (by Gerald Vizenor, Louise Erdrich, Gordon Henry), Oklahoma (by Joy Harjo, Santee Frazier, Eddie Chuculate), and the Southwest (by N. Scott Momaday and Leslie Silko). The landscape remains fluid as tribal bureaucracies push for more control over public health needs. This requires that tribes interface and "negotiate new relationships with the IHS" and other agencies (McFarland et al. 1469). In *Black Eagle Child*, characters live in a world marked by both tribal health bureaucracy and the BIA, which manage their housing, food, and education. They move relative to these administrative forces. When the "silver-haired men" drink en masse in ravines and then make the trek "on the road, cotton-mouthed … to the state liquor store," readers recognize that this movement is not produced by racial or cultural defect. It's their secondary movement, when the men must choose from a web of institutional spaces—tribal offices, the courts, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center, prison—where the structural determinants of their insobriety surfaces. The novel begins with a tongue-in-cheek nod to history: the community holds a makeshift Thanksgiving ceremony in a BIA gymnasium, an event that teases the larger forces at play in settlement life (3). The ceremony opens an ironic space in a national narrative that situates U.S. sovereignty outside the politics of colonialism. Management expresses itself in the discursive and material environment in spaces built for Native assimilation, conditioning social life according to its structures and values. The foundational characters of earlier stories of insobriety suffer marginalization within a socio-spatial system that asserts, naturalizes, and reproduces settler biopower.

Native people have recently been able to wrest some ground-level control from the larger system. Nowhere has the realization of this vision of Native administrative control been more extensive than in substance abuse treatment. Over eighty percent of treatment programs funded

by the Indian Health Service are administered by tribal governments, in their capacity as service providers, and by urban Native programs, although these comprise a mere 1% of the IHS budget. Other federal agencies provide funding for tribally-run programs as well, such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. As a result of spatial, procedural, and economic factors, roughly four of five Native people in the U.S. report having no access to IHS treatment programs (McFarland et al. 1469). Yvette Roubideaux, who would become the first Native woman appointed director of the Indian Health Service, revealed in a 2004 report an emergent tension in bureaucratized Native health: because of a reorganization and decentralization of both IHS offices and health programs that serve Native people, administrators are concerned about how the overall system will "maintain the core function of public health surveillance," a problematic but necessary part of improving health care (5). Tribal control allows for a high degree of autonomy in how newer programs are administered "relative to issues of cultural accommodation and community responsiveness. Indeed, such programs represent potentially productive sites [where] self-conscious discourses about culture are constructed and deployed by formerly colonized peoples engaged in postcolonial re-articulations of self and community" (Gone, "Red Road" 188). Recent Native literary expressions of insobriety offer new, emplaced visions of substance use, signifying re-articulation against the images that emerge from the sober separations of bureaucratic oversight. These activate within a manifested landscape that interprets Native health according to rationalized observation and organization rather than community well-being.

Black Eagle Child reveals the development of health bureaucracy that Benjamin Franklin forecasts. A "Ben Franklin" discount store even appears in Young Bear's novel, so named after the historical Franklin's signature frugality, which joins temperance as the fifth and first of his

thirteen “moral virtues,” respectively (*Autobiography* 102). The novel presents a trajectory of administrative control. In this regard, young protagonist Edgar Bearchild relates unique features of the semi-independent status of the Black Eagle Child Settlement where he lives.[26] He observes a shift in power between the various planes of U.S. bureaucracy and his fictionalized version of the Meskwaki Nation when the Nation purchases land for the creation of a settlement in Iowa, “a state known for its rich soil, crops, and resistance to social change,” while still retaining status with the BIA, after suffering several removals and settler encroachments (48). The Meskwaki continue to operate in a settler-bureaucratic environment in 1965—Edgar’s time—in law enforcement, health care, and other services. Edgar sarcastically notes that this history is known only by its results: an “unentitled bureaucracy” and “the white man’s equal decision-making process: suzerainty” (48). He refers to the relationship of a vassal to a foreign power, the model under which the U.S. government began over time to conceptualize its relationship with Native nations. “Suzerainty” in turn reflects administrative methods seen in the federally-funded treatment centers and state liquor stores. These passages recall Franklin’s remarks on Indigenous extinction, which discursively efface Native land claims. Bureaucracy obscures settler coercion, whereas in Franklin’s time disorderly Natives were bribed with liquor in exchange for surrendering land. Alcohol has always played a role in the conversion of Indigenous land to settler-colonial territory, a conversion facilitated by bureaucracy in concert with bloody conflict, swindling land speculators, and illicit traders. Native dispossession still relies on alcohol and addiction in 1965, whether in signing away land or “signing with the [treatment] program.”

Temperance programs flourished as precursor to Progressive Era reform. They reverberate in current administrative practices depicted in Native stories. The public health crisis

that inspired outreach efforts from groups like the American Temperance Society and Women's Christian Temperance Union in fact mobilized tribes themselves, principally those that had adopted some degree of Christianity. Cherokees borrowed from these movements' association of sobriety with respectability; they asserted self-determination "by linking legal and social reform, sovereignty, and morality" in proving that they could resist the "curse of firewater" (Ishii 108-9).[27] Native temperance movements arose in the nineteenth century, one of the first responses to regulation. These were precipitated by legal-bureaucratic threats in which U.S. institutions deployed firewater discourse as a weapon against Native sovereignty. In part because "Indian drunkenness [had become] emblematic of powerlessness and defeat," regulating alcohol allowed Cherokees to argue their moral and social progress toward "civilization" in rhetorical resistance to these attacks (Ishii 168). The Cherokee Nation claimed sovereignty over their territory by resisting the encroachments of squatters, legislators, state and federal judiciaries, and bureaucrats. The eastern border towns of Indian Territory became contested sites of cultural, economic, and political intrusion.

A border dynamic consistently surfaces in Native space wherein boundaries become sites of transformation. The Cherokee–Arkansas border was for decades marked by bootleggers who sought to "run across the line," the *Cherokee Advocate* reported in 1844 (Ishii 96). This rhetoric resonates with "going up the line" more than a century later. Cadastral boundaries continue to encourage certain patterns of economic activity and substance use. Merchants often constructed their stores "immediately upon the line" in nineteenth-century Indian Territory; these "line houses" enabled outlaws to step across a "plank in the floor" and escape the jurisdiction of the country where they had committed their crimes" (Ishii 96). Officials, as temperance reformers themselves, saw bureaucracy as a saving grace, with little recognition of Native self-

determination: in 1882 Commissioner Price cited an Indian Agent in asserting that "[t]he greatest obstacle … is the constant watchfulness required to prevent them from obtaining whiskey from a disreputable class of whites who hover around the borders of the agency, or in the small towns, ever ready to furnish Indians liquor and to take advantage of them as soon as they have become intoxicated" (*Annual Report* xv). This reflected the stewardship lens through which bureaucrats viewed themselves. "The line" became for Native nations a thing to be protected, via internal regulation as well as negotiation with federal and state bureaucracies. Localized threats were subsumed into broader discourse about "the line," a construct that helped explain how alcohol threatened tribal integrity.

This counters a discourse that justifies bureaucratic imposition and breeds marginalized spaces. Intrusions upon Native sovereignty took the form of legal narratives that construed Native persons as figures of alterity in their own territories. Policies that prohibited non-administrative exchanges of land or liquor with Natives mark the condition of *wardship*, which like "suzerainty" marks a colonial relation in which U.S. bureaucracy rules most facets of Native life (Echo-Hawk 199). This mechanism causes Natives to partly identify with the colonizer in the assimilation process. Settler bureaucracy reinscribes Native land with new geographies that express a racialized anatomy of space, dividing ordered spaces from the disorder that would threaten it.[28] Its narratives construe their subjects spatially: the *Indian* is always at the frontier, that violent and irrational place beyond the bounds of civilization. Prussing recognizes that "popular stereotypes about Native peoples and alcohol echo these colonial storylines by also positioning Native peoples at the moral margins of the social order in the United States" (11). Together, Commissioner Price and James Fenimore Cooper illustrate a general recognition that many elements of alcohol use passed from Europeans to Natives. Yet, through alcohol,

"reservation Indians" were "constructed within the morally corrupt liminal space" of the frontier throughout the nineteenth century, which transferred well into urban contexts, ghettos, and so on (Prussing, *White Man's Water* 11). Alcohol thus had a generative effect in the conversion of Native land to settler space.

Recent texts concern such newer spaces of exclusion. Santee Frazier expresses a spatialized poetics of insobriety in *Dark Thirty* (2009), one of the most addiction-centered works since *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. Frazier sets his series of character poems in a present-day Oklahoma shaped by removal, allotment, and bureaucratic management. His characters suffer marginalization as a result of radical poverty, domestic violence, and substance use disorders. The title of one poem, "Listo," doubles as a slang term for Listerine (connoting the term's use by alcohol dependents) and as a nickname for the anonymous user whose body disintegrates piece by piece, line by line. Listo "tilt[s] back the listo … at daybreak, nightfall, / noon, staggering / in the alleys, / dragging his shoulder / along dumpsters, / and cinder-block walls" (63). Addictions to several substances occur in *Dark Thirty*: when characters run out of liquor, they turn to mouthwash, rubbing alcohol, Sterno (a jellied fuel that can be strained for alcohol), paint or glue for huffing, or the home-brewed "root juice" of the collection's opening poem. Listo huffs aerosol, too, but it's the slang term for the gold spray paint he uses—Midas—that becomes operative. Midas puts "a dull, / gold smile / on his pursed lips" and turns his clothes and fingers to gold (63). Listo huffs Midas til he has "liver and lungs / of gold, lying / wherever he ends up. / Under a bridge. / Park benches. Ditches." (63-4). By pairing these corporeal transformations—decomposition and human alchemy, turning Native flesh to gold—Frazier spotlights the "vanishing Indian" fantasy, which places value on death, converting Native bodies to gold through removal and resource theft. He draws on the Greek story to position settler

bureaucracy against nutriment, as King Midas realizes that his hunger for wealth will prevent him, ironically, from ever eating again. Such an obsession cannot revitalize the Native body politic. A motion of dependency generated by spatial exclusion reflects a distinct relationship between Native body and place.

Substance dependence signals different rhetorical responses in Native stories, since like all illnesses these impact Native individuals and communities as "biological reflections of social fault lines" (Jones 128). They bear a spatial dimension reflected in the built environment. *Dark Thirty* renders visible a secondary landscape of sites that naturalize addiction by rendering Natives invisible. Mangled Creekbed, "creek-bed boy" and "paper-bagged glue huffer," appears in several poems; his name mutually inscribes a childlike identity with the place where he gets high (20). Listo drinks in marginalized spaces, too—in alleys, along dumpsters and cinder block walls, under bridges, on park benches and in ditches, and so on. Read through a lens of Cherokee ceremonial practice, however, Mangled and Listo roam the edges of recovery. "Listo" begins with the prospect but falls back into a cycle of dependency: the poem opens with his "bones crouched / on the creek / bank— / washing gold / from his lips, shirt / sleeves, britches, fingers" (63). The image resonates with "going to the water," a ceremony in which water provides a cure for illness. Those "going to the water" must bathe in natural, running water, which will carry off the energy that has produced ill health (Irwin 250). The ceremony reconstitutes a healthy relation between body, environment, and wider ecosystem. This indicates that spaces of illness and Indigeneity must not necessarily be effaced—as in the settler-colonial worldview—but may be transmuted. Addiction functions not as a tragic sign, signaling narrative closure, but as a chance for revitalization through motive responses that value reciprocal care.

Native literatures of dependency reveal what Jo Scheder calls a "physiology of oppression," a framework of subaltern illness "that recognizes the power of the everyday, the lingering and cumulative decay of existential reality. It is the constant, lived experience of oppression that erodes the body as well as the spirit" (342). The co-opted substances of extreme dependency—such as mouthwash, aerosols, glue—are marked by socioeconomic abjection, illustrating how dependency remains one of many "responses to living inside of inequality" (Scheder 343). Situated in a history of regulation and treatment, such substances also bear the presence of settler administration. Edward Soja argues that these determinants are reproduced by "concretely embedded and imaginatively maintained unjust geographies of underdevelopment and colonial control [that] linger on as stubborn continuities" (40). Scholars now associate settler policies with a higher prevalence of SUDs in all Native communities.[29] In fact, these policies "did not succeed in integrating Native Americans into the mainstream culture [but] typically contributed to the formation of Native American ghettos in urban environments" (Szlemko et al. 440-441)—echoing Momaday's fifty-year old claim. As in *Dark Thirty*'s semi-urban settings, certain sites on the reservation are pathologized in *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*: "Commodity Village" (referring to BIA food programs) and "Hospital Row," for example, are places where the poor and sick live, respectively. "Death Row" serves this same designative function in Stephen Graham Jones' *Ledfeather* (2008). Patterns of illness that have the appearance of being endemic instead evoke a persistent managerial presence in Native stories.

Literary depictions of a complex institutional landscape begin in 1968 with *House Made of Dawn*'s initiation of a Native poetics of insobriety. Within this aesthetic response to a rapidly expanded bureaucracy, authors illustrate how oversight actualizes its conversions through

spatialized surveillance. Here, the practice involves viewing and then controlling Native bodies in space. In *House Made of Dawn,* friend Ben Benally observes that Abel

> didn't have anyplace to stay. The Relocation people were looking around, I guess, but they hadn't found a place, and he was going to spend the night at the Indian Center. There's a storeroom down there in the alley, where they keep the food and clothing that people have donated, you know. You can stay there sometimes if you don't have anyplace else to go. A lot of guys get sick in there, too, and it always smells kind of sour and bad. (134-135)

The passage begins and ends with agency officials precipitating Abel's dislocation. The very institutional landscape intended to civilize and treat Natives instead makes them more likely to become dependent on alcohol by taking away their "place," leaving them with no option beyond administrative reach. Official observations of individuals' self-destructive cycles of dependency authorize further bureaucratic control. In this, Native characters must contend with a constant presence of static procedure, textuality, and discourse.

This institutional presence separates Natives from a natural, motive landscape in *House Made of Dawn.* Native ecosocial models expressed by such alternate landscapes offer a window into the impacts of bureaucratic control. The "land–health nexus" reflects, for instance, the ways Native identities remain "tied to our land, to our cultural practices, our systems of authority and control, our intellectual traditions, our concepts of spirituality, and to our systems of resource ownership and exchange. Destroy this relationship and you damage … individual human beings and their health" (Walters, "Displacement" 165). Joseph Gone warns against heavy reliance on a paradigm of "historical trauma," the cumulative wounds endured by Native peoples and communities from (neo)colonial oppression.[30] But incarceration captures an explicit reflection of bureaucratic alienation. In the lone passage describing Abel's time in prison, the narrator expresses his sense of containment: "After a while [Abel] could not imagine anything beyond the walls…—or even the walls, really. They were abstractions beyond the reach of his

understanding, not in themselves confinement but symbols of confinement. The essential character of the walls consisted not in their substance but in their appearance, the bare one-dimensional surface" (92). The administrative landscape, evoked in Abel's prison cell, his relocation housing, the Indian Center, the courtroom, and so on, works as a collective "symbol of confinement" against which Abel's "running after evil"—in an environment that itself flows—opens a particular dynamic of escape that blooms in later literary narratives.

Texts since the early 1990s exhibit distinct responses to bureaucracy vis-à-vis dependency. The title of "Dear Shorty," a story in Chuculate's *Cheyenne Madonna*, refers to a letter in which Jordan Coolwater recommends that his alcoholic Cherokee father, Shorty, "step up to top shelf" Listerine. By this time, Shorty has already overdosed countlessly amid a pile of empty mouthwash bottles, only receiving treatment when his son manages to locate him in alcohol-induced comas. Shorty's binges occur in city parks, culverts, and abandoned houses, despite his inherited ownership of a "nice Cherokee Housing Authority home" just outside of town—rather, the urban Tulsa spaces mean "a shorter walk to the liquor store" (64). This indicates the failure of subsidized housing projects to make much of a difference without addressing deeper problems, illuminating the same social injustices that French and Bertoluzzi observe when they point out that the "nearly two-thirds [of Cherokees who] have sub-standard housing" are more susceptible to alcohol abuse (333). Explicit linkages between substance dependence and agency presences surface in the brief "Family Portrait" from *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. Narrator Junior Polatkin explains:

> Then there was the summer of sniffing gas. My sisters bent their heads at impossible angles to reach the gas tanks of BIA vehicles. Everything so bright and precise, it hurt the brain. … I remember my brother stretched out over the lawn-mower, his mouth pressed tightly to the mouth of the gas tank. It was a strange kiss, his first kiss, his lips burnt and clothes flammable. He tried to dance away, he named every blade of grass he crushed when he fell on his ass. Everything under water… (195)

The narrator eroticizes a dysfunctional relationship, underscoring the seductive danger of addiction to huffing as well as bureaucracy. A warning label immediately follows the above passage, highlighting its images of gas and flame while cautioning Natives against the effects of a "concentrated" bureaucracy: "WARNING: *Intentional misuse by deliberately concentrating and inhaling the contents can be harmful or fatal.*" (196). Interactions between officials and Natives, relative to the illicit substances that bind them, expose a prime thread of Native alienation. As these actors converge toward a breaking point in a complex landscape, administrative surveillance elicits a pressure for Eurowestern conversion but also manifests an ironic escape route for those fancydancers who pursue alternate transformations.

Public Health Surveillance and the "Drunken Indian"

Modern public health surveillance arose in the nineteenth century from the practice of monitoring interpersonal contact among those afflicted with communicable diseases (Thacker and Stroup 31). This practice complexifies in the context of settler bureaucracy: because "[p]ublic health surveillance is the cornerstone of public health practice," treatment of Native illness comes pre-installed with the problematic politics of settler surveillance strategies (Hahn and Stroup 7). As it has expanded across U.S. federal and state agencies, public health surveillance may be defined as the "systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of outcome-specific data essential to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health practice, and closely integrated with the timely dissemination of these data to public health practitioners" (Hahn and Stroup 7). Critical to a critique of this apparatus are its methods of collection, interpretation, and dissemination of data, consisting of quantitative observation with little inclusion of experiences of Native drinking. Officials, physicians, and other health

professionals working with the BIA and the Bureau Indian Education, the IHS, and larger institutions like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, execute most surveillance of Native health.[31] Reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act in 1996 also established a system of Tribal Epidemiology Centers to expand health surveillance of Native communities (*Best Practices* 12). The array of institutions that *use* this data is more varied: federal and state agencies, regional Indian health boards, tribal governments and programs, and urban Native health organizations (Denny et al. 1).

In the context of settler surveillance, this data undergirds interpretations of Native culture, behavior, and biology. Health surveillance systematizes this material: databases and archives elicit categorizations of information on the distribution of risk factors, including health-relevant behaviors, for the development of treatment programs (Thacker and Stroup 31). In the context of Native health, these practices constitute one institutional arm of what Vizenor calls "ethnographic surveillance," which produces oppositional images of settler and *Indian* (*Fugitive* 145). Early oversight by officials, present in BIA reports, mutually shaped narratives about Native behavior; later reports on drinking patterns—from "the Relocation people," for instance—transferred these narratives into an ever rationalizing domain of health surveillance. *House Made of Dawn* provided a foundational exploration of this process. Abel develops a troubled romantic relationship with his social worker, who remains entrenched in progressive ideology:

> But Milly believed in tests, questions and answers, words on paper. … She believed in Honor, Industry, the Second Chance, the Brotherhood of Man, the American Dream, and him—Abel; she believed in him. After a while he began to suspect as much, and…
>
> That night—he could not remember how it came about; he had got a little drunk—he made love to her. He had been watching her. (94)

Here, bureaucratic textuality functions as a technology of surveillance deployed by public health workers. (To say nothing of the gendered inverse surveillance of Milly by Abel.) Diverse textual genres enable these professionals to perform surveillance in their composite role as supervisors and archivists, codifying pathological constructions of health-relevant behavior. The supervision of Native bodies reflects the ways that health bureaucracy objectifies Native bodies, cultures, and epistemes. Such data collection works as a "simulation of [true] surveillance," which projects essential images of dependence just as it makes observations that might translate into useful therapies (*Native* 204). The "drunken Indian" materializes in surveillance discourse, from the legal to the medical to the journalistic. Images of Native insobriety, incoherence, and violence keep the oversight apparatus in place.

On a larger scale, public health surveillance enforces Eurowestern paradigms of health. U.S. settler administration bears the imprint of a national legacy of temperance movements, particularly its moral dimensions, which persist in current surveillance practice. The Protestant basis for these movements presented an early problem relative to the *interpretation* phase of public health surveillance. Prussing claims that federal and state policy, advocacy campaigns, medical research, and even political activism "continued to reflect and arguably perpetuate morally charged perspectives on the pathological aspects of alcohol use" throughout the twentieth century (*White* 9). Such interpretive models affix substance dependence to Native people along with other markers of social deviance. The institutional contexts in which data is collected obscures these moral perspectives, as seen in a questionnaire in *House Made of Dawn*:

> Do you prefer the company of men or of women?
> Do you drink alcoholic beverages to excess often, occasionally, not at all?
> Which would you prefer to watch, a tennis match or a bullfight?
> Do you consider yourself of superior, above average, average, below average intelligence? (92-3)

Questions designed to surveil deviant sexualities, substance use, violent proclivities, and intellect weave together to ferret out the pathological *Indian*. *House Made of Dawn* exposes a history of exploitation of substance use, via bureaucratic surveillance, to impose biomedical definitions of health, illness, and treatment. Like temperance discourse, the biomedical paradigm ostracizes those who do not follow its procedures. The firewater trope survives in psychosocial and genetic as well as moral etiologies, all of which articulate tragic difference. Alcohol has always been an integral part of the narrative of Native cultural disintegration and disappearance. Most of our codified knowledge in the U.S. about Native alcohol use remains "a form of colonial knowledge that emerges from a process wherein cultural beliefs and practices, biological entities and processes, and social interactions and pathologies are constructed through various institutions, disciplines, and intellectual images" (Quintero 57). Diverse discourses and images converge in administrative surveillance practice, feeding into those medical treatments and therapies that professionals develop from interpreted data.

The *dissemination* of surveillance data at all institutional levels—from bureaucratic reports to treatment program literature—imposes settler ideology through its enforcement of Eurowestern definitions of health. At the ground level, this shapes Native peoples' interpretations of their own health, in its biological, social, and political contexts. Gilbert Quintero argues that "one of the primary goals of colonization … is that Natives learn to accept colonial categories and ways of thinking. Colonialism is most all-encompassing when Natives adopt and enact these categories and accept them as real" (66). Compounding the problem, Native writers may absorb and further circulate colonial ways of thinking. Until the '90s, even those that did not frame alcohol as a moral flaw often framed it as a curse, a stain of Eurowestern modernity. In *House Made of Dawn* and *Ceremony*, this discourse activates as critique relative to

its socioeconomic and political contexts. Historically, settler health bureaucracy must be construed as medical colonialism, a strategy of deploying medical services, supplies, and infrastructure in order to supplant Native practices. It was always "intended to disrupt indigenous social structures as a way of enforcing acculturation" (Kelm 344). The rhetorical power of *House Made of Dawn* lies partly in its refusal to acquiesce to settler health paradigms, as prior eras of Native stories about alcohol use often did. This literary legacy reveals how power naturalizes and recapitulates itself through discourse.

Continued suppression of Indigenous knowledge underscores the fallibility of modern biomedicine, which has justified two centuries of intrusion on Native sovereignty via surveillance, research, regulation, and treatment programs. In a comparative exploration of Cree health, Naomi Adelson explains how "health is interpreted, idealized, and enacted in various ways. …[E]xperiences and understandings of health and well-being are always historically and culturally mediated" (3).[32] Native medicine tends to value social and experiential as well as biomedical etiologies of illness. Scholars now conceptualize health not as mere biological condition, but as "a constituted social reality, constructed through the medium of the body using the raw materials of social meaning and symbol" (Adelson 5). In the context of settler-colonialism, this manifests as paternalistic oversight. Settler oversight expresses, imposes, and enforces particular norms in its surveillance of Native bodies and communities. Ultimately, "all definitions of health … are laden with ideological nuances that can never be separated from cultural norms and values" (Adelson 3). For this reason, health surveillance within simplified syncretic models remains problematic. The mere practice of Indigenous paradigms of health, illness, and space highlight the politics of health in a neocolonial context and exposes the preconceived definitions of Natives within settler culture. Alternate health practices defy settler

bureauracy by placing more emphasis on restoring appropriate relations rather than functionality. *House Made of Dawn* and *Ceremony* initiated an era of Native protagonists who search their respective worlds for localized, sometimes intertribal, practices for health transformation. These depictions always speak doubly, critiquing settler constructs while articulating the experiential dynamics of illness in Native communities.

Data collection and interpretation express settler biopower through an extensive history of regulation and treatment. From the establishment of the BIA, agents observed Native drinking habits. This practice developed along with bureaucratic encroachment, as the modern settler state claimed new territory and an absolute right to all information within its arbitrary borders. David Jones notes that "[d]iseases exist as negotiated social phenomena that patients, doctors, and societies use to assign value and meaning to bodily phenomena" (5). Settler institutions surveil and regulate in order to evaluate Native health transformations on a categorical scale. These strategies operate as expressions of biopower, a force that first "reduced life into a series of exacting calculations by the state and assigned knowledge as the power to transform human life. The subject of the state's calculations increasingly became the life and death of the population as a whole, as opposed to specific individuals" (Erikson 466). While effective for some public health interventions, the generalized and hyper-rationalized administration of Native life disrupted much of its intended purpose. An institutionalized treatment industry "homogenizes and standardizes" Native people, although "both federal and tribal bureaucracies now have a role in subsidizing and promoting what they recognize as traditional healing and culture" (Quintero 63). The early disintegration of Native sovereignty implanted settler narratives in politically irregular spaces, where they could metastasize, such as reservation or urban Native communities. Such narratives and their categories were then impossible to extricate from each other, as "the

real or imaginary Indian drinking problem [was viewed] as an explanation for all Indian problems" (French and Bertoluzzi 332). Indelible generalization underwrote the larger problem of Native political disadvantage in diverse social environments.

As it shapes behavior by propagating the firewater complex, settler surveillance discourse obstructs the transformations that public health surveillance is, in theory, supposed to enable. According to Thatcher, "firewater" became "part of a persistent cultural construct that has been modified and expanded over time. As both a cluster of beliefs and a set of actual drinking norms, this construct has … becom[e] an independent cause of destructive substance abuse patterns and an obstacle to personal and community self-determination and resiliency" (116). The construct confuses two separate but related responses to ingesting alcohol: the first is biological, while "[t]he second response is culturally defined [and] refers to behaviour influenced by local norms, or 'comportment.' Stated another way, how people 'comport themselves' while drinking is culturally defined and socially learned" (Thatcher 128).[33] Treatment programs are designed to assimilate Natives partly by generalizing and then transforming drunken comportment. Treatment has historically reinforced the firewater complex through its use of a biomedical model to construct and then associate the disease of "alcoholism" with Native people. Perhaps most problematically, the complex involves "informal beliefs that guide the drinking pattern of socially disaffected band members, …and serve as an excuse for drunken comportment" (Thatcher 129-30). Thus, health surveillance, regulation, and treatment tend to abandon communities' most vulnerable members by attaching added meanings to Native drinking, such as "the popular belief that 'Indian drinking' is inevitably associated with extreme impairment and irresponsible and antisocial behaviour" (Thatcher 130). As in the many other instances of exiled substance users in Native literatures, *Ceremony* reveals the hidden places where "Indian

drinking" takes place: in the riverbed, under the overpass, and at the city dump near the Ceremonial grounds in Gallup. This last detail juxtaposes sites of Native invisibility—"where Gallup keeps Indians until Ceremonial time … [when they] show us off to the tourists" (108)—with the double-edged visibility of public performances of traditional culture.

Few transformations are possible in such a model. All treatment methods remain entangled with the recovery movement, "which tends to disempower people with its repetitive message that we are all weak, diseased, and helpless" (Thatcher 133). The recovery movement emerged through progressive campaigns centered on personal development stretching back to the settler-colonial origins of the U.S. and Canada, "from Puritans to AA and the 'co-dependency movement.' …[E]ach of these movements encourage surrender of the personal will to a system or a higher power that demands unqualified acceptance of an expert's advice" (Thatcher 133). In this model of personal health, several bureaucratic (and Franklinian) virtues are operable, including strict order and obedience to developmental procedure; by contrast, its moralized elements, which include a "respect for complexities and uncertainties," signify failures of self-control as well as character (Thatcher 133). Physical and discursive movement accrue powerful purchase within (and against) a model driven by moral order and obedience.

In a Native literature of insobriety that begins with Momaday, authors express cynicism about bureaucracy's ability to transform the "drunken Indian." They interrogate the worst colonial assumptions about Native substance use. In doing so, they critique progressive Eurowestern transformation, gesturing at ideological contradictions in treatment. Yet they don't necessarily interrogate the image itself as it emerges from settler discourse. A relocated Kiowa roadman in *House Made of Dawn*, the Reverend John Big Bluff Tosamah, leads a community center service in Los Angeles that marks Abel's alienation even from the urban Native

community. Smart but cynical, Tosamah criticizes Abel for the difficulty he finds in adapting to majority urban life. He first outlines the progressive road of administrative assistance:

> "You take that poor cat… They gave [Abel] every advantage. They gave him a pair of shoes and told him to go to school. They deloused him and gave him a lot of free haircuts and let him fight on their side. But … [h]e was too damn dumb to be civilized." (131)

Tosamah describes Abel's inability to follow the administrative plan. He understates the effects of U.S. military service on Native men during the Second World War and signals the ways that diverse bureaucratic institutions fail to convert him to the majority culture. Ben Benally explains how "the Relocation people got [Abel] a job with the schools, taking care of the grounds and all, but he showed up drunk a couple of times and they fired him after the first week and a half" (143). But there's another road if the progressive narrative fails, and this road is equally written into settler ideology. Tosamah continues his tirade:

> "So what happened? They let him alone at last. They thought he was harmless. They thought he was going to plant some beans, man, and live off the fat of the land. Oh, he was going to make his way, all right. He would get some fat little squaw all knocked up, and they would lie around all day and get drunk and raise a lot of little government wards. They would make some pottery, man, and boost the economy. But it didn't turn out that way. He turned out to be a real primitive sonuvabitch, and the first time he got hold of a knife he killed a man. That must have embarrassed the hell out of them." (131)

Tosamah posits a stereotyped alternative: Abel can skate by as a lazy ward and sell his culture as primitivist art for extra cash. Tosamah's callous references to family life and the "fat squaw" reflect the degree to which he has absorbed the colonial narrative of Native assimilation. But neither road works for Abel. Oversight does not rehabilitate him; it produces more insobriety and violence, and so he continues to "embarrass" the administrative apparatus. Early critics often construed Abel as a man "caught between two worlds" in "modern, industrial America."[34] It is not "modern America" that he struggles with, however. (Though its replacement of a natural ecology with an industrial one plays a role.) Tosamah's words signify an ideology that

encourages Native internalization of an image of themselves as dependents, as "pathological, [and] dysfunctional individuals in need of some type of treatment" (Quintero 62). The politics of regulation become more problematic as health agencies comprehend Native people through the lens of the recovery movement, where they are "sick with a chronic condition that cannot be cured but only treated" (Quintero 62). This precludes transformation and serves the treatment industry by justifying its perpetual presence and, thus, allocations of federal and state funds. Vizenor notes that most studies about Native alcohol use assume that "tribal drinking is somehow different from other drinking," and that dependence is most prevalent among those who are least acculturated ("Firewater" 31). These ideas punish Native persons with the paradox of racialized chronic illness and progressive cultural assimilation. A larger, more invasive treatment model activates at the border between the two.

In contemporary literatures about substance use, authors critique Euro-American treatment discourses but also expose the ironies of the treatment system itself. They show how Native people express political resistance in counternarratives of insobriety that spotlight bureaucratic inefficacy. Their texts situate the struggles of substance dependents in a neoliberal economic structure, in order to express goals distinct from either biomedical or moralized Eurowestern conceptions of health transformation. They reveal new ways that Native communities co-opt, or at least exploit, certain features of the treatment industry:

> If there was anything good contributed to the tribe by the Abuse program, it came from the five full-time staff. Their combined salaries—$85,000—brought income to the community. But the patient turnover rate was deplorable. Of course, there were a handful of successes … who made federal funding a reality. To convert one "chronic" every six to eight years was considered a landmark. Regrettably, it was the old chronics who proved to be the hardest, nearly irreversible cases. (*BEC* 195)

Edgar identifies a cycle of dependency built into administrative treatment. He also portrays one strategy by which locals benefit from the program, though it also tacitly approves and legitimizes

the program: the average full-time salary for the few employed by the program runs to a respectable $17,000 (in 1976 dollars). Native individuals, substance-dependent or otherwise, find ways to take advantage of a pervasive bureaucratic system. Yet Edgar critiques the settler categories that keep the system in motion, the labels by which agencies, officials, other health professionals, and treatment programs maintain control. He indicates how the term "chronic" elides the political dimensions of illness and lends itself to perpetual oversight rather than renewal. Relative to settler–Native interactions, discursive disruption unravels the politics of dependence.

Thunderbird Drunk with the "the wondrous / pleasure of forget / everything medicines"

Conceptual reinscription lies at the heart of Native literatures of insobriety, as an escape route from settler health surveillance. Momaday identified a major component of the struggles of many Natives in "[t]he persistent attempt to generalize the Indian [which] has resulted in a delusion and a nomenclature of half truths" ("Morality" 58). As the operative narrative technology in this process of "delusion," health surveillance engenders a new dynamic of literary engagement. Authors unsettle and redefine the nomenclature of Native dependence—its categories, concepts, and constructs—that governs administrative regulation and treatment of Native health. They offer a lens for critiquing real-life treatment misfires at the site of contact between Native and Euro-American conceptions of substance use, illness, and treatment. Biomedical interpretations lend themselves to individualistic programs that orient intervention toward individual transformation. Prussing observes that many Natives suffering dependency decry the failures of institutional programs to address kinship and community, to help "refocus one's existence around positive cultural values such as social obligations and spiritual purpose.

Programs based on conventional U.S. ideas about "alcoholism" do not speak to these concerns, positing the transformation of individual self from drinker to "recovering alcoholic" instead" ("Sobriety" 357). Though these conventional programs often stress spiritual growth, they activate within a Euro-American religious context, which organizes growth according to a single order rather than a plurality of approaches. Native notions of recovery also emphasize a view of connectedness wherein "mental, physical, and spiritual health and wellness are inseparable. Thus, concepts such as mental health may be inappropriate for Native American people in that this term implies separation" (Szlemko et al. 445). Refashioning treatment, then, relies on transformation in conceptual, discursive, and narrative domains. Through a Native poetics of insobriety, authors reframe intoxication and its causative substances contrary to separative principles.

The thunderbird figure presents an epistemological contact point with settler knowledge relative to health and community. The thunderbird became a popular symbol of transformation, alternatively adopted as a name brand for a potent fortified wine and as a halfway house system, Thunderbird Halfway House, a transitional space for social reintegration.[35] Many Native and First Nations story cultures carry evidence of thunderbirds, from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Northwest, the Great Plains to the Southwest, where the figure might be a single divine being, an alter-species, or something in between such as the Anishinaabe manitous. Anishinaabe stories say that an assembly of manitous, non-human persons who possess immense power, conceived their ancestors. Basil Johnston explains that "none was more revered for its potency" than the thunderbird; in fact, the thunderbird was known among the Anishinaabeg to care for the Earth's "health and well-being, to give her a drink when she is thirsty" (120). This reflects the thunderbird's association with rainfall. In an exploration of thunderbird imagery in Anishinaabe

art, Carmen Robertson argues that the thunderbird serves as a symbol of energy and transformation (55-58). Further, like all manitous in Anishinaabe medicine practice, the thunderbird may be invoked "to achieve a form of metamorphosis through transformative power for both the healer and the patient" (56). Thanks to its abundance in traditional arts, the thunderbird also developed a rich literary tradition: the prominent early twentieth-century Salish author D'Arcy McNickle, for example, wrote of thunderbirds in his posthumously published novel, *Wind from an Enemy Sky* (1978), as "characters who can move between worlds" (Huhndorf and Pratt 279).

In its appearance in stories of substance use, the thunderbird bears the dual meaning of referring to Native cosmo-mythic traditions and real-life usages: the substances that mark extreme dependence, abjection, intoxication, and therefore a greater potentiality for transformation. Authors juxtapose this image with Euro-American conceptions of dependence. In Alexie's story, "Amusements," narrator Victor and Sadie place a drunk and passed-out Native man on a carnival ride. The scene foregrounds a divergence of spiritual traditions:

> "Oh, Jesus, Jesus," Sadie screamed, laughed. She leaned on my shoulder and laughed until tears fell. I looked around and saw a crowd had gathered and joined in on the laughter. Twenty or thirty white faces, open mouths grown large and deafening, wide eyes turned toward Sadie and me. They were jury and judge for the twentieth-century fancydance of these court jesters who would pour Thunderbird wine into the Holy Grail. (56)

Here Alexie plays on Christianity, yet the prank unintentionally thrusts Victor and Sadie into the white public's judgmental eye. The moment represents a shift in perspective as Victor grasps the implications of their act: he recognizes that they put on display and thus reinforced the image of another "drunken Indian." That the event occurs at a carnival underscores the illusory, imagistic dynamic of the scene, and it reveals the cultural politics behind the occurrence's interpretation by the "twenty or thirty white faces."

Observed early on to be a transformative substance by Native people, alcohol may be reoriented to offer restorative outcomes for which sobriety programs are designed. Stories about alcohol use may function as "interpretive transformation," or a "reconstitution of self" within a localized tribal community (Prussing, "Sobriety" 357). This begins with disrupting pathological definitions of Native drinking, to expose them as reflective of deeply rooted and damaging behavioral patterns yet also as a discursive site of fluid reinterpretation. *House Made of Dawn* illustrates the ways that alcohol wounds Native communities, starting with Abel's return home after war: his inability to recognize his grandfather as he stumbles drunk off the bus demonstrates a "marked lack of recognition of kinship," "so shocking in a culture where elders are highly valued" (Scarberry-Garcia 28). This establishes Abel as a portrait of the "drunken Indian," and embodies the potential for transformative substance use later in the novel.

By contrast, recent authors reimagine alcohol as a distinct connecting tissue. Alexie crafts a story about memory and dependence in "Because My Father Always Said He Was the Only Indian Who Saw Jimi Hendrix Play "The Star-Spangled Banner" at Woodstock." In reminiscing about his father, Victor explores alcohol not only as a family legacy, but also as the source of his own genesis: "I was conceived during one of those drunken nights, half of me formed by my father's whiskey sperm, the other half formed by my mother's vodka egg. I was born a goofy reservation mixed drink, and my father needed me just as much as he needed every other kind of drink" (27). Here, Victor, his mother, and his father transmute into alcoholic drinks. They become condensed by signatures of substance use. The personification of inherited dependence suggests a generational pattern, one rooted in more than faulty character, playing on genetic etiologies while gesturing at a larger problem of dependence and its links to family and community. By teasing biological explanations for alcohol abuse, Victor expresses a poetics of

insobriety, which is to say a thunderbird poetics. “Reservation mixed drinks” emblematizes Natives born to absent or violent substance-dependent fathers, or those born with fetal alcohol syndrome. But the tone of the passage eludes the tragedy fixed in the logic behind its images. Victor’s language confuses intoxication with sex, dependence and love. In this, he articulates a social recipe shaped by alcohol, claiming it as a birthright yet signaling how troubled families impact wider community relations.

Authors manipulate stereotypes in order to spotlight the sociopolitical environments that hinder motion toward personal and community well-being. Alexie’s characters, for example, often joke about sobriety’s entanglement in neoliberal culture. Glib language disguises how they regard dependence equally with sincere humor and grief. They mock individualistic conceptions of recovery which extract person from community. In this, alcohol allows Native writers to “occupy an epistemological space where [they can] use colonial knowledge to think and talk about themselves” (Quintero 64). They coopt images of Native dependence in order to critique settler-colonialism’s dependence on such images for its progressive identity. In “Only Traffic Signal on the Reservation Doesn’t Flash Red Anymore,” Victor and a friend, Adrian, recount tales of “reservation heroes,” basketball players who never make it through high school but live on in stories of their brief basketball prowess, their young lives damaged by alcohol. During their conversation, the two joke about their own experience of sobriety:

> “Are you dead yet?” I asked.
> “Nope,” he said. “Not yet. Give me another beer.”
> “Hey, we don’t drink no more, remember? How about a Diet Pepsi?”
> “That’s right, enit? I forgot. Give me a Pepsi.” (44)

Little has changed one year later, except that the current hero they discuss, Julius Windmaker, has “gone bad” like all the rest, just as Adrian predicted he will a year earlier—just as classic narratives about Native men who fail to adapt to “modern, industrial America.” Now, Victor

notes that Julius "has even been drinking Sterno," which will "kill his brain quicker than shit" (51). The two men are at it again, "on the porch in the same chairs," and they repeat the joke:

> "I'm thirsty," Adrian said. "Give me a beer."
> "How many times do I have to tell you? We don't drink anymore."
> "Shit," Adrian said. "I keep forgetting. Give me a goddamn Pepsi."
> "That's a whole case for you today already."
> "Yeah, yeah, fuck these substitute addictions." (50)

Their stasis reflects a tongue-in-cheek failure to extricate oneself from cycles of dependence, but it also reveals the neoliberal influences in Euro-American treatment, which may be understood to trade substance addiction for consumerism. The running joke counters the deep cynicism of the story. Its format plays on links between memory and dependence: the men remember the tragic lives of boys through stories of their artistry on the basketball court, yet the fail to remember their own conversion to sobriety. This teases the tragic elements of Euro-American interpretations of Native drinking, yet still depicts the profound difficulties on reservation communities. Practices of memory and forgetting offer escape from these elements, as well as the brief reprieve of laughter in a community deeply wounded by alcohol use.

In an administrative system that disposes of Native substance users by surveilling them and recording their suffering as tragic history, *forgetting* becomes an important act of resistance against the archive. Literary forgettings recall historical usages of alcohol by Native people as early as the seventeenth century, when the Haudenosaunee were known to drink to "deprive themselves of their senses" and escape themselves (Conrad 6). Administrative warnings in twentieth-century texts like *House Made of Dawn* and *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* mark a surveillance that categorizes Natives and reminds them their place in the system. Ben Benally frequently observes this dynamic between the Relocation people and Abel, indicating the value of forgetting in coping with surveillance: "They were always *warning* him,

you know? Telling him how he had to stay out of trouble, or else he was going to wind up in prison again. I guess he had to think about that all the time, because they wouldn't let him forget it" (139). The continual threat of incarceration inadvertently fuels Abel's feelings of systemic alienation and reaffirms his failure. In several later scenes that illustrate the positive effects of intoxication on community, Ben remarks that Abel "was always drunk. We used to get drunk together, and it was all right because it made us loose and happy and we could kid around and forget about things" (160). Memory loss assumes different meanings relative to systems of surveillance and enforcement, in turn reconceptualizing the substances that induce it. The projected, future image of Native incarceration indicates further how surveillance serves to construct and then imprint images of Native deficiency. In *Dark Thirty*, Mangled Creekbed uses inhalants to make his "memory deaf with glue" and briefly forget these images, as well as the social forces that negatively impact his life (20). While memory loss may present a real-world problem for substance users like Mangled, in Native literatures of sobriety it is more likely to be depicted as a first step to reorientation: substances take on value for their ability to wipe away the images of settler surveillance for a while.

Authors engage with traditional medicines and substances linked to extreme dependence, relative to their effects on memory and administrative control. Gordon Henry writes of the nexus between these elements in his poem, "November Becomes the Sky With Suppers for the Dead." An archival image surfaces near the beginning but faces communication breakdown: "[w]hite photographers talk in / the house of mainstream / media," but the speaker "can't articulate / the agony of [an old man named] Eagle Singer's / children to them." In a following stanza, agency lapses in providing for the basic needs of tribal members disrupt tragic images of addiction: "…another / generation shoots / crushed and heated / prescriptions / … the fixtures yet to be /

installed in the house, / yet to be heated / by the tribal government, / for another night / stolen by the stupors / and the wondrous / pleasure of forget / everything medicines" (72). Despite its negative implications, drug-induced memory loss allows users a "wondrous pleasure"—to disremember an administrative presence expressed through inadequate housing and its adverse health effects, representing trademark bureaucratic failure. A second tension arises between "forgetting" and the community legacy of "another generation's" drug use. This implicates the neoliberal U.S. health delivery system, as well, by which local people acquire and abuse prescription drugs.

Many authors juxtapose forgetting and remembrance as valuable acts for those suffering under settler administration. Their stories show how alcohol and other medicines provide means for actualizing both. Alcohol does so through its social uses: biologically it offers forgetfulness, but socially it offers a memory practice stitched together in story, song, and dance. The several pages in which Ben assumes narration in *House Made of Dawn* are interspersed with Navajo ceremonial songs; one of these, the first line from which the novel gets its title, offers physical and spiritual recovery as well as reorientation to the environment. A few pages after singing this song, Ben articulates alternate valences of memory:

> You've got to put a lot of things out of your mind, or you're going to get all mixed up. You've got to take it easy and get drunk once in a while and just forget about who you are. It's hard, and you want to give up. You think about getting out and going home. You want to think that you belong someplace, I guess. You go up there on the hill and you hear the singing and the talk and you think about going home. But the next day you know it's no use; you know that if you went home there would be nothing there, just the empty land and a lot of old people, going noplace and dying off. And you've got to forget about that, too. (140)

Ben implicates administrative alienation in impairing memory's ability to heal. Cynically, Ben believes that "you've got to forget about" the wounded land and community, particularly elders. In the context of drinking, forgetting instead may signal a re-membering of healthy body and

community through story and song. Ben will explain that the ceremonial songs are not appropriate for casual celebrations, but both expressive contexts remain vital. Native story and song traditions offer a double-edged remembrance that complements the other memory work that intoxication facilitates. Later, Ben recounts a story that reminds him of his grandfather's stories:

> "…and it was like that old grandfather talking to me, telling me about *Esdzá shash nadle*, or *Dzil quigi*, yes, just like that. How was it? I remember, yes; you drink a little wine and you remember. A long time ago it was dark, and you looked in the fire and listened, and he was going on with his work and talking, going on about all he knew, and he knew everything and there was no end to the stories and the songs." (164)

This recollection identifies storytelling and singing practices, together with wine, as mechanisms in a deeper practice of memory. They are vital to sustaining family and community. Passages in *House Made of Dawn* that mention elders reflect how Abel will bury his grandfather according to Jemez Pueblo customary practice, reestablishing appropriate social relations and finally "running after evil" in the rain at novel's end.

The bureaucratic landscape and its control over information, its usage of surveillance to absorb data into the archive, presents an institutional story-space for the thunderbird drunk to unsettle classification. Accordingly, thunderbird stories involve movement—whether sincere movement from sick to healthy spaces, or an ironic movement through sick spaces in a process of redefinition. Gordon Henry pairs literal motion with the motion of language play in "The Second Door: I as Traveler I." Each stanza in the poem begins with "*I am a traveler:*," emphasizing how these classes of motion work together to precipitate experience and knowledge, revealing opportunities for communal action. The speaker's motion works in and against an administrative landscape that seeks to confine Native bodies and identities:

> *I am a traveler:*
> wandering in and out of
> north suburban schools
> we talked of organizing

an Indian student walkout
…only to
realize we had the necessary
federal blood quantum,
but not the critical mass, so (28-9)

The poem establishes, like many texts in the Native literature of insobriety, "travelers" who move with regard to racialized bureaucratic landscapes, discourses, and definitions. Henry then introduces the term "thunderbird drunk," first as an adjective to describe a state of desperate but potentially visionary movement—a trouble on the edge of transformation:

where we continued
to wander in and out of
north suburban factories,
universities,
thunderbird drunk and in trouble;
where we guzzled and smoked
against the wall of the Teepee
liquor store; (29)

Movement through institutionalized spaces (such as universities) and those of socioeconomic exclusion (factories, reservation liquor stores) by Natives "thunderbird drunk and in trouble," positions them to gather a "critical mass" of Indigenous agents. But the lexical ambiguity in the term—"thunderbird drunk" as a noun, a figure—transmutes the language into something with the potential to unsettle categories. The language joins cultural practice and transformative resistance to the Native body and in the process refigures the "drunken Indian," rather than merely ascribing the thunderbird to mistaken states of drunkenness. Thus, such stories explore how Euro-American and Native discourses about alcohol use inversely "link the interpretations, motivations, and actions of social actors to the political-economic landscape of constraints and opportunities that they inhabit" (Prussing, *White* 5). These constraints then show themselves to be discursive as well as structural; stories of insobriety after a way to push back.

Traditional medicines like peyote in *House Made of Dawn* or Star Medicine in *Black Eagle Child* facilitate an alternate transformation that may transcend the use of substances like alcohol, paint, and glue. This brings readers nearer to the "visionary" stereotypes of Native alcohol use. Star Medicine is hallucinogenic, offering a literal sense of "visionary" movement to the members of the Well-Off Man Church—a spiritual tradition reminiscent of the Native American Church, whose name signals a holistic well-being. For Well-Off Man members, "all the good … in this world lies within the medicinal qualities of our Star-Medicine" (14-5). When Edgar Bearchild and his friend participate in a communal medicine practice, each ingests Star Medicine and has a detailed hallucinogenic experience—what the members of the congregation refer to as the "Star Journey." The boys had wanted to get drunk with a group of kids headed out for a celebration, but they were instead dragged to the medicine ceremony: later, "[f]ar off in the distance, we heard the group we wanted to go with, singing and drumming round dance songs on someone's car hood. Their drunken enjoyment seemed trite compared to ours" (31-2). Edgar indicates that not all intoxication is created equal. The boys stumble outside, minds full of visions, before a senior member joins them and leads Edgar to the river, a "sacred place," for some "Blessing Water." In a later scene, alcohol facilitates medicine practice: "three capsules of synthetic *Anaqwaoni* were opened and offered. … Alcohol dominated our better judgments; we stuck our tongues out like thirsty children and down the powder with beer" (125). Alternate substances may combine; Star Medicine becomes a visionary drink when paired with cheap beer.

The remains true of "root juice" in *Dark Thirty*, where a drink home-brewed by traditional medicines offers both a dangerous high and a counterintuitively visionary addiction. In "Gunshot Conjure," a healer named Bluerock brews a root-juice medicine from mysterious but identifiable sources that correlate with the natural and the cultural: "Snakeroot, bloodroot /

floating in juice / like river-grown thickets" (30). In the spring, Cherokee people search the banks of rivers for blood root, an herb that is often drunk as a tea to heal the liver, lungs and intestines (Cain). And yet root juice is also an addictive substance. An old grandfather "on his knees, not remembering / how he choked or shoved, / kicked or whipped, / just begging / for the root once more" (30). The first poem, "Root Juice," instead stands alone outside of any larger section of the book. The poem includes a recipe for this medicine of healing, intoxication, and dependence, which Bluerock then packages in reused soda bottles. Root juice will frame the remainder of the poems. Through it Frazier will question the efficacy of Native healing practices, yet these practices will always be tied to the natural environment, to rivers and rain:

> This ancient thing in plastic,
> plucked from the dirt and given the means to heal.
>
> This tincture of the gully bend—
> that ends gossip and calls down a flood.
>
> No hymn or myth tells how this root grows,
> a conjure pickled in a brine of spit and corn. (3)

The poem describes root juice as a "tincture," a concoction made from medicine dissolved in alcohol, like the Well-Off Man Church's Star Medicine. Bluerock's brew from "gully bend" instead combines, through Native medicine practices, firewater with its cold water antidote. In the nineteenth century, "sweet cold water" came to refer to non-alcoholic beverages that could aid in the path to sobriety (Ishii 105). Root juice elicits both temperance and insobriety, healing and dependence. River water bears literal and symbolic medicine against SUDs and negative images of Native addicts in its re-establishment of appropriate relations with the natural environment. These stories reflect a Native understanding that "[t]reating only the individual's mental or physical health without regard for all dimensions of the person and his or her

relationships with the world is ineffective" (Szlemko et al. 445). The "spit and corn" in the root juice offers a strange sort of visualization of this premise within the medicine itself.

Therapeutic Transformations: Songs of Cold Water and Thunder

Native authors articulate thunderbird transformation on personal and communal levels, where it signifies conversion from profound sickness to well-being. In this way, Native stories of insobriety may activate as narrative medicine: as expressions, they mirror real-world "therapeutic transformations," which Prussing explains as "culturally mediated shifts in behavior and subjective experience" (*White* 7-8). Personal, family, and community stories open a figurative landscape through which storytellers reframe administrative subjectivity. At their most pragmatic, stories reflect the importance of exploring how Native people talk about alcohol use, in order to consider "local perceptions of how colonization, race, and alcohol use are inextricably intertwined" (*White* 10). Authors articulate such perceptions outside the bounds of centralized administrative discourse and then place them in contradistinction to one another. As a poet as well as narrator of *Black Eagle Child*, Edgar describes the experience of being generically constructed: "The head administrator … grew up believing anyone from Black Eagle Child [settlement] was an unclean heathen. All those who sat directly beneath the director were entreated to listen to ugly lies of how we lived, ate, loved, and breathed and what we smelled like" (142-143). Yet expressions of community allow Edgar escape from centralized classification: "To forget those who knowingly violated the laws of freedom, I immersed myself in songs with a longtime friend…" (143). Expressions of transformation from a local practice and point-of-view offer resistance in reservation and urban communities alike.

Language presents a special problem for sobriety in a settler-bureaucratic context, because administrative systems demand that transformation occur through officialized discourses and rule sets. Momaday situates this problem of language at the center of *House Made of Dawn*. Tosamah preaches at length on the differences between Eurowestern and Native paradigms, taking aim at the bureaucratic proliferation of language:

> "In the white man's world, language, too—and the way in which the white man thinks of it—has undergone a process of change. The white man takes such things as words and literatures for granted, as indeed he must, for nothing in his world is so commonplace. On every side of him there are words by the millions, an unending succession of pamphlets and papers, letters and books, bills and bulletins, commentaries and conversations. He has diluted and multiplied the Word, and words have begun to close in upon him. He is sated and insensitive; his regard for language—for the Word itself—as an instrument of creation has diminished nearly to the point of no return." (*House* 95)

This proliferation dilutes health transformation through the categorical language of surveillance, the legalist language of regulation, and the often empty language of treatment. It limits the creative power of language by either evacuating its meaning or restricting it to technicality, projecting accountability onto others for the damage that it creates. Ben decries the impossibility of communicating with the Relocation people, who "can't help you because you don't know how to talk to them. They have a lot of *words*, and you know they mean something, but you don't know what, and your own words are no good because they're not the same; they're different, and they're the only words you've got" (139). Ben recognizes that language games pre-determine interactions between Native people and officials. This reflects Ralph Hummel's claim that "[b]ureaucracy silences language" by determining what counts as speech: the bureau "is at war with language. Its aim is to silence speech by making language inaccessible" (132). Abel more acutely understands his trial in these terms, as a performance by men "who meant to dispose of him in words" in a conflict over the meanings of "murder" (90). They speak in a language built through institutional alienation of the Other. Abel notes that "after a while no one expected or

even wanted him to speak. … Word by word by word these men were disposing of him in language, *their* language, and they were making a bad job of it. … He could understand, however imperfectly, what they were doing to him, but he could not understand what they were doing to each other" (90). They attempt to confine Abel with legal definitions that ascribe transgressive (illegal, immoral) significations to his behavior, yet they remain unaware of their own bureaucratic subjectivity, their own place in the machine of settler oppression.

Recent texts complicate the oppositions that divide Indigenous from settler-bureaucratic language as they develop across *House Made of Dawn*. Gordon Henry foregrounds this discursive conflict, yet he explores emergent subjectivities in figures like the Native bureaucrat, who occupies a liminal space in administrative oversight and control. The speaker in "The Second Door: I as Traveler I" describes motion relative to the discursive elements of this liminality: "*I am a traveler:* / to Eagletown / where we sang with Two Crows / a couple of times, once / at the three kings feast; / where we tried to write / substance abuse reports / in the early morning, before / the BIA phone rang;" (31). The traveler's movement along the edge of administrative subjectivity brings two discursive types into fruitful contrast: traditional Anishinaabe singing and bureaucratized writing practices, chiefly those that activate in a dimension of hierarchy and surveillance. Hierarchies of communication transfer into substance use treatment, as exhibited in the recovery movement, which "emphasizes the personal rather than the social nature of [substance use] problems. It also emphasizes the need for expert assistance with problem solving, whether those experts come in the form of treatment professionals, healers, or recoverees who participate in self-help groups" (Thatcher 134). This top-down communication dynamic becomes problematic in its bureaucratic and individualistic domains, where settler knowledge unfolds procedurally.

House Made of Dawn posits a paradigm of transformation through communal expression, in "the stories and the songs" that take us home—an alternative to official models of therapeutic expression. The novel exhibits a proto-thunderbird poetics that structures narrative according to health transformation. Traditional Jemez story markers at the start and close—*Dypaloh* and *Qtsedaba*—situate the novel in communal expressive practice and spotlight the songs interspersed throughout. Ben explains several times the restorative plan he and Abel have made:

> "We were going to ride out in the first light to the hills. We were going to see how it was, and always was… We were going to get drunk, I said. We were going to be all alone, and we were going to get drunk and sing. We were going to sing about the way it always was. And it was going to be right and beautiful. It was going to be the last time. And he was going home." (166)

Ben and Abel's plan activates in the concurrence of drinking, remembrance, and traditional expression, which together create the condition of possibility for homecoming. Ben later outlines the transformation more explicitly, attaching a counterintuitive sense of peace to their shared insobriety: he says, Abel and I "were going to get drunk for the last time, and we were going to sing the old songs. We were going to sing about the way it used to be… We were going to be drunk and, you know, peaceful—beautiful" (128-29). *House Made of Dawn* exhibits several drinking practices, each with its own social context and transformative potential. Yet the narrative creates forward motion between the dysfunctional drunkenness at the start, when Abel cannot recognize his grandfather, and later scenes of communal drinking that occasion Native forms of therapeutic expression. Prussing argues that we must "attend to [such] cultural shaping of personal narratives, to the politics of how these perspectives interact in local social life, and to the consequences that these processes have for individuals seeking sobriety" (*White* 3). Institutional treatment programs might mandate that those seeking sobriety avoid social drinking altogether. Yet Ben and Abel's drunken stories and songs place them in a tradition of characters

concerned with the transformative power of narrative as it is conceptualized in Native cultural practice.

This motif surfaces often in Native literatures of bureaucracy and substance use. Through new modes of expression, Native characters catalyze a defiant experience, accessing a truth beyond the generalized and rationalized archive of Indigenous deficiency. In *Black Eagle Child*, Junior articulates generational cycles of dependence as a source of medicine: "As for alcohol, the destiny factor, whatever was brought to the old [healer] by patients was consumed for relatives who drank it long before us and had gone on to the Hereafter. We drank for the specific purpose of being blessed with their divine intervention" (220). His irreverent remark construes intoxication as an open line of communication with dead relations. Edgar signals a related expressive transformation as he becomes a poet. He describes Pat—the friend who shares his wisdom regarding the alcohol treatment center—as his foremost poetic influence, for "the tribal songs he composed stemmed from the hearts of our grandfathers"; he "had a way of convincing anyone to treat songs as if they were people" (143). Pat and Edgar sketch a paradigm of expressive transformation in which their ancestors remain alive, just as Abel and Ben's songs in *House Made of Dawn*. The novel's Jemez storytelling conventions signify how texts themselves may function as "regenerative stories of personal/cultural transformation [that] have the power to remake individuals spiritually and perhaps physiologically" (Scarberry-Garcia 1). Authors locate expressions of transformation in place, often water sites, within a deeply connected environment from which story and song—their relations—emerge. Ben's songs and Abel's final transformation occur in the context of rain and rivers, just as those of characters in *Black Eagle Child* and *Dark Thirty*.

In these texts, expressive practices converge in the ways that they actualize according to water in motion. The "thunder songs" of the upper Midwest align with the "cold water songs" of Five Tribes tradition, each marking a unique political and cultural history of regulation. In Henry's poem "At Once You Recall the Thunder Song," the speaker paints a picture of young people "under the influence," defiant of administrative exclusion and surveillance, which privileges the efficient use of data:

> …
>
> None of the singers
> will go into the mission
>
> Under the influence
> of gasoline fumes
> a boy runs naked into
> a barbed wire fence
>
> The tribal custodian
> dances with a BIA mop
>
> The Chairman's deep in a dream
> of information
> about using information
> more effectively
>
> From steep bluffs
> you look deep into
> the river
> held back by pointless dreams
> and simple songs of home. (14-15)

The speaker presents various coping strategies for holding oneself back from suicide: running "under the influence," dancing, and singing "simple songs of home" at the river. Moreover, these motive acts disrupt the "effective use of information" by administrators. Henry interweaves the motion of Native bodies and water sources as part of this interruption of power. "The Second Door: I as Traveler I" exhibits a parallel movement of body and voice marked by water

language: the speaker describes traveling to the northern plains of Red River country, at the University of North Dakota for "a more advanced degree / among Dakota and Turtle / Mountain people," "where we learned of the thirsty / dance, where travelers gave us / thunder songs" (30-1). These passages reaffirm water and movement as central to therapeutic expression. New practices emerge through travel, eliciting interactions between different communities and traditions.

Running water makes an appropriate figurative landscape for human movement in many Native traditions. The language of the "thirsty dance" (or Sun Dance), a ceremonial event among Plains peoples, mirrors the thunder songs and the cold water discourse of Five Tribes stories that disrupt firewater narratives. This fluid semantic field generates intertribal community, as each of these texts shows. The speaker in another poem from *The Failure of Certain Charms,* "Insulin Syringe Blues in the Key of Turtle Mountain," forms a new relation outside his tribal group with a man he names his "thirsty dance brother" (52). Thunder(bird) discourse pervades the work of authors across the continent. In the case of Momaday, Ben sees that

> "There were a lot of Indians up there… We were all pretty drunk by that time, and there were a couple of drums, and some guy had a flute. There was a lot of liquor up there, and everybody was feeling pretty good. We started singing some of those real old-time songs, and it was still and cool up there. Somebody built a fire, and we heated the drums until they were good and tight and you could really hear them. And pretty soon they started to dance. Mercedes Tenorio had some turtle shells and she started a stomp dance. You know, she was going all around with those shells in the firelight and calling out just like an old-timer, "Ee he! Oh ho! Ah ha!" And everybody started to answer in the same way… You can forget about everything up there." (127-28)

Several such scenes echo the "forty-nine" dance tradition, which, since its origin in 1910s Oklahoma, have become the staple afterparty of powwow culture. While customary practice prohibits drug and alcohol use during powwows, unofficial celebrations held after ceremonial events almost always involve one of the two. These offer context for the celebrations in *House*

Made of Dawn.[36] They offer a kind of singing and communication not available in other social situations yet still adapted from customary tribal practice. Though as an expressive form they would seem to conflict with the thirsty dance, thunder songs, and cold water songs, they remain situated relative to emplaced discourse about community, memory, and transformation. They work alongside the Navajo "Night Chant" and other songs that Ben sings in the novel, which are rife with water images. The Night Chant begins,

> *Tségihi*.[37]
> House made of dawn,
> House made of evening light,
> House made of dark cloud,
> House made of male rain,
> House made of dark mist,
> House made of female rain,
> … (129)

As a divinity associated with the thunderbird, *Tségihi*'s home is constituted partly by water features like clouds and rain (Meli 225). Diverse qualities of water meet to orient the singer in a natural order and environment. Likewise, what came to be known as "cold water songs" were always meant to restore alcohol dependents to healthy cultural practice, transforming them into "cold water men." While many peoples engaged in "firewater" wordplay, "cold water" recalled a Cherokee tradition of conceptualizing and enabling health through sacred natural water sites like springs, streams, and rivers, which were believed to purify body and spirit. Native people already knew the relation between health and environment, including built spaces. Reflecting the practice of river immersion in the "going to the water" tradition, expressive remedies for spiritual and physical sickness also absorbed water as a central element.

Rivers flow through the poetics of insobriety due to their importance as transformative sites, where Cherokees reoriented "going to the water" practice toward restoration from alcohol dependence. In its resonances with firewater discourse and temperance history, water forms the

symbolic bridge between sobriety with sovereignty. Cherokees held many nineteenth-century temperance meetings "in the woods on the banks of the beautiful clear-running streams—or near some one of the fine springs," according to one missionary's daughter (qtd. Ishii 104). As common political borders, rivers often *were* "the line" that bootleggers transgressed in order to sell to Natives. These dynamics shifted over time, although the association of sobriety with respectability never abated. Vizenor argues that, because there is "less tolerance of drunkenness at social and tribal spiritual events," local culturally-oriented treatment programs for Native people might be more effective than those enacted by U.S. institutions and agencies (34). Yet non-ceremonial practices signal a variety of tribal strategies for eliciting positive transformation. Institutional spaces inflected by settler supervision remain less effective.

In Native literatures of sobriety, water serves as a structuring metaphor for therapeutic expression and health transformation via movement. Many stories exhibit motion between natural water sites and dysfunctional spaces that lack running water. The abandoned house that enables Shorty's "listo" abuse in *Cheyenne Madonna* has faulty plumbing; this is in fact the only reason he visits his Housing Authority home—to shower or bathe, once a month (65). *Black Eagle Child*, too, echoes this dynamic. The Well-Off Man Church believes that their Star Medicine came from beings that submerged themselves in a river bend, where a "tumultuous upsurge of an underwater river [now] healed or destroyed" (21). By contrast, the novel demonstrates bureaucratic failure in home spaces that also lack plumbing. Edgar notes that "the *Black Eagle Child Quarterly* contained the sad news that the state legislature had reneged on its long-held promises of twenty new houses with indoor plumbing. … The caption and text below the photograph … read: 'All Hope of Flushing Toilets Down the Drain for Twenty BEC Households…'" (223). This helps explain the difference in efficacy between institutional

therapeutic landscapes, from IHS hospitals to treatment centers, and those more rooted in tribal practice, relative to how their "treatment and care interactions are both therapeutic in effect and geographically constituted" (Andrews 309). These scenes in fact demonstrate how, as Gone and Wendt note, the "dichotomy between indigeneity and urbanization is historically and contemporaneously inaccurate" (1026); rather, storied administrative failures emphasize the absence of a true "urban-indigenous therapeutic landscape," a "visible urban space" where "community members [might] attempt to retain and promote traditional forms of Native social support, health, and healing" (1027). Thunder and cold water songs, thirsty dances, and other related practices of therapeutic expression narratively counter the real administrative failures to improve Native health. In this way, a poetics expressed in water-infused stories helps make visible Natives who have been discursively and spatially disappeared. Jodi Byrd describes how stories enact decolonial resistance when they "document the living Indian in the space of the expected dead one" (50). The authors addressed here depict living Native people in invisible spaces like culverts, alleys, or under bridges. Though their characters endure substance dependence, the stories suggest a reconstitution and reanimation of the broken Native body. Frazier observes this correlation in "The Bottle Collector": when his mother locks him out of the house, Mangled retreats to eat sandwiches in the only home he really has, "at the creek—a wash, the concrete sewer bed" (18). The creek and sewer resonate at once as a cold water image and as a site marked by narratives of Indigenous disappearance, where Mangled struggles to thrive.

Transformations of health are enacted first in language and story, for communities as well as individuals. To combat the "firewater" trope as it took hold in the nineteenth century, Cherokees advocated a model of personal transformation in the "cold water man"—an individual who asserts personal and cultural sovereignty through sobriety. A new genre was born in

temperance music: “cold water songs” soon became an integral part of each gathering (Ishii 102-103). This communal therapeutic practice wrote cold water discourse into space as well as song. The tradition marks an early sobriety-centered practice that later communal singing and storytelling practices, as those in *House Made of Dawn*, would echo. There, the narrative focalizes through several characters before Abel comes to a sense of balance and finds “the words of a song” while “concentrated in the sheer motion of running on” in the final paragraph (185). Although not free of his dependence, he has established a healing practice that actualizes through body and voice and their relation to community and the land. The songs sung by Ben, also, express a sense of community across time. The stories shared by the novel’s characters operate as “models of redefining or remaking one’s place in the natural world” (Scarberry-Garcia 2). For Abel and Ben, drinking, stories, and songs elicit a sense of peace in reorientation:

> “House made of dawn.” I used to tell him about those old ways, the stories and the sings, Beautyway and Night Chant. I sang some of those things, and I told him what they meant, what I thought they were about. We would get drunk, both of us, and then he would want me to sing like that. Well, we were up there on the hill last night, and we could hear the drums and the flute away off, and it was dark and cool and peaceful. (*House* 129)

Like many others, this passage expresses a communal therapeutic practice. In her analysis, Susan Scarberry-Garcia argues that, in the context of the novel, “[h]ealing is the process of achieving wholeness or a state of physical and spiritual balance, both within a person and between the person and his or her social and natural environment” (2). Story and song open a route to well-being by emphasizing cultural continuity. Language and motion orient spirit and body in space, correlating space with aesthetic resistance. Yet, although critics may see Abel’s transformation as one from insobriety to sobriety, the many alcohol use practices in the novel (not all of which are dysfunctional or harmful) disrupt a clean binary interpretation. Rather, Abel has oriented

himself to a praxis of appropriate relation—to self, community, and environment. The novel's ending instead functions as a path of transformative potential.

Affirming political sovereignty through literatures of sobriety remains paramount even in the twenty-first century. Rather, a poetics of insobriety, or thunderbird poetics, articulated since Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* in 1968, has gone a long way toward reclaiming intoxication from bureaucratized firewater discourse, in a counterintuitive continuation of nineteenth-century Native temperance traditions. In the latest wave of such texts since the early 1990s, the thunderbird drunk figure emerges as an unmanageable sign that defies settler-administrative control. The figure's motion and expression help Native substance users elude surveillance and classification. Both alcohol and traditional medicines, as well as the therapeutic landscapes of their use, become operative in a dimension of therapeutic transformation. The alternating memory work of these sometimes "forget everything medicines," sometimes substances of remembrance, gesture at a community beyond the generically-constructed settler archive. In the hands of the thunderbird drunk, these substance do not function as the "one great curse" among Natives, as Commissioner Price once claimed. Rather, in affirming them as a "prolific source of disorder," authors explore the double-sided transformations activated through communal use practices.

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CHAPTER TWO: CONSUMING THE BUREAUCRATIC WIINDIGOO: OFFICES OF HUNGER AND RATION-ALIZED NUTRITION

> [I]t was a dangerous thing to commence the system of feeding the Indians. So long as they know they can rely, *or believe they can rely*, on any source whatever for their food they make no effort to support themselves. We have to guard against that … by being … stingy in the distribution of food, and require absolute proof of starvation before distributing it.
>
> —Sir John A. MacDonald, Agent General of Indian Affairs and first Prime Minister of Canada, 1880[1] (emphasis added)

> Being Indian Agent … is a primer for death. You learn how to move as though invisible, as though you can have no immediate effect on your surroundings. Meat, you want meat? I can give you the ghost of meat, the carcass of food. … I made it known … that in the morning we would divvy up the rations. That this was New Policy.
>
> —Indian Agent Francis Dalimpere, in Stephen Graham Jones' *Ledfeather* (2008)[2]

In a century that saw both the United States and Canadian governments institute policies for eroding Indigenous sovereigns from the continent, the reservation operated as a core organizational technology for the conversion of inhabited Indigenous lands into colonial territory and resources.[3] This left Native nations with a mere archipelago of economically dependent enclaves, further officializing their relationship to Eurowestern bureaucracies after the institution of the Office of Indian Affairs and its analogous agencies in Canada.[4] As bureaucrats handled the management of annuities, famine escalated into a defining public health problem for Native North Americans[5] in the latter nineteenth century. Agent General John A. MacDonald implemented a "policy of submission shaped by a policy of starvation"[6]—while the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs mirrored this program by ordering a "contraction of the ration policy and … expansion of the labor policy,"[7] allowing only "starvation appropriations,"[8] designed to keep Native people too wanting, weakened, and wretched to risk insurrection.

Indian Agents manipulated "ration policy" (a legal if not humanitarian obligation) in service of settler colonialism. Managerial literature on Native consumption, comprised of official correspondences, records and reports, indicates a translation of food into the language of bureaucracy—*rations*, a rationalization of nourishment that signifies differential power between

agent and recipient. Historian James Daschuk explains how food administration became a mechanism of coercion: "officials withheld food from aboriginal people until they moved to their appointed reserves, forcing them to trade freedom for rations. Once on reserves, food placed in ration houses was withheld for so long that much of it rotted while the people it was intended to feed fell into a decades-long cycle of malnutrition" ("When Canada"). This process involved exchanges of land—the base for Indigenous culture, economy, and subsistence—for empty promises: "the ghost of meat," Agent Francis Dalimpere confesses to his wife in a series of letters that narratively enlace the stories of Blackfeet characters in Stephen Graham Jones' *Ledfeather* (2008). Yet even fictional agents who have a change of heart can't stem the biopsychological sequelae induced by an aggressive policy of management and surveillance. The nineteenth century was rife with starvation events, of which some reached popular status due to sensationalist reportage that obscured systemic determinants and rarely blamed anything but winter weather. Agency abuses persisted on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel, forming the political conditions for a public health crisis across two settler-colonial geographies and policy systems.

Ledfeather hinges on just such a famine: the Starvation Winter of 1883-4, which left a quarter of the Piegan (Pikuni) band of Blackfeet dead of starvation—nearly six hundred. The novel announces its attention to bureaucratic cycles with a short epigraph: "Between 1856 and 1907, …the Blackfeet endured some twenty-four federally appointed Indian Agents. Of them, Francis Dalimpere had the shortest term: fourteen months. He arrived in September of 1883" as a fall-guy for the looming crisis (7). The narrative pivots on a historical fulcrum, spotlighting the effects of non-elective management via sporadic time-warps that converge 1980s Blackfeet characters with those starving in the 1880s. Conduits for these temporal shifts vary, from Agent

Dalimpere's letters and reports; to game, livestock, and draft animals; to the built environment, as when a grid of paved roads and rectangular edifices superimposes itself over conical Pikuni lodges—the town of Browning, Montana (circa 1982) materializing by way of spatialized imperial palimpsest. These elements constitute a colonially-engineered ecological shift that set the stage for famine, which only required a trigger, such as a distribution failure exacerbated by the meritocratic pretext of starvation policy: namely, that Indians should be kept hovering at starvation levels, for if they even *believed* food was coming, they would never support themselves. This pretext belies an ironic recognition of systemic and environmental instrumentality.

The above statements from real and fictional agents reveal the incongruities by which bureaucratic discourse rationalizes and regulates Indigenous subsistence, as well as its legalist strategies for codifying these values. The stories of a Métis elder in *The Round House* (2012) by Louise Erdrich, meanwhile, stress the import of food to Native sovereignty. The novel made headlines for its attention to sexual violence, but a key motif indicates tension between bureaucracy and Native foodways as a set of sociocultural practices with operative political dimensions. Mooshum, the narrator's great-grandfather whose mysterious lifespan places him in both the 1880s and 1980s, tells stories in this regard that surface at the border of myth and history. In affinity with *Ledfeather*, these stories bare the mechanisms used to manage Ojibwe and Métis food culture past and present by articulating a dynamic of consumption. Mooshum's portrayal of reservation policy, how the government "squeezed us … down to only a few square miles" and his people "starved while … our white father with the big belly ate ten ducks for dinner and didn't even send us the feet," reflects a unidirectional relationship where Eurowestern officials deplete Native lands, resources, and bodies (184). It binds them by implying that

bureaucratic policy more effectively enables colonial consumption on several coordinated fronts. *Ledfeather* also juxtaposes images of officials, fattened on rations they have withheld, with images of starved Pikuni gnawing bark from lodgepole pines. The valences of this conspicuous consumption and hunger persist as a settler-colonial violence obscured by progressivist values. Such images explore how food regulation enables the supervision of Native people as racialized subjects. Daschuk declares that, indeed, "our settler society was founded on a famine" ("Bicentennial"). The communities in these novels have lives and histories that transgress the international boundary; this frames hunger as a cross-border problem but also exposes bureaucracy as a common system by which settler nation-states exercise power and eat away at Indigenous sovereigns. Jones, Erdrich and even Agent General MacDonald agree with the Enduring Critical Crows' claim that "you can't nation-build on an empty stomach"[9]—after all, officials devised "submission by starvation" policy specifically to suppress Native nationhood.

This nation-building principle drives the Native food sovereignty movement. A council met in 2013 to inaugurate the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA), represented by organizations from all U.S regions. Together, they aim "to enable [Native] people … to provide for their food and health needs … through sustainable agriculture, economic development, community involvement, cultural and educational programs" ("Mvskoke"). NAFSA draws spirit from the global movement, which first emerged in 1996 as a Global South agrarian initiative primarily born out of crisis, concerned with "countering the catastrophic social and ecological effects of the neoliberal assault on the agrarian foundations of society" (McMichael 348). The movement finally claimed food sovereignty as a universal human right in the Declaration of Atitlán in 2002. Like NAFSA, the Declaration affirms an integrated paradigm that respects communal production, distribution, and ecological management and thus critiques

bureaucracy in practice. Members argued that denying this right threatens Indigenous survival, including "our social organization, our cultures, traditions, languages, spirituality, sovereignty, and total identity"[10] In expressing an ecosocial health model, food sovereignty problematizes the epistemic foundations of colonial administration.

The global food sovereignty movement arose from a recognition that food constitutes an essential component of self-determination, evident in the ways that an absence of autonomy in subsistence systems has impacted Indigenous polities, cultures, and bodies.[11] In the U.S., local and tribal initiatives have been propelled by food-related public health problems in Native communities that share causal elements with an extensive history of hunger. Rates of obesity and secondary illnesses among Native people have skyrocketed; the prevalence of diabetes alone has increased more than 30% in the past three decades, and Natives now have a nearly fourfold diabetes mortality rate compared to other segments of the U.S. population (Halpern 43). Rather than overconsumption, Native obesity correlates with food insecurity, socioeconomic disparity, and bureaucratic embeddedness (Edwards and Patchell 32).[12] Malnutrition in measure of quantity or quality—no food or no *healthy* food—effects the body in adverse ways.

Literary artists mobilize images of the Native body to reveal correlations between nutrition disorders and the dysfunctions of settler-colonial bureaucracy. These images work at the edges of media advocacy and scientific discourse, which at last recognizes that such disorders persist as "biopsychological consequences of disparity, discrimination, and structural violence" (Singer and Claire 423). They often arise from coincident conditions that exacerbate each other, generating a feedback loop: starvation events accelerate as malnourishment precipitates sickness, which in turn compounds food insecurity. Native U.S. and Canadian people consume diets heavily contoured by regulation and other mechanisms that promote this

insecurity.[13] In the nineteenth century this meant a reliance on restrictive ration policy; a century on, this has meant innutritious commodities and limited access to healthy foods due to policy's effects on local economies.[14]

Complementing efforts to restore Native food systems, authors deconstruct bureaucratic textuality as one arm of imperial management. Discursive technologies saturate *Ledfeather:* Agent Dalimpere labors "with the endless forms and copies of forms required by his post, …with cataloguing the former Agent's voluminous … notes, …and with trying to document the births and deaths on the Reservation" (160). Jones even explains in his Author's Note that a chance encounter with a "big spiralbound government report" inspired him to write the novel.[15] The typewritten forms, notes, and other documents that suffuse *Ledfeather* constitute what Gerald Vizenor calls a "literature of dominance," as they materialize a settler administrative regime (*Native* 263). These artifacts legitimize bureaucracy by signifying rationality and reproducing essentialist and behaviorist etiologies for hunger, personified in the contrary figures of the starved and obese Indian, who require supervision from a lack of self-discipline—"savagery" by another name. These conditions align in bureaucratic discourse as paternalistic constructions of difference that justify administrative programs.

Administrative texts reproduce such constructions as instruments of surveillance. Armed with these tools, settler officials perform surveillance in their composite role as supervisors and archivists, generating a separation between *overseer* and *overseen* further perpetuated in records of starvation events. The supervision of Indigenous food practices operates as "ethnographic surveillance," doing less to observe than to retroactively ascribe narratives of racial deficiency to debilitated communities, producing the tragic images of the starving reservation Indian and the overweight, wheelchaired diabetic. An ideology that preconceives Indigenous extinction informs

both images, as Indians waste away on the plains or lose limbs to diabetes until they disappear. These discursive constructions shift responsibility from historical and systemic forces by pathologizing Native food cultures, illuminating the fundamental links between surveillance and literature. So ingrained in Native life, bureaucratic discourse shapes people's relationships to community, food, and even their own bodies. Yet new literary visions of nutrition disorders show them to be not only socially-determined but socially-constructed.

In reappropriating images of hunger, authors and filmmakers interrupt settler colonialism's ironic compulsion to manage and consume Indigeneity. Recent works expose bureaucratic consumption on three axes: the control of environments and resources via spatial technologies like reservations and national parks; organizational transformations imposed by administrative structures; and discursive conversions executed in managerial literature. Native stories of bureaucracy show how these incursions echo into the future in the socioeconomic and cultural dimensions of Indigenous subsistence. Why does Agent Dalimpere, who discovers a plot to concurrently deprive the Piegan of their land and rations but does nothing to stop it, still wonder that "coldness and hunger would seem to only be an Indian affliction" (76)—given that he watches military officials steal Piegan blankets and food rations in a twisted Thanksgiving scene? Through cycles of reading, recording, and reporting—endlessly reproducing the bureaucratic archive—Dalimpere becomes conscious of how, as social epidemiologist Nancy Krieger explains, health and illness are "biological expressions of social relations" (439). Bureaucratic structures blind agents to most avenues of their impact on local Native communities, leaving even the remorseful few to feel powerless.

Three literary and cinematic strands converge in the mobilization of images of Native consumption. The oldest focalizes around the figure of the reservation Indian in the time of the

great bison herd collapse and the Plains Indian Wars (1850-1890). This narrative persists today, always verging on cliché in its reinforcement of Native anachronism.[16] James Welch's *Fools Crow* (1986), the most canonized Native-authored text in the genre, depicts colonially-designed hunger and food insecurity among the Blackfeet as well as their adapted subsistence strategies during the time before the Marias Massacre of 1870. Obesity and diabetes have recently emerged as part of an inverse trope, after becoming a widespread health problem in the mid-twentieth century. These images, which have proliferated since the early 1990s, take aim at the conditions' political and socioeconomic dimensions: in *Faces in the Moon* (1994), for example, Betty Louise Bell spotlights the connection between obesity, poverty, and contemporary food insecurity. Narrator Lucie Evers returns home to reflect on the hundreds of canned foods her mother has stockpiled: she wonders if, "after years of living on nothing, [her mother] had become afraid of starving. Or maybe she had realized, after all these years, just how hungry she was" (43). The Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service carry a heavy presence here, framing nutrition disorders according to twentieth-century food and health care systems. Works by Sherman Alexie and Gordon Henry mark other prominent explorations. A diverse literature of cannibalism forms the third strand, evolving from colonial European stories about the New World. Yet in Native hands cannibal stories are already intertextual and postmodern. Leslie Silko and Gerald Vizenor borrowed from this tradition in writing satirical revisionist histories on the eve of the Columbus Day quincentennial—Vizenor's *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991) recasts the explorer as a Mayan who returns home to face an evil gambler, set free by "federal operatives" and identified as "the handsome cannibal who devours [Native] children" (177). Vizenor inverts the colonial narrative by relocating Columbus's origin to the Americas and associating the Anishinaabe *wiindigoo*, a cannibal monster, with bureaucratic oversight.

Since the 1970s, many have deployed *wiindigoo* and other cannibal tales in turning images of overeating back on colonialism, critiquing its representational and literal consumption of Native people and lands. Anishinaabe scholar Grace Dillon doesn't mince words: "Parse it any way you like. Imperialism is cannibalism, the consumption of one people by another" (19). To foster a more precise *wiindigoo* resistance poetics, authors draw on a nexus of determinants for obesity and starvation, literalizing yet generating irony in images of Natives "consumed" by bureaucracy. *The Round House* resonates with food sovereignty initiatives in its stories of Liver-Eating Johnson, a white cannibal who like Vizenor's cannibal gambler eats only Indians, until he is tricked into eating himself. Other tales include wiindigoo transformations *within* Native communities, with traditional story markers that symbolize the disruption of family and social structures and their amendment through local food culture. This redirects management discourse away from Native people, for whom a reinscription of disparaged foodways remains vital for real-world reclamation. In this body of literature and film, containing recent works like Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road* (2006) and Drew Hayden Taylor's wiindigoo vampire story, *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007), as well as Native zombie films *The Dead Can't Dance* (2010) and *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (2013), cannibalism derationalizes hunger. Ultimately, in order to restore their communities, Native people must trick Eurowestern bureaucracy into consuming itself: *Ledfeather*'s Dalimpere watches local Blackfeet eat the environment and then themselves, just as Liver-Eating Johnson—until finally Indian agent begins to eat agency, buildings and all. These stories provide layers of metaphoric, systemic cannibalisms.

This reversal of the cannibal narrative rose against a lack of agency communities have over their food, operating as a method of re-territorialization against bureaucratic systemization,

archiving, and surveillance. It expresses potential social transformation: recent texts feature perverse "Thanks Givings," speaking referentially through a Eurowestern narrative about cultural contact in order to stimulate restorations of Native foodways. By juxtaposing alternate modes of consumption, authors and filmmakers spotlight conflicts between alternate social food practices. An eating that sustains community health emerges from this device, recalling colonial prohibitions of Indigenous practices that propagate alternative social ethics. This deep ecological understanding of ecosocial systems reflects a rationality incompatible with Eurowestern bureaucratic principles of motivation and optimization. Foodsharing, particularly in times of crisis, expresses a spirit of cooperative management, disrupting rationalized administration. Seeing this firsthand, Agent Dalimpere becomes aware of bureaucracy's devastating effects and imagines a "New Policy," an ethical vision beyond its narratives and procedures of distribution.

Narrative (Mis)Management of Native Foodways

> After a year now I finally know why I was awarded this post… I wasn't posted here to institute new policy or to enforce existing policy… Nor was I posted here simply to clean up the considerable mess Collins has left for me, which is both political and pecuniary in nature, and possibly criminal in effect. No, the reason I was advanced to this position so suddenly was because the Commission understood that the situation was unsalvageable.
> —Indian Agent Francis Dalimpere[17]

Officials have always known that managing Native people depended on controlling the narrative of settler-colonial supervision of Native assimilation. This required championing administration's capacity to effect change while stressing Native peoples' persistent deficiencies, thus warranting oversight. Officials enacted a policy of deliberate *mis*management to sustain this narrative. Rationalization's effects on Native subsistence surface in diverse bureaucratic texts as unfortunate but useful consequences of the incongruity between settler policy and the narratives that have underpinned it. Indian Affairs reports, which constitute a textual execution of policy,

make clear that agencies were mostly "unapologetic for [their] use of starvation"; officials learned that, "[o]nce the Indians were settled on reserves (and dependent upon rations), the government could counter protests by withholding food" (Daschuk, *Clearing* 127, 133). Officials did not manage food so much as use food to manage Native leaders and communities, through cycles of denying and providing designed to encourage compliance, thereby reinforcing the bureaucratic narrative. Officials refused to deliver rations to those bands considered to be "trouble makers," fomenting plenty of trouble in the process.[18]

When they wanted a more violent solution, officials took to exterminating species on which Natives subsisted. The intimate ecological relationship shared by Native people and their non-human neighbors, especially on the Plains, provided a managerial opportunity: Colonel Richard Dodge encouraged mass slaughter in 1867 when he declared, "Kill every buffalo you can, for every buffalo dead is an Indian gone" (qtd. in Jensen 131). The penetration of Eurowestern market forces into Native territory exacerbated this process with demand for hides and furs (Nicholls 423); but it was clear that government officials sought to use environmental destruction of all kinds to exact Native obedience. High-ranking officials actualized this violent arm of "starvation policy" through a story of Indigenous conversion to sedentary (civilized) agriculture on the Plains. Secretary of the Interior Columbus Delano laid out the plan in his 1872 report:

> The policy of confining the wild tribes to smaller reservations is regarded as of the utmost importance; and carried forward to its full, extent, will result in restricting them to an area of sufficient extent to furnish them farms for cultivation, and no more. The rapid disappearance of game from the former hunting-grounds must operate largely in, favor of our efforts to confine the Indians to smaller areas, and compel, them to abandon their nomadic customs, and establish themselves in permanent homes. (5)

The settler narrative of Native people's food practices, and the ways it privileges a Eurowestern ecological ethic at the expense of others, became instrumental in subduing the Plains under a

coalescing administrative network. Secretary Delano worked at the head of what Richard Bartlett calls the "executive agency … serving as a catch-all for [several] bureaus," including the Office of Indian Affairs, in the latter nineteenth century (215). As such, Delano shaped reservation policy and helped establish America's first national park by supervising and issuing official instructions for the first federally-funded survey expedition of Yellowstone in 1871 (Merrill 14). Narratives of racial deficiency empowered bureaucrats' paradoxical policy—extractionist and conservationist—toward more effective appropriation of Native lands. Stories of these methods have inspired narrative resistance as they passed down in Native communities.

Fools Crow, *Ledfeather*, and *The Round House* exemplify a literary tradition concerned with U.S. bureaucracy's denigration and alteration of Native food systems. They depict the ways that officials activate texts as instruments of legitimation and enforcement. *Fools Crow* presents a nineteenth-century story in which Pikuni Blackfeet battle starvation and U.S. military officials in the late 1860s. The novel turns partly on treaty agreements and a cycle of hunger created by a developing colonial-bureaucratic food economy. Pikuni leader Heavy Runner reminds officials of the U.S. government's treaty obligations, deploying a deliberate, deferential rhetoric to exploit the paternalist bureaucratic narrative and attend to the needs of his people: "We must have food and blankets if we are to survive. We must have 'coffee' medicine. Perhaps the great Grandfather would take pity on the Pikunis and provide us with these necessities" (282). But Officer Sully, the one with the "vacant blue eyes," refuses:

> "You have my sympathy, Heavy Runner, but I'm afraid that will not be possible—until you fulfill the requirements of these court orders. The sooner you do these things, the sooner you will receive your food and blankets—and medicine."
>
> Heavy Runner listened, then said, "These things have been promised to us for many moons."
>
> "And so you shall have them. But only after you meet my conditions." Sully did not bother to look down at his papers. … Sully picked up the papers, straightened them and began to tuck them into a leather envelope. (282-83)

Here Welch contrasts the "promise," which Heavy Runner comprehends as an enforceable agreement, with the material document that the officer uses as a symbol for compelling Pikuni compliance by reference to the U.S. courts. He doesn't even "bother to look down" at the papers; "his" conditions are the only conditions that matter. As a bureaucratic artifact, the document serves to record but also censor those who do not follow its rules. This again reflects Hummel's assertion that "[i]f you want something from bureaucracy, …you've got to say it on their terms. Write a letter, fill out a form" (138). Rather than facilitate ethical management, bureaucratic legalism enables the rationalized manipulation of social contracts. Bureau archives include thousands of reports, records, mandates, and correspondences between agents, superintendents and other officials that illuminate a policy of denying assistance on the basis of discursive technicalities, as well as eloquent letters written by Native leaders in a desperate attempt to be heard by officials in their requests for food.[19] These texts capture a struggle over the narrative of administration and Native nutritional health.

A dynamic of bureaucratic consumption emerges in how the administrative apparatus absorbs Native life into its structures and discourses. *Ledfeather* historicizes several methods of monitoring and managing Native food culture which advance this aim. The novel signifies such managerial relations even on its cover, with images of nineteenth-century Blackfeet lodges as well as a closeup of an elk horn. Elk appear in both temporal frames: first, when a game warden suspects Doby Saxon and his father, Piney (a descendent of Dalimpere's Blackfeet aide in the 1880s), of poaching in Glacier National Park. The park works in this context as a construct that expresses state power by enforcing a capitalist–conservationist ethic, effectively prohibiting Indigenous foodways.[20] National parks operate within a legacy of bureaucratic domestication of the North American landscape, which imposed a set of principles rooted in strict Eurowestern

conceptions of land-use.[21] Andrew Isenberg notes that nineteenth-century arguments in favor of exterminating most bison on the Plains "assumed an inevitable advancement toward higher forms: from Indians and bison to Euroamericans and domestic livestock" (156). The park provides as a spatial-bureaucratic fix, a mode of confining and preserving "wild" species while also expanding lands cordoned off for species associated with domestication or civilization, such as livestock. This fix echoes the reservation/reserve, where both opened wide swaths of land for white occupation and ownership—legally, but also discursively, as *state*, *province*, and *nation* became officialized spaces of whiteness. In the opening pages, young Doby barely survives a Glacier National Park hunt in a winter storm, a transgression from which his father does not return. As a figure of surveillance, the game warden investigating the incident bears a managerial presence, a present-day manifestation of officials who monitored the reservation food supply:

> If [Piney] was just getting meat, I could understand. This is land we've been hunting since before America was America, I mean, and if we don't manage the Glacier herd, the cows will all be starving come January. But when it starts to be about money, when you're just grabbing some meat because the saw's out anyway, then, yeah, I come up to the hospital on Thanksgiving, maybe wait for you. (17)

The warden has imbibed the language of management, just as his predecessors. But his distinct identity as Blackfeet and official places him on the edge of the bureaucratic apparatus and elicits in him a sympathetic impulse. As a Native bureaucrat, the warden has learned to negotiate contrasting linguistic fields, epistemes, and worldviews; he will also shape the official narrative of what happened to Piney Saxon. Like any agent, he is subject to procedure, but this means he also bears some agency as co-manager. His liminal subjectivity reveals the subtler effects of bureaucracy on Native individuals and communities.

Indian Agents execute their surveillance of Native people through ecological oversight and vice versa. In *Ledfeather*, prior observation of the wild elk herd enables the warden to write

the Saxons' story: he recognizes the elk that he suspects them of poaching, because he "had been glassing them since May" (16). Just as Agent Dalimpere must monitor "the federal cattle"—"the untouchable food"—along with the Blackfeet, the game warden must surveil the elk herd and the Saxons a century later (182). The warden's elk in fact descend from one that Dalimpere crawls inside of to survive a blizzard; this sacrificial act pushes him forward in time, marking a history of ecological management. Officials believed that bureaucracy could actualize a Eurowestern vision of modernity, but that this required the disruption of Native foodways in establishing control over all environments, from sea to shining sea. Legal prohibitions on Native food systems thus operated as a vehicle of cultural, political and environmental assimilation. The attempt to exploit Indigenous peoples and natural resources by way of a single set of practices reflects, according to Kari Marie Norgaard et al., "an underlying link between ecological and racial domination" in the formation of social geographies (26). Bureaucratic surveillance has been a prime feature of this process, allowing for a rationalization of Indigenous people, environments, and ecosystems.

Nutritional restriction facilitated surveillance. In a shift to third-person narration, Dalimpere explains how delays assisted in monitoring reservation populations: when rations arrived, "[t]he Piegan were drawn from miles. It was the first accurate count the Indian Agent had been able to make, and, unlike their gatherings and ceremonies, this time they stood still and allowed themselves to be counted" (161). The people resist supervision through cultural practice, whereas dependency on ration deliveries compels obedience. Dalimpere's predecessor, Agent Collins, enacts numerous strategies for optimizing rations and surveilling the local Blackfeet, yet these paradoxically contribute to mass starvation. The consequences must be absorbed and rationalized within the bureaucratic narrative, always at odds with efficient management and the

empiricist façade of surveillance. An annual reservation inspection by Superintendent Sheffield reveals the hierarchies of oversight that in fact encourage manipulation of the archive. When Dalimpere considers the missing shipments and delays caused by bureaucratic red tape, he concludes that the Bureau wants to scapegoat him "[f]or twenty years of mismanagement. It's my name the Commissioner will invoke for the next Agent, until Dalimpere will have become, on this reservation, a curse" (50). This belies a tendency in agents at every level to manipulate the administrative story, either blatantly or through deliberate incompetence.

This narrative manipulation lays ironic groundwork for rational problem-solving. Even Dalimpere appears confused as to what constitutes the "Indian problem" and its solution: whether the bureau means to assimilate or to ultimately erase the Blackfeet, and how best to handle the process. The Agent places blame on the system, saying only that "the decision had been made" to delay appropriations—yet he still construes it as a rational one, for "by being forced to wait those few weeks, the Piegan might see the need for agricultural industry, and remember that need when the next growing season presented itself. A little hardship would forge their sense of community" (162). His logic reveals profound a misunderstanding about Piegan social practice, as well as familiar racist stereotypes about Native people: in rationalizing the decisions of his superiors, Dalimpere cites "the Indian's well known inability to conserve wealth. Give them their full rations in August and they would be hungry by November. Wait two months' time, though, …reminding them of the need to ration their rations, a concept historically foreign to them, and their stores might very well last until the March installment" (162). The phrase "ration the rations" signifies the circularity of bureaucratic logic, which projects these stereotypes onto Native people and provides the perfect alibi when the scheme goes horribly wrong.

Bureaucracy transforms social relations, construing officials and their Native prisoners alike. These subjectivities emerge at either end of a tragic narrative of Indigenous disappearance: the benevolent supervisor and the savage who fails to progress. Such classifications carry powerful implications, determining the rule sets individuals must follow. The young narrator of *The Round House* explains that "being an Indian is in some ways a tangle of red tape" (24). In this way, bureaucracy projects preformed identities until it can be disrupted. In *Ledfeather*, this occurs after Dalimpere starts referring to himself only as "Indian Agent"; he soon switches to "Sam," a name given by his frequent guide, Yellow Tail, in an ironic variation on Blackfeet naming practice, where boys earn a second name upon entering manhood (48). Dalimpere's new name evokes "Uncle Sam," personification of the U.S. government since the early nineteenth century—from Samuel Wilson, a meatpacker during the Revolutionary War and a man famous for supplying the army during the War of 1812, when he also worked as an inspector. This use of naming tradition allows Yellow Tail to instead interpellate the Agent. Wilson's role as a food inspector resonates deeply with Dalimpere, who starts to see the spirits "of people he himself had caused to starve. That Sam had caused to starve" (108). Dalimpere forgets his own name and recognizes that this new one serves "to ratify what the Indian Agent already felt about himself, that he had become a stranger to the man he used to be. Or perhaps it was a way of suggesting that…, …once untangled from the many intricacies of his station, [the] Indian Agent was someone else altogether" (96). *Ledfeather* juxtaposes the textuality of bureaucracy, its records and reports, with the more fluid orality of Piegan naming practice, which disrupts hierarchical procedures.

Bureaucracy modifies the institutional landscape in reservation and urban environments, as Native people interface with an expanding administrative network for their basic subsistence

and healthcare. This effectively functions as a mechanism of spatial consumption. In the process, Eurowestern administrative and epistemic authority mutually reinforce each other. Recent texts in this regard tie the contemporary politics of hunger with colonial bureaucratic history. Joe Coutts, narrator in *The Round House*, sets political activism against spatial consumption when he outlines a history of resistance in a forming bureaucratic landscape: Mooshum "was great friends with all the troublemakers … [and] those who fought desperately to keep their reservation, ground that kept shifting under their feet according to government whim and Indian agent head counts and something called allotment" (202). The story highlights two hallmark methods for appropriating Native North American lands. Luis Aguiar and Tina Marten confirm that "complicated bureaucratic accounting measures" were a favorite, effective way of doing so, while still (mostly) preserving the integrity of the bureau (133). *The Round House* establishes both demographics and food culture as cornerstones of a centuries-long battle for territorial sovereignty. At the other end of this history, Joe articulates a 1980s landscape marked by the BIA and IHS as well as more invisibly by neocolonial reservation economics:

> That we have a real grocery store on our reservation is no small thing. It used to be that, besides the commodity warehouse, food came from the tiny precursor store [that] sold mainly nonperishable items… For real food our people had traveled off reservation twenty miles or more to put our money in the pockets of store clerks who watched us with suspicion and took our money with contempt. (242)

Paired with Mooshum's history, this passage underscores resonances between nineteenth- and twentieth-century methods of spatial consumption. The limited control the local Ojibwe and Métis community has over its food systems implicates colonial bureaucracy in Native nutrition disorders. It also spatializes the divergence of Eurowestern and Indigenous land and food management, tying the concerns of current sovereignty movements to analogous intersections in the past. This dimension of bureaucracy's effect on the Native eating practices reflects what

Aihwa Ong calls the "variegated sovereignties" of settler colonialism, which coerce Native people while obscuring state power (75). The "nested" and overlapping qualities of these sovereign spaces—rather than a faulty image of distinct sovereignties—reveals how disproportionately these wrinkles affect Native community health. This is true of food systems, where self-determination exists but within a hierarchical bureaucratic and neocolonial model.

The bureaucratization of environment, characterized by variegated sovereignties and other spatial paradoxes, illustrates how, as Scott Lyons claims, Eurowestern policy-makers have always intended to rewrite the "logic of Indian space" (17)—from colonial charters to treaties, reservation and allotment policy, government housing, and health care. Bureaucratic logic permeated Native subsistence via federal commodity programs, which encourage dependency and limit Native and First Nations access to healthy foods. The geography of neocolonial reservation economics doesn't offer any alternative, since market forces have promoted the growth of unhealthy food sources near remote communities, like convenience stores and fast-food restaurants. Many communities had their traditional subsistence methods systematically taken from them but have little ability, either economically or locationally, to obtain better foods. The signature spatial distortions of new Native space have unevenly imposed Eurowestern rationalization, which optimizes the budgets of bureaucracies and corporations but not community health. As a result, variegated food systems have fundamentally transformed Native relationships to food and environment.

These and other bureaucratic mechanisms worked to refigure the relationship of Native body to the land, in order to divest that relationship of its political and rhetorical power. The mountains of red tape involved in food distribution have always served the colonial system. Indian Agents courted local settlers by manipulating Native population counts in order to

diminish reservation borders, granting rich grassland to nearby ranchers. In *Ledfeather*, a now dissociated Dalimpere writes that "the Pikuni gain revenue by leasing their unused land for grazing. It's a profitable situation for them, one which both keeps the land from going to waste and should provide for them for perpetuity" (69). This reveals itself in time to be a coerced leasing arrangement that relies on Eurowestern misconceptions of Native land use and does *not* benefit the Blackfeet. Moreover, he notes that, contractually, the cattle "are considered by the government to be federal cattle. Thus, dispensing with them is an act wholly under control of the government through its officials" (69). This legalist bureaucratic strategy allows the various agents of Blackfeet oppression to literally feed on Blackfeet lands, contradicting the image of the wasting Native body that has failed to rationally provide for itself.

Narrative Transformations of the Native Body

The contradictions of settler-colonial administration surface in new formations of bureaucratized nutrition and its consequences for Native and First Nations communities. As a preventable disease and leading cause of death for Native people, diabetes presents new problems for bureaucracy; as an illness that alters the metabolism and shape of the body, it also captures the dangers of rationalization. Research in the last few decades has identified social and environmental factors as prime determinants in type 2 diabetes, but this work tends to focus on interactions with biological (genetic) factors or historical trauma (Halpern 37).[22] The recognition that government commodities negatively impact Native and First Nations people has led researchers to suggest a return to traditional foods but elicited few calls for systemic critique or change in the bureaucratization of Native life. The Native food sovereignty movement aims to change this. Though valuable, an isolated focus on traditional foods reproduces outmoded ideas

in tandem with genetic etiologies, implying that Indigenous lives and bodies are incompatible with modernity. As a cross-border people in the Southwest, the Pima provide clear evidence for settler-bureaucratic influence, where river damming precipitated extreme poverty that led to reliance on government assistance. Pima living on the heavily bureaucratized U.S. side of the border have a much higher incidence of obesity and type 2 diabetes; on the Mexican side, operating as something of a control group, the opposite is the case (Halpern 37). Progression from widespread starvation to obesity among Native people follows a surprising consistency in administrative strategies as well as environmental and socioeconomic degradation.

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have seen a similar increase in stories that explore the political textures of this transformation. The narrator of *Elsie's Business* (2006) by Frances Washburn (Lakota/Anishinaabe), for example, describes an obese Native man named Steve Laveaux, but "how he stayed that way on the meager diet of government commodities was a mystery" (177). This description of Lavaeux resonates with a ceremonial feast at novel's end, which reintegrates Elsie Roberts into the local Lakota community after she experiences sexual assault, social exile, and eventual death. The final food-sharing practice offers a symbolic move away from local officials and the Catholic Church, which have prevented her from using Native cultural practices as a means of recovery. Diabetic images articulate how, as Felicia Mitchell claims, "the injustices of colonization" still play a "significant role … in creating and maintaining environments that allow the manifestation of diabetes in [Native] communities" (72). Bureaucratic discourse emphasizes behaviorist conceptions of diabetes, while Native stories take an ecosocial approach. In Mitchell's formation, this "address[es] diabetes as a product [of] unjust conditions and environments, rather than as a disease rooted in individual pathology and responsibility" (72). New visions of diabetes disrupt the ways bureaucratic discourse continues

to pathologize Native people. They reveal how administrative alienation from social food practices strips Native people of a broader sense of self-determination and health. Jennie Joe and Robert Young speak to this all-encompassing bureaucratic condition, arguing that "the extent to which such colonized groups do or do not enjoy "good" health … is determined by agencies and policymakers outside their society" (6). The systemization of food reproduces colonial ideology in the built environment, within the domains of economic and health management. Whether in an Indian Agency circa 1880 or an IHS hospital a century later, settler authority looms interminably as a hallmark of bureaucratic embeddedness—naturalized, normalized, and obscured.

Medical anthropologist Jo C. Scheder argues that discrimination implanted in dominant social norms as well as the built environment may contribute to metabolic disorders like diabetes. These microaggressions, as social scientists have termed them, contour the lives and bodies of marginalized groups to form what Scheder refers to as a *physiology of oppression*, the result of a "lived experience of oppression that erodes the body as well as the spirit" (342). The marked health disparities between Native and non-Native people that correlate with bureaucratic embeddedness suggest that administrative microagggressions, bureaucracy's unintended discriminatory practices and discourses, have an equally pronounced effect. Institutionalized food and health systems produce a unique dissonance for Native and First Nations people: Scheder argues that "[d]iscordant ideologies, or discordances between ideology and experience, operate as fundamental interlopers in health practices and deliveries" (335). She isolates this discord as a determinant of obesity and diabetes. Others argue that the shift in traditional subsistence to a cash economy has negatively affected Native diets and bodies by forcing families to rely on processed foods (Halpern 17); but this largely ignores the effects of bureaucratic discourse, procedure, and spatial organization on food security. Halpern identifies a

change in approach from "the prevention and treatment of malnutrition" as another factor, since the increased availability of poor, corporatized food as well as more comprehensively bureaucratized food assistance programs have shifted the focus to other domains of food insecurity just as rates of diabetes have spun out of control (12).[23] With some additional nuance, Scheder's framework provides a more expansive method for analyzing the biopsychological effects of U.S. food and health bureaucracy.

Contemporary authors and filmmakers explore the topography of this recent transformation in Native North American health. They depict neocolonial oppression as it gets imprinted in Native bodies, while noting its political, socioeconomic, and bureaucratic dimensions. Gordon Henry writes of the ecosocial and physical consequences of this process in his 2007 collection, *The Failure of Certain Charms: and Other Disparate Signs of Life*. In poems that focalize around diabetic images and stories, Henry articulates several ways that Native bodies respond to changes in environment. The refrain in "Insulin Syringe Blues in the Key of Turtle Mountain" shows how bureaucracy and Native cultural practice inflect space differently as well as how space may work as a culturally centered response to illness:

> Still we got our ways of survival
> our songs and our dreams
> the lodges of our fathers
> the hills of our mothers
> we got our ways of survival.
> I am in an IHS wheelchair
> alone at home with an insulin syringe. (53)

Here, *lodges* and *hills*—in their association with Native family and community structures—operate as sociospatial survivance in a landscape marked by the Indian Health Service, which signifies paternalistic management that denies Native self-determination. The closing images connote how the narrator remains embedded in a bureaucratized food and health care system.

The poem's geography symbolizes a conflict between bureaucratic institutions and the Native places they attempt to overwrite, surveil, and manage. Henry highlights the consequences of these rationalized landscapes, including the loss and rupture of community histories.

Stories of Native hunger and consumption always revolve around history. Yet they are often satirical, because their authors have a stake in questioning the tragic narratives of settler colonialism. In *The Round House*, Mooshum jokes bitterly about local bureaucratic consumption and its counterintuitive effects over time, again citing officials' broken promises: "Many an agent gained wealth on stolen rations in those years, and many a family … died for lack of what they were promised. And now, …there is food aplenty. Food everywhere. Fat Indians! You would never see a fat Indian back in my time" (138). Administrative paradoxes make good anchors for jokes because unravel bureaucratic logic and definitions of illness. This marks a distinct kind of political critique: Scheder argues that "current experiences of illness are not new typologies or changed patterns, or isolated events disconnected in time from our collective past. They are … determined by differential power relations. Controlling the definition[s] of [disease and] disease risk … are also displays of power" (343). In the context of Indigenous paradigms of health, Native authors participate in cultural resistance by rewriting the definitions by which colonial power shifts responsibility for illness onto its victims. Their laughter exposes bureaucracy as a cannibalistic machine that feeds along multiple channels.

To reinscribe bureaucratic etiologies, writers appropriate images of Native bodies and behavior. In the battle over narratives of Indigenous consumption, they seize upon archetypal foods that bear particular dimensions of resistance—either by their significance and frequent appearance in ceremony or oral stories (corn, for example), or their operative signification of particular economic and political realities. Commodity cheese and frybread (a fried dough first

made from rationed flour, sugar, and lard) have anchored a motif of food culture change, where they symbolize survivance in the face of socioeconomic and bureaucratic forces. Tracing their historical and representational origins to rationed foods in novels like *Fools Crow*, commodity cheese and frybread capture the convergence of food insecurity and obesity, reflecting the ways that poverty precipitates a dependence on cheap, innutritious foods. Both feature heavily in Native satire: in Eddie Chuculate's story "Dear Shorty"—from his 2010 collection, *Cheyenne Madonna*—the narrator's father sells his block of commodity cheese every month to a local hamburger joint in support of his Kentucky Deluxe habit (64). In the independent film *Smoke Signals* (1998), which Chris Eyre and Sherman Alexie adapted from Alexie's best-selling collection, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (1993), frybread sparks a similar bittersweet humor. Thomas tells a story about protagonist Victor's mother, who has shown up to a gathering of one hundred people having only prepared fifty pieces of frybread; she must multiply the "magic frybread" in order to feed everyone. Here Alexie evokes a popular story of Christ but recasts him as a Native woman. Commodity-based foods may signify resistance to institutional figures and structures when they are communally deployed.

Moments like these hint at the ways bureaucratic forces consume Native lives and bodies. In another story, "Witnesses, Secret and Not," Alexie captures several correlations of Indigenous hunger, diabetes, and disappearance. Local police call a thirteen year-old narrator's father in for questioning about a missing man named Jerry Vincent. The futile interrogation, an annual event that involves travel between the reservation and the Spokane police department, has over time become a bureaucratic ritual. The story emphasizes links between cheap and innutritious foods, poverty, and diabetes on the reservation, framing this nexus as a systemic, generational problem. On their way into town, father and son stop for a fast-food meal:

> We order Diet since my father and I are both diabetic. Genetics, ya know?
>
> Sometimes it does feel like we are all defined by the food we eat, though. My father and I would be potted meat product, corned beef hash, fry bread, and hot chili. We would be potato chips, hot dogs, and fried bologna. We would be coffee with grounds sticking in our teeth.
>
> Sometimes there was no food in the house. I called my father Hunger and he called me Pang. You know how that is, don't you? (*Long Ranger* 217)

After riffing on essentialist etiologies, the narrator sets up a causal relation between food and body: father and son first find themselves constituted by unhealthy foods in turn inflected by neocolonial bureaucracy, and then they disappear into hunger itself. The detective who questions them offers the young narrator a piece of hard candy, by extension presenting him with a choice: whether or not to be defined by relation to institutional authority. The narrator and his father both refuse and explain to the officer that they are diabetic. When the man offers a pitying look, the narrator notes that "[d]iabetes is just like a lover, hurting you from the inside. I was closer to my diabetes than to any of my family or friends" (221-22). The narrator knows diabetes as a slow, intimate killer in its capacity as a chronic illness. A hint at social structure reorients the story toward an earlier sense of disappearance, one more immediately tied to bureaucracy, when the narrator's father describes settler-colonial administration as a system eager to consume and erase Indigeneity: "Just about everybody [has disappeared] at one time or another. All those relocation programs sent reservation Indians to the cities, and sometimes they just got swallowed up" (212). In this case, however, Native family reconstitutes at the end of the story when they return home, where all the narrator's siblings are playing and his mother has frybread waiting. By closing with a meal after the routine encounter with the officer, Alexie indicates a communally-oriented strategy against bureaucratic methods of erasure.

Consuming the Bureaucratic Wiindigoo

Though colonial European writers exploited the wiindigoo as a symbol for the savage New World, this monster first circulated as a warning among Indigenous Americans of internal threats to community during times of crisis. The wiindigoo emerged, in the oral literatures of primarily Algonquian peoples, as a winter cannibal giant into which one could transform while suffering starvation. Tales of wiindigoo transformation centered on dangers to family and society as well as food security and so became useful in negotiating larger threats to tribal sovereignty. Shawn Smallman observes that in the nineteenth century bureaucratic authorities were likewise intent on altering Native family and social structures (165). As a mechanism of assimilation, this supervision impaired local community responses to public health crises. Native and First Nations people told stories about the correlation between administrative control and community health, deploying bureaucracy and cannibalism as emblems of social disruption. Smallman isolates gender as a vital element in these stories, since they "ultimately described the breakdown of the family and social order, of which women were an essential part" (32). These can be read against the trope of the female cannibal in Eurowestern culture, which Michelle Rajeha argues "serves to indict both Indigenous communities that do not submit easily to European authority and Indigenous women whose bodies served as sites of sexual conquest and pleasure" (254). Louise Erdrich picks up this thread in her work, pulling from Native stories in which women figure as suspected cannibals transformed by loss and grief—yet also as the key to repairing community.[24] In an epigraph for "Windigo," from 1984's *Jacklight*, Erdrich describes the wiindigoo as "a flesh-eating, wintry demon with a man buried deep inside of it," and "a young girl vanquishes this monster by forcing boiling lard down its throat" (79). The poem then begins with the demon's voice, marking its attacks on children, family, and food culture: "You knew I was

coming for you, little one, / when the kettle jumped into the fire" (79). In stories that circulated during the reservation era, the monster could in turn "be overcome through the tools that women used for food production. …[P]eople commonly used kettles to reveal or destroy windigos" (Smallman 42). Wiindigoo narratives share a common arc, containing several stages that mark its development and demise, but strategies for mitigating the threat always involve the restoration of community.

When Europeans first got their hands on the cannibal trope, they found it useful as a signifier for absolute alterity. In bureaucratic discourse this became the irrational, the unorganized, the unsystematized. Maggie Kilgour contends that in this context "[t]he definition of the other as cannibal justifies its oppression, extermination, and cultural cannibalism (otherwise known as imperialism) by the rule 'eat or be eaten'" (148)—but one may add "management" to this list, via a bureaucratic system through which imperial modernity actualized itself. During the nineteenth century, as more Eurowesterners penetrated western Native lands, the U.S and Canadian governments extended their bureaucratic reach by responding to and propagating wiindigoo stories. Prosecuting suspected wiindigoog and wiindigoo hunters offered a method for spreading Eurowestern law over the land. This incursion triggered a propagation of Native versions of the story, as new ones emerged in response to bureaucratic territorial and organizational consumption. As a result of this feedback, Smallman observes, "so-called windigo hysteria broke out" (63). The wiindigoo figure began to reflect external rather than internal sociopolitical disruptions. By the late twentieth century, Native writers reprocessed the wiindigoo for interrogating neocolonial bureaucracy and its core discourses about capitalist rationality and Indigeneity.

In contemporary U.S. cinema, the wiindigoo monster has swung from colonial cliché to sophisticated critique of Manifest Destiny. The trope appears often in the western genre,[25] and Antonia Bird's black comedy, *Ravenous* (1999), offers one rather nuanced example. The film places the wiindigoo in 1840s California frontier: disgraced military officer John Boyd finds himself exiled to a remote fort in the Sierra Nevada after playing dead to survive a battle and consuming the blood of his commander by mistake. A mountain man arrives at the fort and convinces some of its soldiers to search for a group of stranded travelers who have resorted to cannibalism to survive, à la the Donner Party, when a token Native scout shares the wiindigoo legend. During the search, the stranger reveals himself to be the group's lone survivor and kills the soldiers one by one, taking every opportunity to cannibalize them. He then impersonates a colonel and gets assigned to the fort as commanding officer after converting his predecessor into a cannibal as well. Boyd survives these events and at last kills his cannibalistic former and current superior officers (and himself). The film, which critic Simon Abrams called "the best-ever Manifest Destiny cannibal comedy," signifies with Eurowestern and Indigenous cannibal stories how a violent ideology may pervade procedural institutions. With its kitschy tagline, "You Are What You Eat," *Ravenous* plays comically on the wiindigoo trope, oddly echoing "Witnesses, Secret and Not" and its narrator's axiom that "we are all defined by the food we eat." Such humor operates in contrast to dramatizations like *Wendigo*, a 2001 horror film that reduces the figure to psychosis and takes no notice of its politics nor textual history. Robert Saunders argues that *Ravenous* offers "an indictment of military conquest and question[s] the very notion of "Western" civilization, thus flying in the face of Hollywood conventions" (183); and that, furthermore, the wiindigoo operates as "an agent of vengeance upon European interlopers as they conquer and transform the sacred landscapes of "Native" America" (183). Yet

the film comes closest to current Native uses of the figure, since its story is steeped in the procedures and hierarchies of frontier bureaucracy. The film refuses to definitively identify the origin of the sickness. Instead, as officials then begin to kill and eat each other, the story suggests that wiindigoo sickness emerges at the site of contact between Indigenous myth and Eurowestern imperialism.

Leslie Silko and Gerald Vizenor helped canonize a postmodern Native cannibal tradition on the eve of the Columbus quincentennial, but only after exploring the trope in the 1970s.[26] They were inspired to their critique around the time Jack D. Forbes wrote his treatise, *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Wetiko Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism, and Terrorism* (1979), in which he associated the Cree "wétiko spirit" with Eurowestern greed, capitalism, and colonial genocide. In a modern example, Forbes identifies how Eurowestern value systems may corrupt Native communities from the inside: he cites histories of Oklahoma Natives who colluded with "the Indian agent or other whites in the systematic program of fleecing Indians. …[T]hese *wétiko* Indians joined with white oil operators, land sharks, avaricious lawyers, bankers, and corrupt politicians to gobble up other Indians' allotments, trust funds, and so on" (88). Silko and Vizenor continued this inversion in *Almanac of the Dead* (1991) and *The Heirs of Columbus* by designating Europe the progenitor and exporter of cannibalism to the Americas. They expanded on Forbes' larger sociopolitical and epistemic formation of wiindigoo hunger. Joe Lockard argues that Vizenor conceptualizes the figure as a "spirit [that] travels together with monoculturalism" and seeks to impose closed definitions of identity (209). But rather than a purely philosophical understanding of this dynamic, Vizenor started to associate the wiindigoo with settler-bureaucratic mechanisms and agents.

This feeds a wiindigoo poetics that exposes bureaucracy's more inconspicuous modes of consumption. The wiindigoo's purchase surfaces largely in its quality as a "layered construction," built upon an already multivalent Indigenous sign; scholar Vikki Visvis borrows from Michel de Certeau in thus terming it a "palimpsestic site" (225). Double-sided images of Indigenous starvation and obesity offer a fruitful historical correlate, and the cannibal—once justifying administration—comes to *stand for* administrative figures and frameworks. Kristen Guest strikes a similar chord by claiming that the wiindigoo ironically operates as "a symbol of the permeability, or instability, of … boundaries," even in colonial discourses (2). The wiindigoo is thus a figure easily flipped. The literal theft and consumption of Native children by the European cannibal in *The Heirs of Columbus*, just as in Erdrich's "Windigo," evokes the violent contradictions of Indian boarding school systems, disrupting the categories by which such institutions frame a progressivist educational narrative. But there are larger forces at play: the wiindigoo finds itself "frozen in a cave … [by] the ice woman who held the tribal world in balance. With no central authorization the wiindigoo was stolen by racist field agents and thawed out" (*Heirs* 167). This trace of superstructure works in several bureaucratic contexts. In Vizenor's 2001 novel, *Chancers*, "the *wiindigoo* monster is not a tradition, but a wicked, cultural separation" (51); more specifically, it operates as a double entendre marking a history of collecting and archiving Native remains by institutions like the Smithsonian and Bureau of Ethnology. In the novel, student activists steal Native bones from the UC Berkeley anthropology museum in order to resurrect them. Yet the activists' strict definitions of Indian identity instead transform *them* into wiindigoog. Jeff Berglund claims that *Chancers*' symbolic plane works alongside the literal "ways the Native body has been carved up, catalogued, and swallowed by the anthropophagic institution of the Smithsonian, the de facto American Museum," and from

there preserved as artifacts (139). The consumption of Indigeneity as material, data, and narrative recalls the repatriation of Native remains since the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.[27] It also echoes a much longer history of relations between Native and First Nations people and the institutions supervising, managing, and appropriating them.

Many authors now deploy cannibalism to interrogate neocolonial energies that, like "the immaterial wendigo flitting from host to host" in Stephen Graham Jones' *The Fast Red Road: A Plainsong* (2000), may seize control of anyone and seem to have a European origin (239). In Sherman Alexie's instructional poem "How to Write the Great American Indian Novel," from his collection *The Summer of Black Widows* (1996), the speaker satirically declares that "white people must carry / an Indian deep inside themselves," after which "all of the white people will be Indians and all of the Indians will be ghosts" (95). Matthew Herman identifies the poem's concern for the "cannibalistic process of culturalism [that] ingests the idealized native body," but he fixates on the representational, "the cannibalistic system of literary value" that authorizes certain stories over others (88-89). Rather, the poem first signals not the idealized body but the ways real Native bodies suffer as a result of food insecurity:

> All of the Indians must have tragic features: tragic noses, eyes, and arms.
> Their hands and fingers must be tragic when they reach for tragic food. (94)

The opening lines depict Native bodies metonymically dismembered by relation to tragically unhealthy or disappearing foods, revealing the narratives and settler-bureaucratic system at fault. The speaker then cites other familiar ways of Native erasure—murder, suicide, alcoholism, car accidents; Alexie's counter-poetics expresses their systemic determinants.

Native authors and filmmakers have also adapted the modern brains-hungry zombie figure—less so its Haitian/Vodou-associated progenitor—in critiquing settler narratives. Stephen

Graham Jones' 2010 story "Lonegan's Luck," tells the story of a snake oil salesman who travels from town to town on the frontier, converting residents into zombies with communion wafers. In the Native zombie film *The Dead Can't Dance,* an airborne illness—and the insatiable hunger for human flesh that it brings—sparks an epidemic in Kansas just as three Comanche men embark on a trip to see one of them off to college. The men discover that Natives are immune to the disease; in fact, scientists and reporters within the film conclude that a biological predisposition for diabetes and alcoholism also grants them their immunity. The men then hide out in a local school and proceed to repel the white zombie horde, poking fun at the progressivist narrative of Indian education. In a final irony, Native doctors use blood donated by Native people to manufacture a vaccine, leaving all non-Native survivors of the undead illness with their own blood quantum, their own "Indian deep inside themselves."

The Native film *Rhymes for Young Ghouls,* a Canadian residential school story, similarly roots itself in a motif of zombie hunger, where such hunger signifies Eurowestern cultural assimilation. Numerous characters discuss the Indian Agent and the priests running the school as zombies who feed on the local Mi'gMaq children. A grandmother figure tells a story about a hunger, undead wolf to Aila, the main character. The wolf, who bears a skull for a face, wanders hungry in a desolate landscape. When he finally comes upon a tree from which many Mig'maq children are hanging, he grows so hungry that he blacks out, and while unconscious he eats all the children, one by one, and then wakes up with grief. The grandmother says, "Not knowing what to do, [the wolf] continues to eat. As he sits there, he begins to eat his tail, he gets to his stomach, and begins to eat his stomach. He finishes his stomach, then gets to his heart and eats his heart. He has finished his heart completely, and then he has finished eating himself" (*Rhymes*). These texts highlight connections between cannibalism and Christian religion,

particularly the Eucharist, where consecrated bread becomes the body of Christ; and between medical colonialism, diabetes, Native nutritional health, and educational assimilation. Their critique emerges from the reversals of two Eurowestern tropes of consumption.

Many Native and First Nations writers who adopt the wiindigoo situate its hunger in a transnational or globalized context, alienated from local ecosocial systems and cultural practices. In *Three Day Road* (2001), Joseph Boyden uses the wiindigoo to symbolize "what Algonquian scholar Basil Johnson has termed the spirit of selfishness. … It is when the young [Native] man travels to Europe that the evil emerges, while only in the wilderness is healing possible" (Smallman 68). Rather than savagery, the natural environment here signifies reciprocal, sustainable relations. Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007) merges the wiindigoo and Eurowestern vampire genres, adapting motifs of blood-sucking aristocrats as a metaphor for neocolonial appetite.[28] In both stories, Native people absorb wiindigoo hunger through contact with European social models and ideologies, ultimately consuming themselves. In *The Night Wanderer*, the Otter Lake Reserve receives a man they believe to be a European visitor, Pierre L'Errant, but they come to find he has returned home after three centuries in Europe. The story reveals that L'Errant, once of the local Anishinaabe community, had been lured across the Atlantic by tales of European culture from French traders. Later, he is made to perform his culture and "prance around like an animal" in France, reduced to a simulation of Indigeneity (95). After he falls sick with measles, a European aristocrat or official "with red eyes and sharp teeth" flies in through his window and tells him, "You come from a new land, a new people. … I [will] let you become the first of your kind to join my kind. If you survive the transition, maybe one day you will return to your home" (97). The implication here is not merely one of race or culture. Rather, the European infects L'Errant ("The

Wanderer," whose given name in Anishinaabe is Owl) with a dark hunger that he must resist and will eventually carry home to his Otter Lake relations, in an attempt to rid himself of the illness.

Both the novel and graphic adaptation of *The Night Wander* begin with L'Errant on a transatlantic red-eye flight to Canada, where he returns to Otter Lake and takes a room with the family of teenaged Tiffany Hunter. The story quickly reveals a dysfunction in the Hunter home: Tiffany and her father have had a contentious relationship since her mother left for a fresh start in Edmonton. The mother's absence and resulting conflict signify disruption in both family structure and community. Tiffany's grandmother, however, offers a shrewd and centering presence: Granny Ruth lives with Tiffany and her father and immediately seems to connect with the new boarder. In one conversation with the old Anishinaabe woman, L'Errant shares a version of the "wendigo" legend he heard from *his* great-grandfather, now centuries dead: the wiindigoo "eat and eat, anything and everything. And everybody. They never get satisfied. The more they eat, the bigger they get, and the bigger their appetite becomes. It's a never-ending circle" (78). L'Errant's wendigo personifies a number of gluttonous energies, from "those who resorted to cannibalism" and "condemned themselves to … a hunger that couldn't be satisfied" (79); to those who consume more than their share of resources and thus impair community survival; to settler-colonial and bureaucratic appropriation, which best reflect the true curse of the wiindigoo: as energy needs increase exponentially with body size, the monster's growth causes it to spiral forward into self-destruction. Eurowestern bureaucracy also suffers this paradox, since the resources required to sustain its growth increase exponentially, precipitating further growth in acquiring those resources. *The Night Wanderer* sets women and family in opposition to settler bureaucratic systems. For example, Tiffany lends her tribal ID card to her white boyfriend, who uses the card to buy alcohol, intimating processes and histories of bureaucratic as well as cultural

appropriation. The identity fraud also reverses assumptions about Natives and alcohol consumption.

Ledfeather likewise illustrates the dangerous effects of bureaucratic ideology through Agent Dalimpere's struggle against his growing cannibalistic impulses. His impulses come in stages and not without counter-tendencies. While the Piegan starve, for instance, a fish appears on the Agent's doorstep; as he eats it, he finds a human knuckle bone lodged inside—a mysterious sign that literalizes the systemic cannibalism performed by the Agent, Superintendent, and other officials. Dalimpere writes to his wife, "I wish I could tell you that it made me ill, …that I'm still of that quality of man whose body will reject what [he] knows to be unnatural" (52). The Agent first glimpses redemption in this moment, as he imagines rebuilding Piegan bodies and voices from their collective hunger: "Given enough [bones], …I could reconstruct a whole man in my stove, …and then hold discussions with him. Talk policy" (52). Dalimpere perceives a core bureaucratic violence when he recognizes the link between erasing Indigenous bodies and voices, through mechanisms like administrative hierarchies, falsified population counts, blood quantum, and tribal status cards like those in *The Night Wanderer*. Restoring redacted voices remains essential to negotiating more ethical policy, yet few of these exist in *Ledfeather* until the 1980s.

Native voices emerge in wiindigoo stories as they chart the developing association between settler management and cannibalism. Mooshum tells of the "white wiindigoo," a trapper named Liver-Eating Johnson, "who used to track down Indians and … eat our livers" (236). As a trapper, the "white wiindigoo" correlates colonial resource extraction with the consumption of Native people. This process would later be veiled by bureaucratic rationale, but Mooshum situates the white wiindigoo in a local history and ethical tradition. During "those first

reservation years," as colonial bureaucracy consumed not only Ojibwe land but depleted their resources, trickster "Nanapush saw his people starve and die out, then his mother was attacked as wiindigoo but the men could not kill her" (184). Loss and paranoia reflect the early damage done to Native social structures by a network of administrative agencies designed to appropriate their lands. The double-sidedness of wiindigoo stories—the collision of bureaucratic control and Native voice—runs to the present, where bureaucracies operate in line with new economic forces. Grace Dillon argues that Native filmmakers likewise use the wiindigoo "as a metaphor illustrating transnational interchanges, neo-liberal globalization, …and Indigenous counter-resistances" (qtd. in Smallman 70)—rather than mere karmic payback, as in *Ravenous*. The dynamic surfaces in the wiindigoo's divergent uses: while over time, Natives have "associated [it] with the danger of greed, capitalism, and Western excess, …in [Eurowestern] imagery, it is the symbol of … wilderness … and madness—two diametrically opposed visions of the same phenomenon" (Smallman 63-64). These visions mark an ideological divergence: one trending toward communal balance, the other trending toward rationalized accumulation. Rationalized policy, not wiindigoo "madness," drives the Piegan to the most desperate measures. Contemplating images of eating, Dalimpere considers how administration feeds on the Blackfeet and that they might turn to self-cannibalism. Once they start eating tree bark, he observes them "in their lodges, their faces drawn, bilious fluid seeping from the rims of their eyes… Had there been a way to boil their hair into broth and live on it for even one day longer, then the Piegan would have taken the knife to their own scalps" (95). Here, the Agent redirects familiar Indian scalping imagery toward the Native people suffering under his authority, with whom this reversal offers him a penitent connection.

Erdrich infuses her cannibal stories with humor as a way to contest and open the logics of settler bureaucracy. The narrator learns that "there could be wiindigoog—people who lost all human compunctions in hungry times and craved the flesh of others. … The cure … was often simple: large quantities of hot soup" (213-4). This tonal shift demystifies the wiindigoo, relocating it from the realm of the terrible to that of the mundane and mutable. After Mooshum's daughter suffers sexual assault by a white man whose family tried to steal land from a local Native family, she remembers her father's stories and associates her attacker with the monster. His satirical Liver-Eating Johnson tales reverse several colonial stereotypes. Mooshum tells his grandson, "when I was young and fleet, I run [Liver Eater] down and whittled him away bite by bite and paid him back. I snapped off his ear with my teeth, and then his nose" (236). But Mooshum and "some Blackfeet warriors" devise a plan; they bind Johnson's wrists and ankles and tie him to a tree:

> You never saw a white trapper's teeth, but they hadn't the habits we Indians had of scrubbing our teeth clean with a birch twig. They let their teeth rot. You could smell his breath a mile before a trapper came into view. His breath generally smelled worse than the rest of him and that is saying a lot, eh? Liver Eater's teeth were no different from any trapper's. And now he was trying to chew off his cords. Every so often, we would hear him curse and spit—there went one tooth, then another broke off. We panicked him into chawing until he was all gum. Never again could he bite into an Indian. (237)

Mooshum and the warriors sap the white wiindigoo's power to eat Natives, leaving him at the mercy of his own ravenous hunger. The oral story presents an appropriate method for meting out what, in another wiindigoo story, "old woman buffalo" calls "wiindigoo justice"; she furthermore isolates the construction of ceremonial space and community as vital elements in doing so (187). Mooshum's small justice lies in his reversal of the colonial narrative that uses the monster "to demonstrate the backwardness of First Nations people" (Smallman 128). He upends the opposition of savage Indian–civilized white man by stressing the trapper's unhygienic

practices. Liver Eater's lack of hygiene is especially evident in his teeth, indicating that he cares nothing for healthy or appropriate eating practices—only rapacious consumption, at all costs. Reflective of pathological greed rather than wildness, in many oral stories the wiindigoo becomes so ravenous that it chews off parts of its own face.[29]

As it coalesces in recent Native texts, "wiindigoo justice" diverges from Eurowestern conceptions of justice in key ways. Even historical officials who understood the negative effects of administration continued to make rational arguments for Native erasure. Those who experienced deeper ethical crises (like Agent Dalimpere) still used familiar colonial-capitalist rhetoric in arguing that the government had a duty to provide assistance to Native communities. These claims sprang from notions of justice profoundly shaped by instrumental rationality. In his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior in 1859, Commissioner A. B. Greenwood essentially performed a cost–benefit analysis. He wrote that the U.S. had

> taken possession of the country and deprived [them] of their accustomed means of support. These circumstances have been well calculated to alarm and exasperate them; but, by good management on the part of their agents, and assurances that the government would not let them suffer, they have thus far been kept quiet. … There is no alternative to providing for them in this manner but to exterminate them, which the dictates of justice and humanity alike forbid. They cannot remain as they are; for, if nothing is done for them, they must be subjected to starvation, or compelled to commence robbing and plundering for a subsistence. This will lead to hostilities and a costly Indian war … and the expenditure of a much larger amount of money than would be required to colonize them on reservations… Good policy, as well as justice, requires that we shall thus provide for them… (21)

In *The Round House*, wiindigoo justice emerges in several important moments, both in oral stories and in the actions that young narrator Joe Coutts takes. Joe elects to kill his mother's attacker, Linden Lark, whom she has named a wiindigoo. The Lark family preyed on the local community with racist business practices and later lost that business after attempting to defraud the Wishkob family out of 160 acres with a legal trick. Linden, however, is equally motivated by

jealousy, and for these reasons bitterly defiles and colonizes a vital ceremonial space of the local Native community, the eponymous round house, by choosing it as the site for his assault of tribal enrollment specialist Geraldine Coutts. Joe's father suspects that he has killed the man and posits that the act may be appropriate under "[t]raditional precedent. It could be argued that Lark met the definition of a wiindigoo, and that with no other recourse, his killing fulfilled the requirements of a very old law" (306). Joe and his father go to the grocery store some days after the assault, where they encounter Linden, who has returned to town after a short absence. Rage overcomes Judge Coutts in this moment and he attacks Lark, while Joe joins in and hits Lark repeatedly in the face with two cans of Rotel tomatoes—whatever Joe had in his hands at the time. The public fight with Lark gives him his first taste of vengeance, which he will satisfy when he kills Lark near the end of novel. Joe synthesizes a communal story of the original attack as the story progresses because his mother refuses to speak. In his mythic stories, Mooshum tells of communities that must likewise address wiindigoog. But the Liver Eater story emphasizes that the best way is always to trick the wiindigoo into consuming itself.

Bureaucracy may turn its insatiable hunger inward and dismember its own institutional corpus. In *Ledfeather*, overcome by regret, Dalimpere starts to loot the Agency of wood. He literally devours the built environment after realizing the damage his supervision has done to the Piegan. In the center of "the disrepaired Agency grounds, …[the Agent] was in his long underwear, his face bent to the lowest slat of the horse pens. He was chewing on that slat" (68). Dalimpere had first given all the Agency's provisions to the Blackfeet during the winter. As he becomes haunted by the starved sufferers of bureaucratic policy, he starts to see a larger vision of deconstruction, where the dead "wait for me to eat the Agency house, and the office itself, and the school and the store room and the outbuilding the rations once festered in and every other

article and relic of the government's presence on their land" (78). The Piegan surround their Indian Agent and Agency until each suffers its own appetite, rotten teeth and all.

This process consumes the institution of bureaucracy—its categories, procedures, and discourses. Through its historical shifts, in which characters merge (chiefly, Agent Dalimpere and young Doby Saxon in the 1980s), *Ledfeather* reaffirms the similarities—not differences—of Native and non-Native people. Eurowestern cannibal stories tend to focus on inexorable alterity, contributing to the paradox of progressive colonial administration; alternatively, wiindigoo stories focus on a potentially reversible transformation, which articulates an analogy only subtextually present in their Eurowestern counterparts. Guest observes that all cannibal tropes rely on a "recognition of corporeal similarity. Even when it seems to reinforce dominant ideologies or mainstream discourses, then, cannibalism also reveals the catch twenty-two of oppositional logic by drawing our attention to the relatedness of bodies that lie beneath the ideas they express" (3). In its focus on this corporeal relation, the Native North American wiindigoo enables a double-sided critique of divergent practices and ideologies of food. As reversals of wiindigoo conversion occur through food practices, stories effectively stress the role food plays in maintaining proper ecosocial and political networks; disruptions of foodways trigger dysfunctions in larger social relations.

Ledfeather and *The Round House* articulate traditional subsistence as a mode of political resistance to bureaucracy. Of utmost import is providing food for the community. When a dead deer sparks a vision, Doby sees his father "stealing [deer] from the wardens and … carrying them into town to feed his family. …[T]hat was the lesson his grandparents wanted him to learn from the deer. That this is what you do, provide. That meat can be an apology" (133). Suicide, however, may also provide, since it removes one hungry mouth from the starved people. The

catalyst for Dalimpere's change comes when he witnesses a young Piegan boy, Lead Father, attempt suicide by tossing a heavy stone in the air and standing under it. The affected Agent begins to associate himself with the Piegan. He holds unconscious Lead Feather in his arms and affirms the similarity of Native and non-Native bodies, in defiance of the bureaucratic categories that constitute his role at the Agency, as he describes his wish to sacrifice a part of himself: "I promised him that if it could at all be in my power, then he would live. …[E]ven if I had to shave the meat from my own ribs. It … oversteps any number of boundaries I'm supposed to maintain as Agent" (59). Offering himself as meat for the community contradicts the rational procedures that have put Dalimpere in a place of privilege and separated him from the despairing Piegan outside his door.

"Thanks Giving" and the New Policy

When in *Ledfeather* Indian Agent Francis Dalimpere at last implements a "New Policy," what he imagines is something closer to nonpolicy. Though still initiated by an official, his rogue act opens up the administrative system to variables and voices outside of policy control. Dalimpere involves the community in apportioning its own rations; as such, his plan serves the local people, from the strong to the suffering, against institutional interests. He thus shows a willingness to operate outside the bounds of instrumental rationality and abandons the use of rations as a mechanism of control over the Piegan Blackfeet. This culminates parallel to his dissociation, a response to the callous actions of his fellow officials and his own complicity by silence. In a letter to his wife in which he assumes the identity of a superior, Dalimpere outlines the problem from a legalist, settler-bureaucratic point of view:

> What could a beeve or two have even done, do you think? Rather you should throw lit matches at the coming Winter. Tragedies abound out here, Mrs. Dalimpere. …[A]s for

> the Pikuni to whom [Dalimpere] was supposed to be bringing agriculture and prosperity in the name of the United States government, even when no treaty specifies such a burden, know that their loyalty lasts only as long as the rations. (70)

There are no written contractual obligations for the officials at the Blackfeet Agency, beyond general annuity terms. This interpretation of accountability ignores the ethical crimes committed in withholding and consuming the rations allocated for the Pikuni, the several systemic injustices that contributed to the Starvation Winter in the first place, as well as the humanitarian obligation that presents itself when the Pikuni begin to starve en masse. The above passage, which marks the viewpoint Dalimpere will abandon, bears a paternalistic and demeaning rhetoric that emphasizes how the adoption of capitalist Eurowestern foodways anchored the settler-bureaucratic conception of Indigenous development toward civilization.

Lead Feather's suicide attempt first catalyzes Dalimpere's transformation from wiindigoo bureaucracy. The Agent promises meat from his own body if the boy will live. In this, Dalimpere figuratively adopts the transgressive trope used to separate civilized bureaucrat from as-yet-uncivilized ward, disguising his sentiment as Christian charity. As a companion to a more destructive self-cannibalism, offering one's body for the community reflects a desire to restore communal health by increasing resources. Throughout *Ledfeather*, suicide expresses diverse drives, causes, and associations—from colonial despair to visionary sacrifice. Doby likewise attempts suicide by dashing in front of cars on the highway and suffocating himself with a plastic bag, where he starts to see himself "the way he used to see his dad, reflected in the shiny eyes of the deer left on the porch: as … somebody doing the only good thing they can. Providing meat" (141). The characters' actions reveal unsound notions of suicide, yet each remains limited in the communal food practices he can perform, given administrative embeddedness. In novels with explicit wiindigoo stories, giving one's body for the community emerges as an oppositional

vision. The trope appears in Erdrich's *The Antelope Wife* (2008), where grandparents offer to exchange their lives for their children, parents serve as food sources for their children, and mothers ingest soil and clay as the land offers itself up, too. Conceiving of the earth not as commodity but as participant in a web of ecological relationships, moreover, divides Indigenous and Eurowestern agricultural regimes; each establishes its own set of appropriate relations with the environment. Julie Tharp argues that, in Erdrich's paradigm, "[e]ating crosses the line into windigo behavior when it is carried to a selfish excess that literally and figuratively eats into the well-being of family and community members, and ultimately into the well-being of the earth itself" (118). This positions self-sacrifice toward ecological balance. Native wiindigoo stories articulate oppositional relations, but toward equilibrium rather than the binary separation and pathology that justify territorial consumption. The wiindigoo became a way for First Nations peoples to interrogate an ecological ethic "epitomized by the Euro-Canadian culture of extraction and environmental destruction" (Smallman 64). This ethic is not only shaped by bureaucratic rationalization but also by market dynamics that affect food production and consumption. It displays a blindness to ecological embeddedness and Eurowestern society's alienation from environment.

Recent uses of the wiindigoo figure mark a paradigm shift in decolonial rhetoric and praxis. Such a shift is fundamental to the shift signified by food sovereignty initiatives, since they too animate new linkages between food practices and self-determination, between ecological and political knowledge. Morgan Ruelle and Karim-Aly Kassam note that "Indigenous communities rely on diverse and dynamic ecological knowledge to maintain and innovate food systems of their own choosing" (316). Each act of agency with regard to food thus expresses a decolonial ecology that transgresses bureaucratic systems. Many communities

"emphasize that direct interactions within local ecosystems reinforce important relationships and affirm core cultural values" (Ruelle and Kassam 316). This indicates a networked, polycentric resistance to the optimized cultural hegemony of settler bureaucracy. Expressions of resistance permeate local, regional, transnational, and global food sovereignty initiatives alike, further articulating intimate Indigenous relations between human bodies, the broader ecosystem, and the earth itself.

The Abenaki *common pot* construct provides a model for mapping the reach of Indigenous ecologies, as well as alternative food networks that defy settler control via its administrative hierarchies. Moreover, such ecologies interrogate neoliberal foods systems. These surface in *The Round House* via the "commodity warehouse" on the reservation and the off-reservation stores that leave Natives at the mercy of markets that emerged through settler-colonial domination (242). All environments are spaces of process and relation. Those shaped by settler bureaucracy maintain dysfunctional relations that demean Native foodways, but alternate systems offer new narrative potential. As it evokes the round valleys of the Northeast through a metaphor of a cooking pot from which all eat equally, Lisa Brooks explains that the common pot signifies "deeply situated social and ecological environments" (3). The pot embodies all relations within, symbolizing a "cooperative, interdependent" system that grants certain rights and responsibilities (Brooks 3). The common pot disrupts settler bureaucracy by refusing its structures and escaping its dynamics of administrative surveillance, control, and dependency. Historically, the ethic was "necessary to human survival. …[C]ommunities relied on equal distribution to ensure social stability and physical health. All inhabitants of the pot were fed from the pot and were part of the pot" (Brooks 5). Europeans neither understood nor respected Indigenous ecological models, and they imposed their own regimes on all ecosystems, with

terrible results—near-extinction in many species, triggering famine and disease. The political economy of food differs considerably between capitalist market societies and Indigenous societies that have traditionally relied on non-market systems like the common pot. Noah Zerbe explains that current "processes of neoliberal globalization and commodification are resisted through efforts to reassert concepts of food democracy and food sovereignty, which collectively seek to de-embed food from the broader market relations of global capitalism" (86). Food sovereignty movements in North America seek to resituate food and subsistence away from global markets, but also to decouple them from the first-order violence of settler bureaucracy. Native writers parallel this decolonial process toward an ecological practice that indicts extractionist and conservationist ethics—represented, for instance, by *The Round House*'s wiindigoo trapper and Glacier National Park in *Ledfeather*. Karina Walters claims that integrative models instead "shift the Western emphasis from the human to the ecological community" (169). Settler-colonial bureaucracy privileges human systems and suppresses ecological relations in its commodification and consumption of Indigenous peoples, other species, and the natural environment. Integrative models offer a turn away from the worst implications of this singular directionality.

Where ecological relations veer into ecological management, Eurowestern bureaucracy denigrates models that do not operate solely on instrumental rationality. This has remained true of food culture contact throughout North America. The liminal subjectivity of *Ledfeather*'s Native game warden creates a neocolonial wrinkle in the contact between managerial regimes: the warden operates within the procedures of his office, while remaining open to alternate models of managing "the Glacier herd." Norgaard and others recognize that Eurowestern

> scientists and social scientists alike [still] follow in the tradition of claiming that prior to European contact our continent was an untouched wilderness. Yet in fact Native people

> actively managed … hundreds of … food and cultural use species. … Most non-Indians can identify ecological degradation in the form of severe manipulations of [the environment]. What seems quite beyond comprehension … is the ecological damage occurring from the disruption of Native cultural management. (29)

While Native subsistence expresses reciprocal ecological relations, colonial-capitalist extraction tends to disrupt these relations and damage environments. Allison Dussias argues that Indigenous rights to subsistence and management bear "a significance that often extends beyond the resources' function as food for the body, to include their value as nourishment for the soul. These resources, and their procurement and use, are bound up with cultural and religious practices and beliefs" (276). In Indigenous managerial regimes, food plays a major "role in integrating human and non-human communities" by way of its production and cultural significances (Ruelle and Kassam 316). These elements tie the social to the ecological, networking a vast inter-species community. As food operates "as a medium for social and ecological connectivity," it inflects management by de-embedding it from administrative categories and hierarchies (Ruelle and Kassam 316). Stewardship, then, bears altogether different political connotations and relations.

From the day-to-day to the ceremonial, foodways prove foundational to Native societies, polities, and cultures. These practices help affirm a local, everyday sovereignty against exclusion from larger institutional spheres. Sidney Mintz argues that "eating is never a "purely biological" activity… The foods eaten have histories associated with the pasts of those who eat them; the techniques employed to find, process, prepare, serve, and consume the foods arc all culturally variable, with histories of their own. Nor is the food ever simply eaten; its consumption is always conditioned by meaning" (7). So, too, are the spaces and contexts by which this meaning is continually conditioned. In much of recent Native literature and cinema, the kitchen table expresses the everyday continuance of Indigenous stories and bodies. It represents a community

ordered on mutual cooperation, investment, and responsibility—not instrumental rationality. Food-sharing and storytelling combine to reinforce community sovereignty against outside political threats. The final poem of Joy Harjo's *The Woman Who Fell from the Sky* (1994), titled "Perhaps the World Ends Here," begins with a proclamation of an ordinary Indigenous model of food-sharing: "The world begins at a kitchen table. We must eat to live" (68). The kitchen table expresses localized logics for ordering family and community within larger national and global contexts. This frames the second statement, an articulation of the relationship between food and body, according to settler-colonial relations. Scott Lyons argues that the kitchen table is both "a space where people are nourished" and "a democratic space," reflecting a "desire to keep power and decision making in an everyday communal site" (20-21). It is also a space where a community anchored by women and food practices writes and reinscribes its foundational narratives. In *Faces in the Moon*, narrator Lucie Evers opens by saying, "I was raised on the voices of women. Indian women. The kitchen table was first a place of remembering, a place where women came and drew their lives from each other" (Bell 4). The kitchen table operates as a microcosm of Native social, political, ecological, and historical models; food thus provides a nexus where storytellers and their stories may then stitch these spheres of life together. Ruelle and Kassam observe this process in "foodways transmission, or the ways in which people convey food-related knowledge within their families, communities, and nations" (316). In *The Round House*, Judge Coutts performs this by negative example. He discovers expired food in the fridge, donated earlier by the community after his wife isolated herself post-assault. Coutts places a rotted casserole as the base of a tower of kitchen utensils, symbolizing the rotten foundation upon which federal Indian land law reproduces itself through cycles of legal precedent. Framed

by food-sharing practices, the decay underscores how deeply family and community relations have been wounded.

Given their significance, ceremonial practices effect yet more powerful violations and restorations alike. In *The Round House*, the ceremonial structure itself becomes a site for a double assault and then provides a story-site for performing justice in the face of profound violence. The same is true of *Elsie's Business*, where a concluding Lakota "ghost feast," a "wiping of the tears ceremony," helps restore Elsie and her mother from social exile; previously, only some residents from fictional Jackson, South Dakota accepted Elsie after her rape. The feast indicates a restoration and reinforcement of community relations via food-sharing. This communal practice repairs the ecosocial networks damaged by violence and trauma, where some voices are silenced by shame, institutional procedure, or violence. Food offers a unique path to recovery: Mintz observes that "[c]onsumption [itself] is at the same time a form of self-identification and of communication" (13). When community disintegrates, so do the foodways that help reify it. In a central story in *Elsie's Business,* Deer Woman seduces a man into not providing for his family:

> He goes out looking for [Deer Woman] every day, but he does not hunt.
> His family begins to starve.
> They live only because others see that they have no food.
> And share their food with the man's family.
> But he doesn't eat. (17)

In such stories, food-sharing protects the biological and social integrity of family and community. These practices become acts of resistance in a settler-bureaucratic context where officials use food as a means of political domination. Further suppression surfaces as administrative institutions overwrite Native food cultures. In *Ledfeather* and other Native works,[30] a similar Thanksgiving motif encapsulates the ecosocial and discursive axes of conflict

between Eurowestern bureaucracy and Native social practices. Norgaard writes that, rather than expressing a rationalized rhetoric, Native ecologies express an embodied social promise: the Karuk people, for example, "speak of the foods they eat as relations. … Rather than doing something *to* the land, ecological systems prosper because humans and nature work together. Working together is part of a pact across species" (30). Many Native peoples share this integrated ecology, which, unlike a hierarchized one, offers a way of addressing nutrition disorders outside the limited parameters of bureaucratic procedure. Mitchell contends that an ecosocial approach to health "requires a paradigm shift in which health issues are seen as a responsibility of society rather than the individual. Such a perspective repositions … belief[s] about where treatment and healing occur and places it outside of direct medical authority and institutions and into the social and environmental contexts of peoples' lives" (77). Instances like the Lakota ghost feast in *Elsie's Business* and the community support during Geraldine's isolation in *The Round House* enact sociobiological treatment against the erasure of Native people via food and food culture. Native writers work to actualize treatment for nutrition disorders through the realms of narrative and discourse: the Deer Woman stories and *Ledfeather*'s several plays on the "first Thanksgiving" explicitly perform discursive treatment, even inviting other species to participate in the process.

Thanksgiving, as both a narrative and cultural practice, shapes characters' understanding of their social and political lives in *Ledfeather*. In the early pages, Doby staggers bloody and frozen into a bar and lands in the hospital on Thanksgiving, where the game warden finds him. A hundred years before, Dalimpere reluctantly takes part in a bureaucratic "Thanks Giving" in which officials, led by the visiting Superintendent, steal and feast on Piegan rations. The feast is designed not to restore community but to destroy it. The Agent writes naively of this event and

cannot resist imposing a progressive narrative in his interpretation: “The Indian and the White Man together. The pageantry spoke to me of civilization” (170). The novel underscores the violent ethic underlying what he calls “civilization,” as the Superintendent Sheffield ponders aloud while eating, “Was it not the Indians who gave their own food so that the Pilgrims might live and eventually proliferate, though?” (172). This perverts the sole truth of the “first Thanksgiving” but also the Native food-sharing ethic that it patronizes. The soldiers do not allow the starving Pikuni any food, refusing to return the favor of the narrative. But the soldiers compound insults and injuries: Dalimpere notes that when “the holy day feast drew to a close…, instead of allowing the Piegan the indignity of supping on the remains, the soldiers instead raked them to the dogs” (173). This reminds readers that the contact fantasy reproduced in the Thanksgiving legend carries profound political implications in its use as a reference, as a clever cover story.

Native characters throw light on this deliberate mass self-deception. Yellow Tail bitterly emphasizes divergent food-sharing practices by urging Dalimpere to write to his wife about the theft and “about Lincoln’s holiday of Thanks Giving,” implicating the settler-colonial state by invoking the story of its survival by Native food-sharing as well as the name of its most generous leader (134). In this, Yellow Tail satirizes how the Superintendent had, during the officers’ feast, “explained the holiday … as Lincoln had in an address” (169). The Thanksgiving story, along with the story of Native assimilation to Eurowestern culture, narrativizes a long history of food culture contact that has since transformed the very bodies of Native people. Dennis Wiedman identifies two prongs in this transformation, where policies prohibiting subsistence methods and ceremonial practices like potlatches and dances, as well as strictures regarding rations and off-reservation hunting, gathering, and trading, strictly limited food diversity and promoted diabetes

in Native and First Nations communities (602-3). Officials' explanations for these measures, rooted in narratives about food contact like Sheffield's Thanksgiving address, emphasized the possible but unlikely entrance of Native people into a modern world of which they were already a colonized part. Settler bureaucracy, as an engine for modernity in the Americas, would need to rewrite Native ethics of food-sharing. Native people would have to write back.

Agent Dalimpere reinscribes the Thanksgiving story thanks to Yellow Tail's influence. The Agent chooses to kill the local cattle, against the orders of his superior, and offer them to the starving. In third-person narration he explains his decision to sacrifice "[t]he government cows, as the Piegan termed them. The cavalry beef. The untouchable food. This wasn't the same Indian Agent from a year ago. Thanks Giving, he said aloud, as if naming … this suddenly holy day" (182). He more appropriately grants the name "Thanksgiving" to a ceremony that feeds the community against the tenets of starvation policy, delegitimizing its earlier use by officials while consuming Piegan rations. He pauses between each cow "to acknowledge what it is that's being given to [him], and to offer thanks" (183). Other species in the novel offer gifts as well, reflecting an inter-species pact, a food-sharing system more accurately reflective of thanks-giving.

The stories that mark this sacrificial pact in *The Round House* and *Ledfeather* express an anti-bureaucratic policy that challenges the artificial separations reproduced through surveillance and rational management. Yellow Tail, for example, claims to have been saved by an elk that offered its body to him during a blizzard. He reasons, "The proof of that sacrificial act … was that he was here, a product of the elks' compassion" (183). Agent Dalimpere later crawls into an elk to survive a snowstorm as well, and Doby's father will decades later tell the story,

> a joke mostly, like all of [his] stories, …that one time an elk had found a white man lost and dying in the storm, and they'd talked to each other, and finally the elk, because it

> knew the man needed to live, to be warm, it took pity and laid on its side and let the man cut it open and crawl inside, and stay warm like that even though the snow piled up all around them for days and days and even years, only when the man finally crawled out again, everything was different, because that elk you crawl into, it's not the same one you crawl back out of, right? (Jones 209)

Piney's story inverts Eurowestern hierarchies by resituating the settler bureaucrat as ward—not steward—of the ecosystem. Old woman buffalo likewise offers herself in *The Round House,* allowing Nanapush to crawl inside her body to weather a winter storm. Her body then provides the conceptual map for the ceremonial space of the round house. Lastly, a similar dynamic exists in Yellow Tail's story about his enchanted horse: he explains that "you can take your knife and cut from its flank a steak or two every few days without killing it, and the horse will feel no insult, no injury, provided you … blow smoke over it in thanks" (75). But one must reflect appropriately on each sacrifice. Just as the Agent counted the living and dead during the Starvation Winter, he counts the cows as he shoots them; in this, he rewrites his earlier act of accounting by situating it in ceremony. His penitent gesture enacts a new food policy, whose spirit is drawn not from bureaucratic logic but from the many inter-species sacrifices throughout the novel. These indicate a de-bureaucratized ecology, in turn generating new spaces of relation that defy the confines of national park and reservation. Dalimpere's "New Policy" speaks to discursive resistances that operate just over the horizon of administrative consumption.

In this growing constellation of texts, from novels and poetry to graphic novels and films, authors continue to mobilize images of Native hunger to reveal the dysfunctions of settler-colonial bureaucracy. Whether wasting away in starvation, debilitated by diabetes, or transformed by wiindigoo hunger, new uses of these figures have complemented recent sovereignty initiatives' efforts to restore Native food systems from bureaucratization; to do so, they deconstruct its objectifying discourses of management and surveillance. Reappropriated

images of Native hunger disrupt the administrative structures by which settler-colonialism consumes Indigeneity while excluding Indigenous people from modernity. Moreover, Native narratives take a historical view of these incursions, to show how they impact the health of present-day Native and First Nations communities. A wiindigoo poetics, having emerged in response to corrupt settler-bureaucratic and neocolonial appetites, expresses agency against all vectors of Eurowestern rationalization of Indigenous ecologies and food cultures.

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CHAPTER THREE: TRACKING THE UNDEAD TRUANT: DISCIPLINE AND SURVEILLANCE IN FEDERAL INDIAN EDUCATION

> The matter of runaways is one that needs our careful consideration, as the existence of the runaway spirit in any school is more or less a reflection on its conduct. To those who have not analyzed the minds of pupils who have been guilty of this offense, it appears that there must be something radically wrong with the management when a pupil prefers his rude and uncomfortable home to the school…
>
> — L.W. Parker, teacher at the Colville School in Washington, in 1895[1]

> Dear Master:
> I'm afraid
> I cannot return.
> …
> I have learned some things,
> as you sometimes say,
> without question,
> but I'm afraid
> I cannot return.
>
> —from Gordon Henry's "Letter to the School Superintendent" (2007)[2]

By the late nineteenth century, U.S. politicians and bureaucrats had come to a consensus: the assimilation of Native peoples relied on formal education. The Board of Indian Commissioners determined in 1875 that "*education* must be regarded as a fundamental and indispensable factor" in the assimilation process, and the board advised a major bureaucratic expansion by way of a federally-supported school system (qtd. in Prucha 269). The relationship between education and imperialism couldn't be more clear: the man who would become the most famous figure in settler education for Native people, Captain Richard Henry Pratt, came to this phase of his career after years of military service in several conflicts against Native nations after which he attempted to educate Native prisoners of war at Fort Marion in Florida.[3] There he instituted an assimilation program that involved both formal classes and manual labor. After encouraging some to enroll in a new education program at the Hampton Institute, he borrowed from that program to establish the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1879, serving as its superintendent for many years. Carlisle would in turn become the model for all federally-funded English-only Indian boarding schools[4] in the United States. This federal system sought to deculturate and then assimilate

Native children in a compulsory educational model. Thousands of Native children from all over the U.S. were taken from their homes to remove them from their communities' influence. Educators standardized students' appearance, language, cultural practices, and habits according to Euro-American norms. This would lift them up according to an ethnoracial hierarchy that placed Native cultures near the bottom. As in other dynamics of setter health paradigms, associations of certain cultural practices with hygiene and civility reinforced arbitrary boundaries between white and Native peoples. Bureaucratic consensus construed this feature of Native assimilation as a national project: according to Andrea Smith, "it is the constant purification and elimination of racialized enemies within the state that ensures the growth of the national body" (211). Bureaucracy was believed to be a key system that could actualize this purification dynamic across the continent. But there was a more pragmatic conception of this goal, too: politicians saw in it a horizon to the social-fiscal burden of a massive bureaucratic infrastructure that had emerged as a way of dealing with the "Indian problem." In order to make this disappearing act a reality, children must receive practical training—agricultural and industrial instruction for boys, domestic skills for girls (Prucha 270).[5] Linguistic discipline and labor anchored their conversion to self-sufficient members of U.S. society.

Along with most of his contemporaries, Pratt adopted a prominent ideology of ethnoracial deficiency and progress, which saw education as a way to erase Indigeneity and replace it with a more civilized, European-derived identity. Native children would advance along the hierarchy, an imaginary mobility that ignored racial coding in the United States. Administrative problems immediately became rampant. In the 1920s, the Department of the Interior commissioned a study of the general conditions of the relationship between settler bureaucracy and Native people in order to evaluate settler education—*The Problem of Indian*

Administration, otherwise known as the Meriam Report, which recommended mixed instruction in Native and Euro-American cultural values as opposed to a model of complete erasure of Native cultures. Despite this, the assimilationist educational system expanded; a century after its institution, Steve Nickeson argues, Native education was still "the largest, fastest growing Bureau expenditure" (61). It was not until after the rise of the American Indian Movement and other activist initiatives that Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (1975). At last, boarding schools began to close in the 1980s, but not before hundreds of thousands of Native children had attended them over a century's time. A legacy of assimilationist educational policy persists.

One issue quickly emerged in the compulsory settler education model. In 1895, Colville Agency teacher L. W. Parker addressed a group of superintendents and instructors during the Indian Summer Institute in Tacoma, Washington. Reading from a paper titled "Discipline," Parker warned of a "runaway spirit" rampant among Native students.[6] This spirit of resistance generated different conceptions of movement depending on one's positionality: for Native students, such movement occurred between school and home, settler-colonial assimilation and cultural safety; in the minds of bureaucrats and educators, it occurred between civilized and primitive society, between progressive order and disorder. Both perspectives construed this dynamic of escape and capture relative to administrative spaces, regulations, and discourses. Parker came to the rare conclusion that the "runaway spirit" indicated that "something [was] radically wrong with the management." Truancy led him to question the managerial structure that he legitimized through his daily interactions with students. He decried the fallacy in "regard[ing] the Indians collectively" according to "minute descriptions of Indian character at large, as though one mental type prevaded [sic] the whole Indian race" (68). Yet he still had

much to say about essential "Indian" character: he declared, "Order may be heaven's first law, but the Indian in his native state never recognized it" (68). Parker saw a solution in convincing Native children "to let the warm glow of civilization diffuse itself over" them by first "[t]each[ing] obedience to [their] parents as a moral duty" (68). This association was exacerbated by popular tropes of savagery that "refus[ed] to imagine Indigenous children as contemporary receivers and producers of knowledge and identities" (Hearne 89). Rather, officials saw Native children as convertible by imprinting them with Euro-American cultural norms. This belief pervaded educational policy. The association of obedience and discipline with education—learning "without question," as the student in Gordon Henry's "Letter to the School Superintendent" recounts—proved central to the problem of truancy.

The above passages from L. W. Parker and Gordon Henry, separated by more than a century and by administrative positionality, belie the role that literacy has played in settler education. Parker's paper, delivered at the 1895 Indian Summer Institute, engaged with regulations handed down from his superiors; it also immediately became part of the bureaucratic archive. From the other side of the administrative divide, Henry's student reveals a cognizance of managerial discourse by noting the superintendent's catch phrases, which identify him as a settler bureaucrat and educator. The poem-letter expresses a kinship between literate resistance and truancy as they interpenetrate in settler–Native relations. Its recalcitrant speaker is in fact a writer, a Native student who like many achieved literacy in English and turned these practices to an advantage by requesting time away from school, manipulating teachers or administrators, or even by mere self-representation. The student candidly announces that he "cannot return" to boarding school, breaking the cycle of escape and arrest with settler education expressed in fugitive acts, literate and physical alike. In this, literacy become an ironic vehicle for resistance

that backfires on the bureaucratic forces that use it as a method of control.

For the past two centuries, English-language literacy has constituted a set of technologies and practices that binds federal Indian education programs with Native U.S. and Canadian political resistance. Critic Amelia Katanski identifies literacy as the cornerstone of federal boarding school practice. She notes that by 1895, the U.S. commissioner of education had one message for Native parents, which emphasized "the primacy of English literacy … [as a] source of power and control" (5). Many Native activists in the Progressive Era attended boarding schools; they wrote and published as novelists, poets, journalists, ethnologists, and political advocates, and birthed numerous advocacy organizations. The Society of American Indians in 1911, the National Council of American Indians in 1926, the National Congress of American Indians in 1944—all were established partly by Native authors who had attended (and taught at) boarding schools. Many wrote autobiographically of their experiences, where they interrogated settler education and its structures, discourses, and practices. Boarding school stories published during this period, such as Francis La Flesche's memoir, *The Middle Five: Indian Boys at School* (1900), Zitkala-Ša's "The School Days of an Indian Girl" (1921), John Joseph Mathews' *Sundown* (1934), and D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded* (1936) negotiate a progressive story about civilizing Native people through education. These authors endured a complicated relationship with literacy, one fraught with the contradictions of progressive ideology. Lapier and Beck note that by the last decade of the nineteenth century many Native people educated in off-reservation boarding schools were moving to the cities—and "Instead of assimilating into American society, American Indians during the Progressive Era and those who were products of Progressive Era reforms sought to change American society and American views of Indians. They wanted control of their own racial and ethnic identities and their own destiny" (xiii). Their

protagonists come to literacy as both a mode of acquiescence and empowerment, signifying a concern for how Native children respond to being interpellated by education programs. Depictions from the early and mid-twentieth century tended to emphasize the oppressive and alienating and assimilative effects of Indian education (Allen 13). This trend continues to this day, most recently in Adam Fortunate Eagle's book, *Pipestone: My Life in an Indian Boarding School* (2010), reiterating the continued importance of boarding school education to Native cultural expression. Many contemporary authors have personal or family ties to the institution—the three major authors of the late-twentieth-century, Leslie Silko, Louise Erdrich, and N. Scott Momaday, all have family who either attended or taught at Native boarding schools.[7] Their experiences defy the boarding school stereotypes that associate it with the past.

Settler literacy and truancy bear a counterintuitive relationship. In a search of a theory of Native boarding school literature, Katanski identifies literacy as a primary mode of resistance to the policies of erasure of the federal boarding school system (3)—rather than a method of training the savage instincts out of Native children. English language instruction deployed by settler bureaucracy as a technology of assimilation grew to backfire, as Native children learned to use reading and writing practices to their advantage—in creating community, representing themselves, and actively resisting administrators and their policies. These students and their children and grandchildren have used literacy to find their voices, to offer their testimony—which has never been valued—as to the horrors and negotiated choices of boarding school education as a space of psychological and physical danger. Authors from Zitkala-Ša to Adam Fortunate Eagle have engaged in a "process of literary reinvention of the representational tools of assimilation" (Katanski 6). Through literacy, Natives developed a set of anti-bureaucratic protocols for expressing tribal, pan-tribal, and sometimes syncretic identities in defiance of the

standardized, normalized, and regimented identities demanded in the schools. Autobiographical and fictionalized accounts of boarding school experiences operate in the twenty-first century as texts that promote solidarity in these various valences, where all Native people in the U.S. and Canada bond through a shared negotiation of the administrative instruments of assimilation. The stories examined here focus on Native children's micro-assertions of agency. A larger sense of sovereignty comes from the depiction of pan-tribal student resistance to surveillance and confinement. Katanski notes that educators believed "in their control over how (and if) their students textually represented themselves" and its importance to the assimilation process, where "[t]he controlling pedagogy of the anti-tribal schools was to monitor and restrict representations of Indianness…" (7). All of the above stories signify the relationship between the textuality of education bureaucracy and Native literatures, as writers learned to appropriate literacy toward personal and tribal sovereignty.

Native authors explore how boarding school education deployed English- and French-language literacy (in Canada) as a technology of progress but also surveillance. This reframes one of the racial uplift narrative's core dynamics by couching it in the politics of settler administration. Through a hyper-rationalized, administrative textuality, superintendents wrote into practice a sociospatial paradigm that surveils and manages Native behavior—constituted by roll counts and other records, annual reports to superiors, and travel papers, which posed a bureaucratic obstacle to Native families who could not gather the funds for their children to visit home. In the early twentieth century, some authors questioned the story of literacy as an instrument of racial uplift. Zitkala-Ša wrote of her mother's insistence that she read from the "white man's papers"—the Bible—but the girl's "enraged spirit felt more like burning the book, which afforded me no help, and was a perfect delusion to my mother" (73). By the time Leslie

Silko's short story "Lullaby" appeared in her collection *Storyteller* (1981), many had critiqued literacy's efficacy in self-determination, instead emphasizing its use in settler capture and assimilation. In "Lullaby," the incongruity between a Navajo woman's ability to sign her name, which her husband taught her, and her failure to comprehend the larger settler-bureaucratic context—its language games, as well as the BIA officials and police who arrive in a "government car"—is what enables her children to be taken away to school: she mistakenly signs them over. Just as earlier stories, "Lullaby" showed how officials exerted regulatory control over Native bodies, always in line with top-down procedures actualized through administrative practice.

In its discourses of containment, settler education manifested a set of managerial oppositions, and over time Native authors and filmmakers have exploited these in a narrative realignment of administrative subjectivity. Two tropes emerge to reflect the separate axes of the administrative presence: the superintendent, embodiment and instrument of managerial literacy and power; and the boarding school, site of confinement and educational transformation. Together, these limit Native self-determination with a co-produced textual field of confinement and surveillance, which elicits a gesture toward escape. Positioned against these forces of oversight, a third figure emerges in the Native truant: the recalcitrant pupil, fugitive from surveillance and regulation. These figures disrupt and reorganize a web of pedagogical relations predicated on administrative practice, where the hierarchies of regimentation, discipline, and obedience of the settler educational model break down. The truant relates to this model in many dimensions, including the textual (policy/documentation), the interpersonal (superintendent), and the spatial (the boarding school campus itself). Accordingly, his flight activates within and against all three of these fields concurrently.

Early literary runaways occasionally framed their escape as adventure, but otherwise capitulated to internment and assimilation at the close of their stories. McNickle's *The Surrounded* expresses a troubling message of resignation: Salish boarding school students attempt escape after their mixedblood uncle, Archilde Leon, the novel's protagonist and a graduate of the school, returns to the reservation after some years with a fatalistic view of Native resistance to settler education. He can't decide whether students have "any chance of finding something better than a life imprisoned or on the run" (Katanski 168). The novel closes with Indian Agent Horace Parker shackling Archilde and remarking, "It's too damn bad you people never learn that you can't run away" (McNickle 297). As Archilde finally offers his hands to Agent Parker, he finds himself "surrounded" and occluded by settler control. The runaway boys, however, remain fugitive but free, so far as the text is concerned.

Within all stories of settler education linger traces of truancy, where administrative discipline reveals its logical slippages and Native absence signifies escape. Katanski claims that "the Indian boarding-school student remains representationally evocative," as boarding school education so shaped the lives of Native writers, artists, and content creators for generations, into the late twentieth century (172). Yet Native literary truants have morphed over time. Louise Erdrich famously writes of fugitive girls in "Indian Boarding School: The Runaways," from her 1984 poetry collection, *Jacklight*. The girls stow away on a train but have their flight interrupted by capture in a familiar cycle, for they "know the sheriff's waiting at midrun / to take us back" (11). Though they do not manage full escape, while scrubbing the sidewalks the girls see old messages inscribed in wet concrete by themselves and their fellow students, a literate gesture toward rhetorical sovereignty and thus representational freedom. In spite of this act of writing, the superintendent's disciplinary strategies imply a perpetual cycle of truancy.

Over time, Native authors have sought to deconstruct particular axes of administrative practice, marking literacy education as a site—and letter-writing as a tool—of resistance. "Letter to the School Superintendent" provides a model of the truant's expression of unmanageability, in language and body, by bringing together literacy and escape. In their respective studies on boarding school experiences in 1994 and 1999, K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Brenda Child, both descendants of former boarding school students, used state and federal archives to explore the letters that Native students and their parents wrote to each other and to school administrators to influence policy and practice. Diné author Laura Tohe, a fourth-generation student—her great-grandfather attended Carlisle—begins her collection of poetry and prose memoir, *No Parole Today* (1999), with a similarly defiant piece titled "Letter to General Pratt." The form allows her to directly address the mastermind of the settler education model himself. Tohe describes the boarding school experience as "similar to serving a sentence. … While some of us survived these schools, others ran away or died trying" (ix). Tohe then intersperses her poems with fictional student letters. These letters focalize in the double-sidedness of literacy—as a method of settler control as well as Native resistance. With images of confinement, escape, and letter-writing, Tohe and others take up the figure of the truant in a larger narrative of recalcitrance from within administrative practice.

The truant's fugitive presence via literacy produces a proto-*sous*veillance (or inverse surveillance) that interrupts totalizing administrative oversight. Whereas surveillance involves being "monitored from an external position by another entity, sousveillance is consciously employed and controlled by an individual … providing an interior, first-person perspective on their lives" (Kitchin 95). The tools of oversight, such as roll books, silence and erase Native voices via a rationalized, bureaucratic textuality. Learning to read and write may signify escape

from settler discourse, as it operates as a writing-from-below. Native students expressed a textual sousveillance in which they wrote their own experiences—which "counters traditional top-down scrutiny by exerting a disciplinary effect from the bottom up" (Sewell and Barker 942-945). In some texts, an additional dynamic of hierarchical sousveillance becomes operable: in this case, students observe, write/record, and express themselves in order to interpellate educators and officials in return, in an explicit reversal of hierarchical, administrative power. When in Henry's poem the student writes, "Dear Master," mirroring the many letters written to request home visits or to protest school conditions, he strikes an ironic pose. His mock managerial discourse objectifies the superintendent through the production of a stereotypical image. Finally, the phrase, "I'm afraid / I cannot return," voices Native students' fear of discipline and classification as "savages" but also functions as a sarcastic expression of escape (Henry 76). A poetics of truancy—from physical as well as representational capture—activates in the affirmation. The student has written back to the agent, exploiting literacy in a rejection of the rationalized management of Native education. The student's formal address enhances the effect of the message, signaling how truants were often successful students who had learned the trappings of "civilization."

In several contemporary stories, a secondary opposition emerges to parallel the relationship between agent/superintendent and truant: the truant officer, the one sent to capture and return the fugitive pupil. Nearby Native communities often harbored runaways as a mode of protest against the schools, while other towns heeded the requests of BIA officials and school administrators who offered rewards for their capture. Such children were then "[r]ounded up by government-deputized Indian truant officers" (Watahomigie and McCarty 100). Boarding school narratives carry this oppositional dynamic between fugitive child and the agent of his or her

capture. Yet, although truant officers typically signify whiteness and settler-bureaucratic control, the category blurred as authors began exploring histories of Natives employed by schools or otherwise tasked with recovering truants. Between the categories of "Indian" and "truant officer" opens a liminal subjectivity where Native trackers signal wrinkles in the oppositional logic of boarding school narratives. Former student Archilde Leon occupies this position when he tracks his nephews in *The Surrounded*. Momaday's stage play, *The Indolent Boys* (1992), a Native boarding school employee and father of one of three runaway Kiowa boys is tasked with finding and retrieving them. The trope of the truant officer becomes especially operative in the boarding school films *The Only Good Indian* (2009) and *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (2013), whose tagline from distributor Monterey Media reads "Her only options are to run or fight... and Mi'gMaq don't run." While *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* centers on the Canadian boarding school experience, *The Only Good Indian* tells the story of a Kickapoo boy, Nachwihiata (Winter Fox Frank), who escapes from a Kansas training school only to be pursued separately by a famous white Indian hunter and sheriff, local white bounty hunters, and Sam Franklin (Wes Studi): a "civilized" Cherokee bounty hunter with unrealistic hopes of someday earning his way into the Pinkerton detective agency.

In the late twentieth century, a motif of living death surfaced in boarding school stories as a signifier for both settler-colonial consumption and the categorical deconstruction of ethnographic surveillance. This conceptual paradox emerged relative to truancy: texts like "The Snakeman," a 1979 short story by Luci Tapahonso, and Momaday's *The Indolent Boys* offered an early vision of this paradox, as their runaways either come into contact with the dead or elude capture themselves by perishing. Images of the dead, ghosts, and undead figures like vampires and zombies represent the unassimilable Indian, unsettling administrative procedures embodied

in the superintendent and boarding school. This trace of the unmanageable has emerged in representations of settler-colonial education bureaucracy in a new figure, the "undead Indian," recalling Richard Pratt's famous axiom, "Kill the Indian, save the man." As Native children come to literacy through figures and narratives of the undead, they come to a transgressive knowledge about supposedly inviolable categories—*life* and *death*, *civilized* and *savage*, and so on—that allow them to disrupt bureaucratic logic and surveillance. Drew Hayden Taylor's *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007) uses an undead Native man to reorient a teenage runaway. The girl has left home and only returns after an encounter with the man transformed into a living-dead figure reminiscent of both the vampire and wiindigoo through intimate contact with European culture.

The (un)death trope appears in several films directed by and starring Natives, including *The Only Good Indian*, *The Dead Can't Dance* (2010), and *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*. As a medium that—like photography—developed partly for documenting the "vanishing Indian," film offers an interesting association with living death. *The Only Good Indian*, as a U.S. boarding school film executive produced by and starring Cherokee actor Wes Studi, borrows some of promotional "before and after" photos that bureaucrats showed to politicians and benefactors in order to garner support for the conversion process that involved "killing the Indian." These forms, then, work in concert. Vizenor argues this with regard to medium, when he writes that, in photographs of Natives, "the poses are the absence of the other, an ironic exposure because the representation of bodies as cultural evidence is the certain death of the other, death by continuous photographic exposure" (*Fugitive* 159). The coincidence of manufactured ethnographic evidence and Indigenous disappearance and/or death resonates with *The Only Good Indian*—a title that evokes the phrase "The only good Indian is a dead Indian," which has been for centuries

popularly attributed to General Philip Sheridan and famous Indian fighter. These films show how the tropes of undead Indigeneity provides a model for reading assimilated Native children as well as boarding school runaways. They reveal how literary Natives escape conversion by Eurowestern rationality. Just as Vizenor associates death with ethnographic surveillance, the images of assimilation imposed on Native children engender a kind of death that eludes surveillance. The "undead Indian," a figure that is both there and not-there, intersects with the truant and offers a method of sousveillance, where runaways escape classification and write back at bureaucracy from below. Truancy forms the narrative impetus for these films, as students resist being recaptured by bureaucratic agents and discourse. Scenes of Native truants learning to read and write signal resistance, and when paired with undeath these articulate symbolic deconstruction. As in *The Night Wanderer* and *The Dead Can't Dance*, undeath functions as a polyvalent image, associated alternately with both settler-colonialism and a fugitive Indigeneity depending on its deconstructive purchase.

By virtue of the shared history of Indian boarding schools between U.S. and Canada, a new generation of Native media on boarding schools expresses intertribal resistance to the narratives of settler education, coopting a classic colonial generalization as rhetorical strategy. This echoes Wilson and Stewart's claim in *Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics, and Politics* (2008) that Native "media makers are producing … dynamic cultural and artistic works … that question dominant worldviews while at the same time promoting a strategic, internationally conceived Indigenism" (31). These films implement boarding school narratives (sometimes humorously, often satirically) alongside Native story traditions and contemporary filmic genres—including the western, the zombie film, and their accompanying motifs. The amalgamation reflects how Native authors and content creators tell their own stories as an act of

narrative recalcitrance, reflecting both the corporeal and discursive resistances of thousands of Native students in settler boarding schools across time.

Discipline and Escape in Indian Boarding Schools

Under the spell of bureaucratic and social evolutionary ideologies, politicians and reformers understood discipline to be bridge between education and management. L. W. Parker argued for a moral association between discipline, education, and order: "Taken in the broadest sense, discipline includes everything of value in the educational world," while "[i]n its narrower sense it relates to the maintenance of good order" and "the suppression of vice" (68). This procedure operated like an equation for personal and ethnoracial progress. Parker believed in the power of bureaucratic structure to actualize his ideas, even deeming it "honorable": "Explain [to students] that obedience is honorable: that you must obey your superiors and they in turn must obey theirs" (69). Yet an ideology based on a deeply-rooted ethnoracial hierarchy inflected the bureaucratic ideal that Parker had absorbed. Subordinates could find honor in obeying the hierarchies of the system. David Wallace Adams likewise argues that, in literacy education, the goal of this system had always been "to engender in the students a willingness to comply" (Adams 141). Contemporary authors have also explored the values expressed through bureaucratic structure, procedure, and discipline. Momaday's *The Indolent Boys* tells the story of three Kiowa boys who ran away from the Indian Boarding School at Anadarko (then Indian Territory) in the winter of 1891, headed for their home camps roughly forty miles away, after an instructor, Mr. Wherritt, whips one of them severely. Their bodies were later found frozen near Carnegie, Oklahoma—one of the boys was only eight years old. Known since as "the frozen boys" among the Kiowas, the circumstances of their deaths inspired resistance by nearby Kiowa

communities, who marched on the school and assaulted the superintendent. In the play, fictional superintendent G. P. Gregory echoes Parker, outlining the master plan for bureaucracy's ability to realize a plan according to a sense of order:

> I began to see the scheme of things. I began to trust in the judgment of my superiors. The United States Government, …the Department of the Interior, the Office of Indian Affairs, the Indian School Service—these are the particular patches of a great and beautiful quilt… And I began to see the proper order of this and that and the other, the arrangement and design, the symmetry and proportion. Yes, and I saw that if I held my attention squarely upon the business at hand, why, the whole scheme, all the meaner parts of the whole would fall into place. (Momaday 22)

The superintendent describes the greater system within which Native children are civilized by the "scheme" of education. His words demonstrate, moreover, how literacy and textuality are used as tools for establishing "proper order" demanded by bureaucratic rationalization. The ideological underpinnings of a Euro-American bureaucratic system was inserted into federal Indian education policy by politicians and reformers, and further reified by the bureaucrats and educators who first actualized it. Yet, like reading Parker's comments more than one hundred years after the fact, readers understand the dramatic irony of the superintendent's words in *The Indolent Boys*: the system, beyond being oppressive, is bound to fail.

The federal Indian education system may be understood as the centerpiece of settler bureaucracy and its Progressive Era assimilationist policy. Built through Eurowestern bureaucracy the federal Indian boarding schools were seen as the primary engine of assimilation. Bureaucratic regimentation and regulation, core values of the Indian education system as it was enacted, marked an ideological imposition. In their exploration of Native education and U.S. democracy, Lomawaima and McCarty argue that the Indian boarding school system signified a "battleground between federal and tribal powers; the war has been waged through and about children, and the costs of colonial education have largely been borne by Indian people" (5).

Education was just one arm of a wide bureaucratic expansion over Native life, as the Bureau of Indian Affairs grew to have much more administrative authority over Native life: while Indian Agencies had control over Native communities, boarding schools expressed their authority by extracting Native children from their communities to add internal indoctrination to the external impositions of authority of classic bureaucratic structure. It was a widespread belief among Indian agents that Native parents resisted their children being taken away for schooling because they had "not yet reached that state of civilization to know the advantages of education" (Adams 210). Bureaucratized educational practices, inflected by settler-colonial ideologies circumscribed appropriate cultural practices that Natives must adopt—the "Indian" must be killed, according to Pratt, while the "man" must be saved and remade—rewritten—as a Euro-American. Outwardly, federal Indian education succeeded in "[d]rawing the boundaries between safe and dangerous cultural difference." (Lomawaima and McCarty 5). They were in charge of the most important cultural changes in Native peoples, beyond the economic/subsistence transformations that Indian Agencies attempted to instill during their own instruction in "civilization." Despite the Indian education reforms enacted in the first decades of the twentieth century, its bureaucratic structure was too essential to its character. Progressive Era commissioners talked convincingly of reform, but "[l]ike most bureaucracies, the BIA frequently gives a superficial appearance of change while moving to preserve its existing structure" (Nickeson 61). This structure heavily affected large-scale educational policies and ground-level educational practice.

The administrative structures that vested agents with so much authority and paternalism counterintuitively led to brutal (and often willfully incompetent) applications of procedure. Settler institutions attacked Native children's language, daily habits, and other expressions of Native identity, expressing a strange disregard for those in their care. This process involved not

only widespread impositions of Euro-American culture through language, dress, diet, but also in regimentation via space and time. Even into the present, these schools have "homogenizing or standardizing goals. Often masquerading as a tool for equal educational opportunity, standardization has segregated and marginalized Native peoples and others as it has circumscribed a narrow zone of tolerable cultural difference" (Lomawaima and McCarty 5). This is the case for all spatial containment: reservations, prisons, asylums, boarding schools interlace to form a discursive, organizational, and architectural settler-administrative landscape. Andrea Smith describes such spaces as "technologies of the body, [where] the body becomes the site of regulation such that power relations no longer seem to be that—rather it becomes self-evident that … there are rules that any allegedly normal person would want to follow" (211). In *The Only Good Indian*, Kickapoo runaway Nachwihiata becomes captured by bounty hunter Sam Franklin (or Black Fox), who proceeds to take the boy with him as they visit several other regulatory sites in an attempt to capture another Native bounty, a young woman who escaped from an asylum. The head physician of the asylum, Dr. Hummber, medicalizes her resistance: "I had hoped to sterilize [her], maybe send her back to the reservation someday. She suffered from what many of them do. It's typically called senile psychosis. … There are a range of symptoms, from an angry, defiant nature; to a refusal to cooperate with authorities; many cases they hold on to bizarre behaviors—dances and the like." The settler official and physician reinscribes her disobedience as an act of mental illness rather than resistance. His goal is to coerce her into compliance by first controlling the definitions and narratives that restrict her, and then to do so with a legalist spatial technology such as an asylum or reservation.

Bureaucratic structure bears profound impacts on literacy projects. The superintendent in *The Indolent Boys* reveals how he has been shaped by a value of rationalized literacy: he remains

in awe, he says, of all the "…forms, …requisitions, allowances, per diem, Government Issue, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, in duplicates and triplicates. God, it's wonderful, isn't it? Arrangements, forms, orders, procedures, *proper* procedures. In a word, *efficiency*! We inhabit an age of order and efficiency!" (Momaday 52). And yet the whole process was marked by incompetence: superintendents in particular showed their ineptitude, shaped by bureaucratic practice, generating a unique irony in the values and methods of optimization. This core value would define educational practice of the time: an "American consensus in the period [could be found in] a generally held loathing of inefficiency. The "search for order," in the case of American Indian policy," persisted well after the Progressive Era, in the approaches to federal Indian policy (Holm xiii). Yet incompetence went all the way up the ladder. Over the course of the Progressive Era and into the mid-twentieth century, Holm notes that the BIA "continued to treat symptoms produced by its inconsistent policies and programs without attempting to create a fundamental restatement of the ultimate goals of its Indian policy" (172). During the early twentieth century, schools had begun to integrate Native U.S. cultural material into their curricula, although these were still settler-colonial accounts of Native cultures. These reforms were limited and few, thanks to bureaucratic structure: "top-down curricular mandates from White male administrators at the district office" activated as part of a textuality of discipline (McCarty, "Power" 48). Federal Indian boarding school curriculum expressed settler ideology in both its content and pedagogical methods.

Literacy undergirded most of the settler strategies of removing Native children from their narrative contexts, which left them open for being imprinted with the scripts of settler education and progress. Tohe follows her introductory letter with an autobiographical piece written by her grandmother, titled "Prologue: Once You Were Signed Up," an account of her boarding school

experiences. The woman narrates how literacy enables capture and containment in the first place: “You know back then we couldn’t go home anytime. They made you stay once you got there. You had to stay the whole year. Once you were signed up, you just had to tough it out” (xiii). This reveals how the children are forced into passivity: they do not sign up but *are signed* up by someone else, just as in “Lullaby,” and it is this literate act that contains them. Physical discipline supplemented this process of coercing compliance. The settler literacy paradigm inculcated students into the highly textualized and legalized settler classroom and its curriculum, which operates on an officially-mandated, hierarchical model. Together, they formed “[n]arrow, standardizing institutions [that] demand[ed] myths that simplify the world” (Lomawaima and McCarty22). Because of the focalization of literacy at the center of Native education, discipline of all kinds grew tied to reading and writing practices. Firstly, educators used reading and writing to effect assimilation “by producing scripts of Indianness for their students to follow” (Katanksi 7). This curricular model, where upper administrative echelons hand down material, in fact left settler discipline more open to critique in literate forms by Native students. Disciplinary methods often fell far from legislative intent as it was written into federal assimilation policy. This generates a fruitful contradiction: even in recent boarding school stories, the institutions “embodied both victimization and agency for Native people, and they served as sites of both cultural loss and cultural persistence.” (Davis 20). The letters serve as textual devices that effect this double-sided operation, a mediator between recalcitrance and acquiescence.

In “Introduction: Letter to General Pratt,” Tohe marks the essential relationship between literacy and regimentation. She steps into a world filled with large- and small-scale disciplinary forces: “At the Indian school my life was measured and accounted for on a daily basis: roll call, nine-week work details, lights out at ten p.m., lights on at five a.m. Fences surrounded my life.

Cement covered the earth beneath my feet" (ix). She associates diverse facets of regimentation with the school architecture, which work together to reinforce a settler-administrative narrative. These intermedia reinforcements elicited resonances between the disciplinary enforcement of a settler pedagogical paradigm and its attendant narrative, based on a standardized conception of progress and achievement. The paradigm legitimized itself via protocols for boarding school behavior that involve a high level of regimentation designed to draw a line between the safe and threatening to authority. While administrators offered a surface explanation of "self-sufficiency," settler bureaucracy sought to train Native people to follows its rules, a practice of indoctrination where officials, administrators, and educators "normalized certain cultural and educational practices while defining others as threatening to federal authority and therefore impermissible." (Lomawaima and McCarty 10-11). This process engendered a conflict between administrative regimentation and student agency, where administrators designed disciplinary strategies that encouraged both compliance and self-sufficiency in a given trade. Tohe notes that Carlisle's modeling of the Indian boarding schools after military structure and discipline had an effect. She writes, "In first through third grade, I marched to my classroom with a John Philip Sousa march playing over the intercom, which was, of course, apropos because you modeled Indian schools after the rigid military life in which you made a career" (ix-x). Tohe's grandmother, two generations before, also describes school discipline and regimentation: "We had military rules and we had to learn the commands. You had to get in line in the morning. We were marched everywhere we went, classrooms, dining room, church, everywhere" (xiv). The tone and passive construction in the woman's writing signals the ways that Native children received discipline, with little direct agency themselves. Instead, they were forced to improvise resistance on the

edges of procedure. *No Parole Today* begins with generational resistance, as its first letters are written by Tohe and her grandmother.

Administrative discipline, and the hierarchies that reified its authority and value as a mode of personal progress, structured the entire boarding school experience. Furthermore, structuring education as a strict, progressive series of lessons facilitates surveillance of Native students' progress toward assimilation. Lomawaima notes the irony of this process, as severe discipline, regimentation, and standardization of tasks, appearance, and language "that operated by the rules with no regard for the individual, all appear antithetical to the federal rhetoric of producing self-sufficient, self-reliant citizens. Practice was more suited to producing subservience than self-reliance" (121-22). Native and Euro-American educational paradigms bore striking differences: Native children had been in the habit of learning by observation and practice rather than repetition, and Native families believed the physical discipline to be an irrational Euro-American practice. An administrative system that used physical "correction" as a motivator for learning only intensified these Euro-American educational practices. A secondary problem also surfaced due to the realities of bureaucratic inefficiency: in the federal boarding schools, "what was lacking in personnel was made up in discipline. Recent scholarship has cited the low ratio of staff to students as an important factor in the rigid discipline maintained in boarding schools" (Collins xviii). Funding and other concerns, therefore, could powerfully shape the violence experienced by students.

Reformers understood the significance of the interrelation of bureaucrat and bureaucratic space. Parker pragmatically observes a similar relationship between space and education, where bureaucracy organizes space in such a way as to promote order and facilitate its instruction. He knew that "[m]uch can be accomplished in the interest of good order by the proper arrangement

of rooms and grounds" (69). Following this line of thinking, administrators actively constructed space to achieve complete control over bodies—visually, physically, socially—beginning with Richard Pratt and the school at Carlisle. Federal Indian boarding schools operated as spaces of settler-bureaucratic domination, where students were subjected to regimentation and curriculum that cast their identities and subjectivities as "other." Pratt borrowed from his experience at Fort Marion in the organization of the Carlisle campus, which resembled a prison or a factory, commensurate with its focus on manual labor training. Tohe also picks up this element in *No Parole Today*. In fact, Carlisle had a tall fence surrounding the campus, and plenty of methods for incarcerating disobedient students. Trafzer explains how at the center of all, "school officials placed a large, white bandstand where Pratt and his staff often observed the actions of students. They used the bandstand as a metaphor to symbolize white control of the place and its inhabitants. The all-seeing observer on the bandstand used administrative power to regulate the behavior of students at Carlisle." (99). This administrative apparatus produced an unbalanced landscape of visibility, safety, motion, information, and power on several levels—a panoptical sovereignty that embodied larger, abstract formations of settler-bureaucratic oversight of Native communities.

No Parole Today expresses a motif of containment from title to close, where, in the final poem, "Gallup steals our children / returns them empty and crumbled" (47). Tohe's grandmother offers explicit images at the beginning of the collection: "The boy's jail was right outside of the school house," where everyone passes by, making incarceration, punishment, and humiliation visible to the other students (xiv). The letters in particular tie education to imprisonment. The old woman describes being taken into the basement to see the girl runaways who had been captured, where they were kept for a whole month in a small cell with only a small window—"a metal

place and it had just holes, just full of holes. That's the only window they had" (xiv)—and a bucket for a toilet. She describes the space as a "dungeon" (xiv). The title itself produces a gesture toward escape. The sense of either containment or escape in these texts indicates how, since the early twentieth century, Native authors and filmmakers have explored boarding schools as a contested site of Native resistance to settler control. In the *Indolent Boys*, Momaday's uses the set design to construct a middle space that resembles a boarding school classroom, where a handful of children sit at desks during the play: "At times this space appears to be inside the classroom, at others outside," he specifies (iv). On the one hand, the Momaday's set forces audiences to constantly attend to educational bureaucracy and its authority system; but it also establishes the theater itself as a pedagogical space, with the audience standing in as students. By contrast, the text instructs set designers to hang a medicine wheel on the wall on stage, forming a symbolic horizon of anti-bureaucratic spatial relations. The medicine wheel stands as an alternate map for non-hierarchical architectures—both physical and organizational.

As the head administrator of a federal Indian boarding school, school superintendents operated with considerable autonomy within the BIA, under the direction of the commissioner. Collins notes how, despite being "held up as the icons of morality and decency" Indian agents and superintendents were historically perceived by both Native communities and the general public alike "as a seedy lot and the bureaucracy they labored under as a seething house of nepotism" (xi). Officials who worked in any capacity at boarding school were expected to command quiet obedience, and were given wide latitude in their physical, psychological, and emotional abuse in order to make this happen. Matrons have been depicted severely in Native literatures, but the consensus among BIA officials in the late twentieth century was that white women, in particular, were the "most suitable employees for the work of assimilation"—"only

women had the moral strength that was the foundation of civilization" (Cahill 67). The belief that women were inherently nurturing conflicted with a desire to actualize all goals through instrumental rationality.

Tohe writes of the ways disciplinary narratives emerge through the tools of measurement, education, order. The matron hits students with a ruler, further signifying how physical discipline functioned as a process of writing, by which order and obedience could be inscribed onto the bodies of Native children. Despite being coded as white, the matron position could express itself more liminally than that of the superintendent: Tohe writes that Mrs. Harry had "a reputation for being a mean woman even though she's an Indian, a Heinz 57, an Indian who's from several different tribe" (28). The matron here not only occupies an identity similar to the children—even reflecting intertribal identity by virtue of her tribal affiliations—but still occupies a different administrative positionality than the students. Teachers became instruments within a progressive social energy of a scope so immense that it often eclipsed other elements of their person. In the "General Pratt" letter, Tohe describes how "[o]n the first day of school we found ourselves behind small wooden desks looking at the teacher who acted on behalf of your assimilationist policies" (x). No matron appears in *The Indolent Boys*, but two teachers—a young white woman and an older white man—provide pedagogical contrast. Barton Wherritt acts as the misguided and violent teacher who disciplines the children, while young Carrie shows herself to be gentle and caring in her methods but at the same time drawn to an older student, John Pai, who is about to leave the Kiowa School for seminary. The matron figure, however, more fully expresses surveillance in her administrative gaze. Lomawaima observes the "hours spent standing at attention, scrubbing on hands and knees, avoiding the matron's gaze, keeping still, keeping

quiet" (112). Most Native stories establish the work of a variety of administrators and educators from the perspective of being watched, recorded, critiqued, and disciplined.

The punishments that children received were standardized but differed by gender. Boys tended to receive far more corporeal punishment and hard labor that reflected the industrial training elements of Indian boarding school pedagogy. Many in the Indian boarding school system believed that "the Indians have not been brought up to believe in the dignity of labor." (Holm 20). *The Indolent Boys* focuses on the relationship between young Native boys and particularly white male authority figures, either educators or administrators—or superintendents. John Pai, the model Kiowa student, tells an incredulous Carrie that he, too, was disciplined. She asks, "You were … whipped?" and he responds: "That was the least of it. … They cut my hair, which was already cut short. They left cuts and little tufts of hair on my scalp. That is how we *Gaigwu* look when we are grieving. It was as if I was mourning my own death. Then I had to stand naked with the new students, who were much younger than I and terribly frightened, who thought that they were being put to death, while we were deloused with poisonous powder; it got into our eyes and nostrils and mouth" (33). John Pai's description foreshadows the heavy presence that death and undeath will bear later in the play. Administrators expressed settler biopower in their disciplinary practices, which "reflected the federal obsession with disciplining the body in order to discipline the mind" (Lomawaima 106).

The discipline female students suffered was instead shaped by Euro-American beliefs about domesticity's role in civilized life. While some texts emphasize that corporeal punishment was used on girls by the matron, their daily discipline involved regimented instruction in homemaking skills rather than industrial or agricultural training. Girls would darn socks for the boys, for example, training them to become assimilated wives and mothers. Dian Million argues

that “the system was mostly interested in reforming women’s morality” through domestic training (45). Cahill notes that this came after “policy makers pushed for new programs that emphasized the role of the household and education” in the assimilation of Native people, which was linked with a feminized discourse about sympathy and nurturance (66). Popularly-speaking, women are given the educational roles and men the higher-order administrative roles. Education programs were “administered by women, who are able to do the work of education and uplift by virtue of the special characteristics of their gender” (Cahill 66). Men, on the other hand, often represented not a ground-level authority but the official vested with the authority to override al other decisions—including granting students leave from school. Given the direct interaction of teachers and students, Cahill claims that those advocating education reform in the late nineteenth century essentially believed that the Bureau worked best “as a maternalist agency” (65).

This multifaceted face of administrative authority provoked an equally varied legacy of resistance by Native students. Defiance manifested in many forms: setting fire to school grounds, passively resisting the work and curriculum, fighting with administrators, as well as “clandestine acts of cultural preservation” (Adams 233)—such as merely talking. Boys’ defiance was perhaps more visible, but Native girls did participate in their own forms of resistance, either passively or by running away, just as the boys tended to. Erdrich’s “Indian Boarding School: The Runaways” centers on runaway Native girls, a fairly rare literary figure. The poem reveals how even clothing was made to do different disciplinary work for Native boys and girls. Boys wore standardized military-style clothing; instead, girls wore plain dresses designed to instill Euro-American femininity and domesticity. In Erdrich’s poem, the girls are “cold in regulation cloths,” and after they are captured and returned to the school, the matron and/or superintendent marks them: “All runaways wear dresses, long green ones, / the color you would think shame was” (11). The

runaways are then forced to “scrub / the sidewalks down because it’s shameful work” (11). Native pupils find themselves gendered by settler administrative authority and its demands for alternate paradigms of labor.

Truancy became a major problem from the start of the federal Indian boarding schools, particularly those within a few miles of their home community, such as the Kiowa boarding school in *The Indolent Boys*. A social understanding of this act of resistance existed among the students: Lomawaima describes how “[t]he student grapevine instantly telegraphed the news of who had run away, and who had been recaptured” (120). Many administrators were compelled by rule and convention to keep enrollment figures up in order to maintain the flow of agency funds, which were “allocated on a per capita basis” (Lomawaima 120). Capturing truant students then became a practice of bureaucratic survival for administrators. Disciplinary practice was a common factor in escape: among the many reasons that Native students gave for running away, many complained that they were either “mistreated by teachers” or “too confined by the innumerable restrictions placed on them in boarding schools” (Child 88-89). Visits home were specifically obstructed by the policies of the bureaucratic apparatus, as they required up-front fees. Therefore, Native students “who could not afford the expense of train travel, or those who simply wanted to avoid the bureaucratic details of gaining formal permission to go home, often just skipped the premises” (Child 99). When model student John Pai escapes, “the policeman from the school came and took me back” (Momaday 32); when he gets caught again, he is publicly shamed. Native communities believed that boarding school students were justified in their resistance, yet students also felt some guilt as a result of the indoctrination of schools. As with John Pai, at many schools “[r]unaways were frequently considered hard-working students who were well behaved at school, and their first desertions often caught school officials by

surprise" (Child 89). The children had mastered the regimented behavior and literacy practices of their colonizers, revealing how narratives of Native truancy always-already disrupt the narratives of settler education.

Educational Surveillance into the Progressive Era

Images of surveillance appear in even the earliest boarding school stories. Like Captain Pratt's model, where the central bandstand allows for an administrator to watch Native students, narratives of compulsory settler education often revolve around the trace of an administrative gaze. The superintendent's spyglass in Francis La Flesche's *The Middle Five* (1900) signifies such a perspective, a watchful eye looking down students from above. When the superintendent briefly lets one student borrow the spyglass, he and La Flesche still use it to "watch the Indians" (10) —one of them standing near a grave (17). The Native boys seem unaware that they hold the instrument of their surveillance by the superintendent. As the first Native ethnologist in the U.S., La Flesche (Omaha) would in fact spend much of his career "watching Indians."

Administrators pair visual with textual instruments to build a more comprehensive and permanent apparatus of supervision, where captured images of Native children become fixed. Children in boarding school stories are imminently aware of being recorded and labeled in such a process—this dynamic arises in Zitkala-Ša's "The School Days of an Indian Girl" (1921), when a matron watches over children with her spectacles, a roll book, and a pencil ready for daily records (65-6). Files, reports, requisition forms, and the writing practices associated with them, right down to the check mark, mark surveillance as a central function of literacy. They signify observation in a hierarchical, bureaucratic relation. Officials and others acting on their behalf activate textual forms in order to reinforce and legitimize difference. More than any other

administrative dimension, the presence of these technologies of literacy in Indian education generates a separation between *overseer* and *overseen*. Overseers monitor behavior for features that help them "mark" narratives of Native deficiency and disobedience onto exploited children. In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault observes that "power produces … reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth" (194). Settler educational power likewise projects a formative reality onto Native children. This reality constitutes a subjectivity that casts Natives as extras at best—victims at worst—in the curriculum, the settler stories of Indigenous disappearance. Educational bureaucracy sought to police all definitions of Native people, including their hygiene and sexuality, to guide them on the way to assimilation to Euro-American culture while simultaneously communicating, via discipline, regimentation, and images drawn from settler-colonial narratives about Indigenous uncleanliness and hyper-sexuality. Oversight was the apparatus through which bureaucracy used its officials to actualize these definitions, which kept schools in session.

As a formative part of the larger settler apparatus, administrative surveillance of Native communities systematized what had previously been a disreputable "federal mania to collect and store information" and then produce records and reports that capture Native knowledge, culture, and identity; this archival practice has served as "the lifeblood of the bureaucracy" (Lomawaima and McCarty 11). At heart, this mobilized settler technologies in the appropriation of Native self-representation, generating the settler fantasy of the assimilated and grateful Indian, blended (enough) into Euro-American society as to erase the problem of Indigeneity.[8] Katanksi explores the double-entendre evident in settler educational literacy: settler education operated as "a process of imprinting, and those who controlled the printing process … deeply believed in their power to edit and rewrite Indian identity through use of the newspapers as disciplinary tools and

rhetorical weapons" (47-48). In this, newspapers joined all other technologies of literacy at the boarding schools' disposal in the effort to express full control over the identities, behaviors, and beliefs of Native students.

The Indian school superintendent served as the core mechanism in the advancement of Native assimilation. One scene in *The Indolent Boys* illustrates the construction of the settler-bureaucratic narrative by such literate authority figures: Superintendent Gregory and instructor Wherritt compose and narrate their reports on opposite sides of the stage; the superintendent will compose a larger report for his superiors from the sum of all documents and information in his possession. Momaday shows how these separate reports assemble to form a coherent (if misguided and damaging) narrative, as the two men do not consult any Native voices. Their procedural writing practice diffuses but reifies administrative authority. In their explanations, they describe the incident of truancy, differing in some key details. Wherritt claims relative to his report that "I simply wanted to … express *my* reading, *my*, ah, interpretation of the manual" (*Indolent* 7). Momaday places the interpretation of regulations, procedures, and discourses at the center of the play. The scene begins with the superintendent reading letters of request from both the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. and the Indian Agent of the Kiowa Agency for a full "a more circumstantial report of the facts" (42). At first, Wherritt is willing to admit that "The cause of their departure from the school has never been definitely ascertained but is supposed to have been *partially* due to punishment inflicted by myself upon Sailor, on the morning of January 7th…" (43). While the superintendent blames the oldest boy for being "perfectly wild," Wherritt writes, "Judging from the *frequency* with which the *boys in question* ran away, I consider the principal incentive that led to their departure was identical with former instances; that is, they wanted to go to camp, preferring to reside there in indolence, rather than

at school, leading a life of activity and usefulness" (44). Both rely on thoughts of essential Indigenous primitiveness. As the men sign their reports, Wherritt signs his name "Bart Wherritt, Teacher and Disciplinarian," identifying him as the primary educational presence in the dead boys' lives (44). The conjunction of the two reports crafts a bureaucratic narrative that affixes truancy as an essential, unavoidable characteristic to the boys, eliding the true reasons for their flight. Wherritt's admission, flimsy as it was, becomes obscured by bureaucratic language and rationale at the end of his report. Despite these men's negotiation of a co-written narrative, the report is not polyvalent—it is essentially written with one voice, the voice of the bureaucrat. The superintendent in the film *The Only Good Indian* similarly expresses control over the files of runaway students. He contends that the information contained within the files remains the sole property of the Office of Indian Affairs. The various rationalized and standardized texts of settler education exemplify a violence against the experiences of those silenced by their procedural construction and preservation.

The production of images of Native educational deficiency via supervision legitimizes administrative authority over Native communities, reinforcing the continued operation of the bureau. Settler education performs this work in the ways that it encourages advanced students to see themselves as separate from other Native students, in effect policing each other. Conversion was documented in the bureaucratic archive, including in visual media during an era "of intense visual documentation with its "before and after" photographs used to record and legitimate the children's movement from "savage" to "civilized" subject" (Raheja 282-283). Students were surrounded by the products of visual surveillance; the images of difference and transformative similarity that it produces quelled the anxieties of settler society. This clearly manufactured evidence for the efficacy of Indian education illustrated to all "how dangerous cultural difference

was being contained, made safe within the Indian boarding schools" (Lomawaima and McCarty 2-3). These conversions work as a representational living death for Native children, who may or may not identify with either photograph or the narrative that joins them. The training school in *The Only Good Indian* has been hung on every wall with these promotional "before and after" photos captioned with Pratt's axiom, "Kill the Indian / Save the Man." Identification in such a narrative becomes problematic when administrative surveillance is designed first to classify you as "Indian" and then efface that identity, one way or another.

Foucault recognized the inextricable relationship between oversight and education, where "[a] relation of surveillance, defined and regulated, is inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching" (176). Rationalized narration and textuality would urge Native children to participate in a progressive process by trusting in the transformative power of careful monitoring of self and others. Practices of synoptic surveillance, which runs laterally as opposed to vertically, surface when students are taught to watch and report each other. Native authors play with letter-writing to expose the links between education and all axes of surveillance. Gordon Henry's poems articulate circular, redundant logics through their lyrical repetition, in a parody of bureaucratic procedure and discourse. The poems likewise reflect a tension between Native storytelling, articulations of aesthetic sovereignty, and the "virtual landfill of supporting documentation … [of] a vast federal bureaucracy"; instead, Native stories offer "a historical account whose quality is not measured solely by the cubic volume of archival boxes or linear feet of library shelves devoted to its sources" (Lomawaima and McCarty 15). As bureaucratic accounts of settler education became more quantitative over time, their surveillance methods learned to rely more on language games and less on physical discipline, but the effect was still the same. Methods of textual surveillance expressed control over Native bodies.

Wrinkles emerge between Native identities and several bureaucratic positionalities to present additional problems. Tohe writes of a young girl named Vida who describes a moment when the matron called her into the hallway. In the brief story, "So I Blow Smoke in Her Face," Tohe depicts layers of Indigeneity and racial betrayal. The matron is a "Heinz 57," a Native woman with a diverse Native background; while the girl who delivers the matron's message to Vida's door is named "Apple Annie, [the matron's] favorite [student]" (29). This refers to the derogatory slang term "apple," which Tohe explains: "Those who chose assimilation we call apples—red on the outside, white on the inside" (xi). Superintendents frequently employed such strategies, recruiting certain students into the base level of the administration. Lomawaima argues that these Native "officers walked a fine line between their supervisors and their peers. Being set apart as an officer was enough to alienate some other students" (105). By extension, these relations based on hierarchy rather than community affiliation further instructed Native girls in how to properly monitor and instruct their home communities in advancement toward civilized life, once they left the boarding school permanently.

In *No Parole Today*, literacy becomes a tool for surveillance in several subtle ways. Roll calls serve this function, as in the poem "The Names," where children's identities and names get classified first by English mistransliterations and then by roll marks: "The teacher closes the book and / we are little checkmarks besides our [new] names" (5). Often viewed as a personal solitary practice, literacy encourages the student community to communicate with each other but also to police itself. Literacy education carries a double-edged quality, as it becomes a tool for colonization and decolonization, power and resistance. Practices of reading and writing reveal a nexus of relations between administrators, educators, elected officials—who all attempted to enforce specific uses of literacy and deny either Native or subaltern rhetorical stances—and the

students themselves. Momaday himself articulates alternate, Indigenous literacy practices in *The Indolent Boys,* starting by placing Kiowa tribal winter counts alongside the documents of bureaucratic archive.[9] The juxtaposition frames the pictographic Indigenous history-writing practice in a context of Eurowestern documentation. The bureaucratic narrative, produced partly through surveillance practice and procedures of interpretation in the reports of the superintendent and disciplinarian, is resisted by the literate acts of Momaday and students like John Pai, who has achieved full literacy in English.

Settler-colonial bureaucracy may deploy literacy to allow for controlled escape under the bounds of progressivism. But in this case the Indian remains confined to and defined by the school—only the "man" has been released. Set to graduate from the Kiowa boarding school and enroll in seminary school, model student John Pai waits received his travel papers through much of the play, establishing a horizon of settler-sanctioned escape. John's wait creates additional tension relative to the missing boys: whereas they ran home without permission, John waits for permission to leave for seminary, where complete ideological assimilation awaits him. He reveals in his conversation with Carrie the details of his escape attempt long before: "…you know … it was worth it. When I reached my mother's camp it was as if I had returned from the dead. … And it didn't matter that I would be hunted down and taken back… My spirit had been caught and caged, and I had set it free again. Do you know how? By running away, like those three boys, by returning, by going home" (32). But a truant officer tracks John to his home community, and in exchange for his act of resistance the subsequent capture and return of the school's golden boy proves to be publicly humiliating and damaging to John's psyche.

Truant Literacies

Indian boarding schools had been constructed from the ground up as totalizing institutions for the assimilation of Native children, but they could control Native bodies only slightly more effectively than they could control their expressions of resistance in language. Children spoke their tribal languages and used their new English-language skills toward acts of negotiation and disobedience, particularly in literate forms. Managerial discourse and textuality were designed to exclude Native people, but students learned to appropriate them as technologies of rhetorical sovereignty, representing themselves as powerful liminal figures rather than those who vanish. While official textual modes expressed and reified administrative control, students practiced a "covert literacy" of self-representation (Rockwell 9). Native students and the literary tradition that sprung from their resistance express counternarratives against settler education. The result has been an assembled counter-poetics, a poetics of truancy that disrupts the definitions, discourses, and narratives of boarding school experience. This blending of Indigenous and Euro-American poetic conventions functions as a "metaliteracy strategy" (Gilmore and Smith 81). Tohe's poem, "Our Tongues Slapped into Silence," depicts girls reading a fictional poem, *Dick and Jane Subdue the Diné*, illustrating how teachers and their children's stories imposed Euro-American culture and language on Native students. Tohe underscores the relationship between verbal and physical discipline. The poem may also be interpreted as an appropriated version of the story frame, rewritten by the girls in order to interrogate the ideological enforcement working beneath the surface of the apparently harmless "Dick and Jane" reading lessons. Throughout these responses, Native children construct alternate, enacted identities inflected by conversion to rhetorical sovereignty as opposed to assimilation.

That Laura Tohe, Gordon Henry and other contemporary Native authors have taken up letter-writing as a signifier for Indigenous resistance is no surprise. They followed this by correlating it with truancy. Brenda Child notes that "rebellion was a permanent feature of boarding school life, and runaways and stories of resistance figure prominently in the letters and reports" of boarding schools (94). Boarding school texts express this relationship between literacy and escape, as one of the most common uses of English-language literacy by students and their parents was to petition the superintendent for home visits, or to have their children returned home permanently. When these petitions didn't work, many of these students chose to leave anyway. Where truancy and literacy cross is a counternarrative to the settler educational story that successful students never ran away. They contest the simple progressive narratives that produce settler realities, thereby disrupting the ideologies that underpin them.

These counternarratives in effect operate as sousveillance. When Tohe recollects and articulates her school experience to a long-dead Richard Pratt, "I voice this letter to you now because I speak for me, no longer invisible, and no longer relegated to the quiet margins of American culture, my tongue silenced" (xii). Yet the official narrative espoused by the U.S. Commissioner of Education to the Friends of the Indian in 1895 revealed the progressive fantasy upon which settler education was built: "Give us your children. We will give them letters and make them acquainted with the printed page. . . . With these comes the great emancipation, and the school shall give you that" (qtd. in Katanski 5). Ironically, this would be the case, as literacy helped enable certain modes of representational escape, as well as practical skills for negotiating with bureaucratic forces. Tohe, like her grandmother and many other former students, has been able to reinscribe her voice and interpellate the settler-administrative hierarchies that confined her. She deploys English language to bear witness to the school experience and to the memory of

student resistance to settler educational surveillance, regimentation, and textuality. This narrative disruption and realignment of a Native bureaucratic subjectivity is made more possible by the representational technologies of assimilation. They allow for more fluidity of identity just as they have also been deployed to suspend Native people via static images. They create community in their truant gestures. Subaltern "identity is produced in social interaction and through a process of contestation and collaboration" (Gilmore and Smith 69)—particularly with regard to boarding school education, which captured and generalized tribal identities as *Indian*.

At the mandate of the agency, the truant officer figure positions himself counter to these trajectories of escape. The figure becomes important in stories where alternating interpositions generate a perpetually contested representational site. The 2013 film *Rhymes for Young Ghouls*, set on the (fictional) Red Crow Indian Reservation in 1969, begins with a series of passages excerpted from Canada's Indian Act of 1876. The first explains that, by law, every physically able Indigenous child between the ages of five and sixteen must attend an Indian Residential School. The second juxtaposes compulsory education mandates with the mechanisms that keep this system in operation:

> Her majesty's attendants, to be called truant officers, will take into custody a child whom they believe to be absent from school using as much force as the circumstance requires. (*Rhymes*)

This foregrounds the role physical discipline plays in cycles of running and return in the film, as well as the way that disobedience—particularly the kinds that emancipate Native children from constant surveillance and regimentation—provides a pretext for especially violent discipline and incarceration. Unless, of course, one can afford the truancy tax. The levy works as a rationalized, monetized exploitation of fugitive acts, among the most desperate of acts committed by students. In the next frame, the next passage in the Indian Act displays:

> A person caring for an Indian child who fails to cause such a child to attend school shall immediately be imprisoned, and such person arrested without warrant and said child conveyed to school by the truant officer. (*Rhymes*)

In the film, Indian Agent Popper (Mark Antony Krupa) commodifies Indigenous escape by looking the other way for a simple payment, exempting those able to pay from returning to boarding school. This cycle of truancy is still beholden to settler-administrative power. The teenaged protagonist, Aila (Devery Jacobs), manages to earn enough money selling a variety of cheap designer drugs via a weed-growing operation with her uncle to keep her and her friends out of St. Dymphna's residential school. (Dymphna, coincidentally the Irish Catholic saint of runaways, victims of abuse, and mental disorders, was killed by her father at the age of 15.) Agent Popper fakes a drug raid of the local strip club with his goons, stealing the money Aila had saved to for the truant tax, putting her and her friends at risk of being returned to St. Dymphna's. They decide to mobilize a major drug-selling operation to recover the money as quickly as possible. During a party scene Aila wears a gas mask that the audience will discover belonged to her dead mother, an artist who would often spray-paint political art while protected by mask. Aila, who inherited her mother's artistic talent, also wears the mask protect herself from smoke: she spends the night rolling and dipping specialty marijuana cigarettes for clients. Resonating with several diverse coping strategies for escaping the strictures of administrative power, Aila looks around the party and quips, "This is what brings my people together: the art of forgetfulness" (*Rhymes*). Drug-induced emancipation from memory, poverty, trauma, and settler authority—though harmful—echoes characters' truancy.

Most students didn't run away because they knew they would be captured before making it home. *The Only Good Indian* stars several Native actors and was partly produced by Cherokee actor Wes Studi. In the opening scene of *The Only Good Indian*, a young boy we will come to

know as Nachwihiata (and Charlie), is shown to be smuggled into an empty field by a man and woman revealed to be his parents, merely so he and his father can play a stick ball game. The scene implies that the couple has been hiding their son from the mandated education of federal boarding schools. Soon, out of the treeline, a group of watching white truant officers emerge on horseback, lasso Nachwihiata and abuse the other two, no matter how much they beg the men not to take their son.

Truants were captured by a number of figures. A liminal space opens between the Indian and the truant officer, where Native characters move in interesting ways. Native men in *The Surrounded* and *The Indolent Boys*, themselves products of the schools, are tasked with finding truants and convincing them to stay at the school. Other texts offer similarly deputized Natives who operate on the border between overseer and overseen. As in *The Only Good Indian*, many of these were Indian police or former Indian scouts for the U.S. military, like Sam Franklin. Adams explains that Native officers "were usually excellent trackers; they often knew the runaway's family and could therefore anticipate the direction of flight; and finally, they knew the country, the canyons and hollows where a child might get lost or hide" (225-226). In reality, whole communities could function as truant officers, though they weren't bureaucratized in the same way. *The Only Good Indian* demonstrates the racial fluidity of official positions. Several of the film's characters move in and out of truant officer subjectivity. The white truant officer, Finkle (T. Max Graham), serves as the first, straightforward villain; in a final violent scene, he will be shot and killed by Sheriff Henry McCoy (J. Kenneth Campbell)—Black Fox's former nemesis during the Indian Wars—when Finkle won't give up two abducted children as McCoy orders him to. At different stretches in the film, however, both Sam Franklin and Henry McCoy pursue escaped Native children across the Kansas landscape as instruments of capture.

Cherokee bounty hunter (and former scout for the U.S. military) Sam Franklin represents a shifting but sincere capitulation to Euro-American assimilation. Sam Franklin's name evokes the essential (Euro-)Americanness of "Uncle Sam" (just as the bureaucrat in *Ledfeather*) and the Founding Fathers of the United States. This echoes Sam's conception of his own transformation to Euro-American culture. He explains his plan to Nachwihiata: "Sam Franklin is going to be the best white man he can be. I'm going to out-"white man" the goddamn white man" (*The Only*). To actualize this, he carries a "German-made Mauser automatic" pistol, wears a pilot's helmet and goggles, and rides around on an early gas-powered bike rather than a horse, as all the white men in the film do. His use of such technology would have in the very early twentieth century been a significant marker of whiteness. Sam finds himself straddling several ethnoracial and bureaucratic borders in the film. In addition to their patent lack of motorbikes, the white men also searching for the main character demonstrate zero hygiene and prove to be half as articulate as Sam. Sam says, after telling Nachwihiata that he can learn about operating and fixing the bike in school, "Problem is, Injuns don't use machines. Let me show you something, boy. It's a catalog, boy. It's full of everything that the white man manufactures. Look at it and dream." Sam's act not only introduces Nachwihiata to Euro-American capitalist literacy, but it also dissociates Sam Franklin from his Native identity. But he will recover this affiliation and kinship when, near the end of the film, he decides to free his captives and go on the run with them, transforming from truant officer to truant himself. Sheriff McCoy will pursue the lot of them, in a culmination of the film's maelstrom of undead discourse and imagery.

Tracking the Undead Truant

Death has been a common motif in boarding school stories, as well as stories of runaway students, for this reflected the realities of compulsory settler education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Diné author Luci Tapahonso's short story, "The Snakeman" (1979), reflects her experiences as a former boarding school student. Tapahonso explores life in a girl's dormitory, constantly under watch and threat of discipline from the matron. The story begins with an act of escape, as the reader learns that the main character takes advantage of the darkness each night to slip out of the building and visit her mother in the graveyard. As a former student herself, the protagonist's mother is buried in the school graveyard, but the woman appears as a ghost each night to console her daughter. Katanksi detects "the exquisite irony of the story that only the girl whose mother is dead is allowed this kind of comfort" (173). This generational comfort and experience is in fact facilitated by death, as it is her mother's interment in the graveyard that allows her to be close enough for her daughter to visit. Tohe's grandmother's story in *No Parole Today* offers similar generational linkages, as she also associates death and graveyards with safety. After describing her visits to the graveyard, she writes, "I don't know why we used to like to go to the graveyard. The matrons used to ask us, "Where do you want to go for a walk?" "Graveyard!" We weren't even afraid of the *ch'įįdiis*, ghosts. I guess it was the only place we didn't get scolded" (xv-xvi). Both of these girls associate graveyards with safety. Within the larger field of representations of boarding school students, authors begin to associate the truant with the dead and the living dead. *The Indolent Boys* begins with an epigraph, as it is printed in Momaday's *Three Plays* (2007):

> They are homesick,
> they are going to the camps, they are camping.
> —In Kiowa oral tradition it is not unusual
> to speak of the dead in the present tense. (9)

Like many of these authors, Momaday recalls the trace of the undead in Pratt's boarding school axiom. *Un*death functions as both critique and categorical escape. While the literate, assimilated Native becomes a kind of "undead Indian" by virtue of her cultural negotiation and might be considered "less Native" by her home community or "less Indian" by white bureaucrats, the paradox allows for agency through mastery of the literate tools of settler-colonialism. It signifies ultimate escape from regimentation and disciplinary power as well as the Eurowestern images of both savage and "civilized Indian."

The villain of Momaday's play, "teacher and disciplinarian" Mr. Wherritt, notes an association between Carlisle Indian School and death. When the superintendent brings up the school, Wherritt says, "Worse! A *real* prison! My God, have you seen the photographs of the graves there? (*He takes out a watch from his pocket, reads the time.*) Your beautiful quilt, Mr. Gregory, your grand scheme, tell me, where are the boys in it, the runaways?" (23). Here the teacher criticizes bureaucracy for not accounting in its grand scheme for truancy. The blind unawareness of his association of education and incarceration with dead and missing children recalls the Kiowa story of the "frozen boys," the three who ran to the West toward the dying sun: Mosatse, Koi-kahn-hodle, and Seta (known at school as Jack, Arch, and Sailor). After a severe beating and an unexpected winter storm as they traveled toward their parents' camps, they died. Although the frozen boys are the focus of the play, they are not among the cast of characters, appearing only as bundled corpses in the dream sequences. Children make good figures of resistance in this way: bureaucratic discourse infantilizes and representationally kills Indigenous people. Yet this innocence offers a fantasy that creates transformative undeath rather than containment through principles like "Kill the Indian, save the man." In a conversation in *The Indolent Boys,* Wherritt launches into a diatribe with the superintendent,

> [John Pai] is an *Indian*. Indians are children. Children all—Sailor, John Pai, Emdotah—children! Why, those indolent thieves and beggars, those dreamers out there in the camps, those poor, *befeathered*, war-painted Ghost Dancers are *children*! The old, pathetic ones with their rheumy eyes and running sores—those "wise men" are nothing but children. (19-20)
> …
> Children do not care for reality… They prefer make-believe. Why, right now they are probably dancing in the camps, the Ghost Dance. … They are making believe that their dead will rise from their graves, that the buffalo will come back, that we whites will go away and leave them alone. (21).

Here, teacher and disciplinarian lumps an adolescent, a young adult, and an adult Native man into one category: "children." His statement demonstrates the ethnoracial hierarchy while simultaneously open a route of escape in the Ghost Dance. The dead first rise in the imagination, and then they may rise in the material world. In this sense, undeath works as a kind of horizon of possibility and teases yet another racist discourse about primitive Indigenous religious practices. Golden boy John Pai remarks that although they died the boys had reoriented themselves and found a life beyond bureaucratic capture.

In one of the last scenes of the play, Emdotah, the father of one of the frozen boys and a stand-in truant officer sent to find them after they had fled the school, enters a room where John Pai sleeps in a chair beside "three forms in a row on floor wrapped in old canvas blankets, like mummies" (59). Dressed in his Ghost Dance shirt, Emdotah perceives, "My son is here. (*singing in Kiowa*) The enemy held him, he broke away. The enemy shamed him, he made a song. Death sang with him" (59). Emdotah interposes on John Pai's dream and prays for the boys, imagining them returning home to the camps: they have gone on to their ancestors, free of the bureaucratic institution that had tried to discipline the Kiowa out of them. Emdotah prays for his own escape from the shame of having served temporarily as truant officer, as well: he says that, when he dies, "I shall be who I am then. I shall not be then an agency Indian; I shall not wear these ugly,

branded clothes. And I shall not hunt down my children!" (34). His Ghost Dance regalia signifies the power of ceremony to reverse irreversible categories like "life" and "death."

Contemporary Native storytellers often borrow from Euro-American genres to travel the transgressive but transformative boundary between life and death. By merging the Native wiindigoo and Eurowestern vampire genres in *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* (2007), Drew Hayden Taylor plays on the trope of the undead Indian in an exploration of assimilation and cultural sovereignty. A European visitor arrives at the fictional Otter Lake Reserve in Canada: Pierre L'Errant, who he has returned home after three centuries in Europe. The story reveals that the man, once of the local Ojibwa community, had been lured across the ocean to colonial-era Europe by the stories of visiting French traders. After L'Errant falls sick with measles, an aristocrat or official "with red eyes and sharp teeth" flies in through his window and tells him, "You come from a new land, a new people. … I [will] let you become the first of your kind to join my kind. If you survive the transition, maybe one day you will return to your home" (97). This "transition" signals cultural and biological assimilation into a carnivorous whiteness. But L'Errant has already received a warning. His choice to leave home for Europe, which began the process of conversion, infected him with measles. Now he must resist a new, more insidious illness until he can return home to his Otter Lake relations. His wiindigoo-vampire self signifies the gluttonous settler-bureaucratic compulsion to appropriate Indigenous territory and resources, which infects people with "a hunger that [can't] be satisfied" (Taylor 79). This hunger ultimately functions as a compulsion to assimilate (and assimilate others). The act of finally leaving Europe after centuries of shame the result of assimilation works as a first-stage escape from living death. Once L'Errant returns to Otter Lake, he takes a room with the family of sixteen year-old Tiffany Hunter, her father, and her grandmother. Because of her mother's

absence and a contentious relationship with her father, Tiffany runs away from home, only to be found in her hiding place by L'Errant, who tells her his own story of running and urges her to return home before it's too late. L'Errant then climbs the highest peak at Otter Lake and, with a smile on his face, performs a smudging ceremony and lets the sun put him to rest as the wind carries off the ash that remains of his body.

Many recent films deploy images and motifs of living death in a process of exploration of the dynamics of Native truancy. As a medium that, like photography, developed partly as a medium for documenting the "vanishing Indian," cinema offers a unique connection with living death. As a medium it disrupts a Euro-American tradition that reaches back to the "before and after" photographs that reaffirmed ethnoracial separations, rather than fulfilling their intended purpose of validating the possibility for conversion and assimilation. Critic Michelle Raheja writes of how these photographs express "a racial-optics system whereby Native Americans are policed through the dominant culture's ability to recognize them as Indigenous through their dress and physical and cultural separateness from other communities" (67). These films offer specific aesthetic strategies for the disruption of settler-bureaucratic categories, discourses, and policies that perform some of this racial policing. Recent films about boarding school experience reflect both sides of the undead Native trope, including *The Only Good Indian* (2009), *The Dead Can't Dance* (2010), and *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (2013). After being captured by white truant officers in the opening scene of *The Only Good Indian*, Nachwihiata finds himself on a train with other boys being taken to the residential training school. Nachwihiata narrates the story in voiceover, in strange language about the dead: well before the audience knows what text the future Nachwihiata will read aloud, his voices offers excerpted aphorisms from what the audience will learn is Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Over the images and sounds of the moving train,

Nachwihiata reads, “Chapter one: … For the dead travel fast” (*The Only Dead Indian*). An ambiguity immediately presents itself: are the Native children riding on the train “the dead,” or is it the white American truant officers that move fast to capture them?

When the children arrive at the boarding school, the superintendent explains the process of cultural, psychological, and social death for the new children. He meets them and by way of introduction offers them a welcome speech: “This is not a prison. There are no walls, no fences—but there *is* a clock. The clock is here to provide order and discipline. The white man uses time to manage the world” (*The Only*). This indicates the managerial aspects of Euro-American assimilation, which offers a “right to manage” the world, including Native children like Nachwihiata and the others who stand listening to the superintendent. The man goes on: “You will learn to respect authority and to always be on time. And taking leave of this institution is strictly forbidden. Should you wander astray, once you are returned, your transgression will be dealt with in a swift and decisive manner, with punishment mete out accordingly” (*The Only*). The visual cuts away so that the superintendent can be heard in voiceover, over scenes of Nachwihiata and other Native children having their hair cut, being washed, being taught the English alphabet; within this montage, Nachwihiata receives his English name, “Charlie,” and has his photograph taken—but the school employees can’t get a clear shot, and Nachwihiata’s photographs show the blurred motion of resistance. Later, Nachwihiata will meet another Kickapoo boy who complains about all the “whistles, bells, and clocks” (*The Only*). In an act of defiance, the two boys sneak outside that night and climb up into the clock tower, where they examine and play with its time-keeping mechanism, turning the gears so that its hands spin wildly. Nachwihiata sticks an Indian Head Nickel, which had been thrown at him by a white child on his way to the school in an early scene, into the clock mechanism to break it. This

escape from the barracks, for which they are captured and beaten, becomes Nachwihiata's dry run before he makes his final escape.

Rodrick Pocowatchit's *The Dead Can't Dance* (2010) tells the story of three Comanche men who on the way to college discover that a new zombie virus is on the loose—an airborne virus that Native people demonstrate a natural immunity to. The virus infects its white victims with an insatiable hunger for human flesh. Set in Kansas, the virus sparks an epidemic just as three Comanche men embark on a trip to see one of them off to college. Because of Native immunity, scientists within the film conclude that a predisposition for diabetes and alcoholism—illnesses essentialized by settler etiologies—grants them their immunity. The men hide out in a local school and proceed to repel the white zombie horde, poking fun at the progressivist settler narrative of Indian education. The film reverses assimilation, as Native doctors use blood donated by Native people to manufacture a vaccine, leaving all non-Native survivors of the undead illness "part Indian," with their own blood quantum. This reflects Raheja's assertion about a "racial-optics system," as Natives begin very identifiably separate, and then blend with whites biologically.

The Only Good Indian foregrounds literatures of transgressive identity, including living death, immediately following the superintendent's speech. The camera cuts to Nachwihiata looking around his classroom, when he spies a small stack of classic Eurowestern novels—among them, *The Invisible Man* by H.G. Wells (1897), *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886), *The Mysterious of Udolfo* by Ann Radcliffe (1794), *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole (1764), and *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley (1818). And one book, which does not belong to the same box set as the rest and has a different over: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker (1897). Nachwihiata feels drawn to these stories,

and as he reads they help situate his developing literacy in a Eurowestern literary tradition and a tradition of supernatural tales of monsters and/or outcasts on the edge of human identity. Later, after he is put in solitary jail for speaking his tribal language and the teacher visits him and asks about *Dracula*, he makes a cross with his fingers as she leaves, casting *her* as a vampire. As in the other stories and films examined here, undeath presents itself as an imminently interpretable sign. Native writers may mobilize it for diverse and even contradictory purposes.

Nachwihiata comes to full literacy in English on the run, after stealing the school's copy of *Dracula* when he escapes. This marks a future point of literacy that defies assimilation and helps him enter into a representational state of undead. He reads several passages from *Dracula* throughout the film, eliciting contrary resonances in the concept of undeath. He describes the victimizing quality of settler-colonialism by associating a passage about vampires with former Indian-fighter Henry McCoy: "They cannot die, but must go on age after age adding new victims and multiplying the evils of the world. For all that die from the preying of the Undead become themselves Undead, and prey on their kind. And so the circle goes on ever widening, like as the ripples from a stone thrown in the water" (Stoker 342). Over an image of the sheriff, these words signal a critique of the consumptive nature of settler-colonialism. Nachwihiata warns against Pratt's more limiting version of the "undead Indian," where the ideology that creates "civilized Indians" like Sam (Black Fox), who has recaptured him, threatens to confine the transgressive power of Nachwihiata's new Native (but syncretic) literacy with cycles of false images of Indigeneity. Literacy has emerged for a transgressive character from a transgressive book that he has acquired in a transgressive act. Such literate gestures of escape reflect a legacy of resistance by children who lost their lives to the categories of settler bureaucracy.

The Only Good Indian may be read primarily as a western, given its form and the

historical context. These converge in the dynamic between the cowboy sheriff and Indian-fighter McCoy and the Cherokee scout and bounty hunter Sam Franklin. But the introduction of the gothic horror genre through Nachwihiata's narration from the boarding school's copy of *Dracula* shapes the way we understand the film. The motif of living death brought by gothic horror provides a different generic optics for reading cowboy and Indian. Nachwihiata reads a passage of description about Dracula when the film introduces us to our first image of former Indian fighter Sheriff McCoy: "His face was deathly pale, and the lines of it were hard, like drawn wires. His eyes were positively blazing." Nachwihiata describes the undead villain who toward the end of the film will track down and shoot at Sam, Nachwihiata, and Sally (Thirza Defoe). McCoy shouts, "Black Fox, I expected it would be you, when I seen that riding machine. Haha, I know we'd cross again, you son-bitch." "But this time you're gonna die, Sam says." "Hell, Injun, you oughta know more than anyone: I ain't never gonna die" (*The Only*). In this moment, Henry and Sam dissolve into signs, readable in at least two different generic modes, forever occupying their overlapping positions in the film.

Nachwihiata avoids both the consumptive undead of settler-colonial violence and the living death of assimilated life. When he tells his young Kickapoo friend of his plan to run away, Nachwihiata says, "I would rather die … than stay here." The other boy responses, "Don't let them bring you back," a play on words that evokes a cross-connection between truancy, capture, and living death. When Nachwihiata announces his resolve to escape, the other boy hands him a crude wooden stake he has carved. The boys tells Nachwihiata to run away. Later, Nachwihiata will experience yet another version of living death in the captured Native people at the asylum, most of whom are drugged. When Sam and Nachwihiata ask around about Sally, the men and women of the asylum surround them like zombies, moaning and groping for their bodies. One

patient does offer information that will help Sam and Nachwihiata find the young, fugitive Sally: Martin, a two-spirit man wrapped in a quilt, with his own bordered identity.

Rhymes for Young Ghouls features several undead tropes within its story of female truant Aila. As both a runaway and a facilitator of other escapes, Aila is shown to strike deals with the educational bureaucrats, who feed on her and her friends via the truancy tax—just like a vampire or a zombie. In this case, the creature appears in the title: "ghoul" derives from an old Arabic word, "*ghūl*," meaning "to seize" ("Ghoul," def. 1). Much like the contemporary zombie figure, the evil ghoul was believed to steal human corpses from graves and eat their flesh. The film begins with Aila's uncle, Burner (Brandon Oakes), drunkenly remarking a young Aila and Tyler, as they look at some of her mother's drawings (including one of a zombie),

> "Ever seen the [school] up close? They cook Indian kids up there for that zombie priest."
>
> "What's a zombie?"
>
> "Jesus Christ, Tyler, don't they teach you anything up at that school? Zombies are dead people who come back to life to eat brains. Dumb brains, especially. Normally zombies will eat anyone. But these religified zombies… Why do you think so many kids go missing at St. D's?" (*Rhymes*).

Aila says, "I have something that will protect you," and she hands Tyler a picture her mother drew for her: a female Native warrior who "likes to fight dead people," presumably the zombie drawing they have already looked at. The school in *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* combines federal boarding school and mission school as a way to signify a broad category of settler educational institutions.

After this exchange, Aila's mother Anna (Roseanne Supernault) stumbles drunk out of the building and in need of a ride home. She climbs into the front seat of her car and pulls Aila into her lap to drive—she indicates Aila has done this before for her. The two back out of the dirt driveway, only to run over and kill Tyler. In the following scene, a young Aila wakes up and her father is being taken away to jail, her mother having hung herself from the rafters. Aila will see

her mother as a zombie a sporadically during the film; she has a dream that her mother's corpse rises up out of the leaf-covered ground and orders her to take vengeance on the Indian Agent and schoolmaster. (Anna's husband, Joseph, says that they buried her without a name, and that's why she is undead.) In a dream after she has been captured, taken to school, had her hair cut, and placed in isolation, Aila will find Tyler come back to life as a child zombie in the boarding school graveyard. Aila recalls Burner's words in the opening scene as the zombie boy leads Aila to a mass grave of children.

The drawings of other undead monsters return occasionally in the film, including in a story about a zombie wolf and its insatiable hunger for Mi'gMaq children. When Aila asks where her grandmother heard the story, the woman replies, "Before they took me off to school, my mother told it to me. Your mother is telling it to you too" (*Rhymes*). Here a generational component surfaces; it surfaces, too, in Aila's father, who went to Catholic school many years before with Agent Popper. Of course, Joseph went to prison and Popper ended up running the local boarding school. This is the moment that Aila decides to steal the truant tax money back from Popper, who runs the school with an iron fist and shakes down local Mi'gMaq truants for money. The film merges Indian Agent, school superintendent, and truant officer as a way to signify a singular, bureaucratic institutional presence in the film. This presence resonates even in objects: Mysterious black car belonging to Aila's father—the one that killed young Tyler—not only still runs after so many years, but Maytag responds to Joseph's question of whether the car still runs or not by saying, "Fuck yeah. That's the weird thing—it never stopped." When Aila sees the car again in the present, she tells a young friend named Jujijj who says thinks the car is scary, "That's 'cause it eats little kids" (*Rhymes*).

Aila, who has become an artist, paints the face of a young boy, Jujijj, who escapes and

runs away from the school during the night frequently to hang out with Aila and her crew. She paints him up as a zombie; he cases the school for her so she can put together a plan. Ironically, it is the strict schedule kept by Agent Popper and the other officials, educators and priests that allows the plan to come to fruition: Aila knows exactly where each will be at every moment. Aila says, "Jujijj said Popper and his stooges go through the same routine every night. They do the rounds. They do a head count. They get their grope on. Then Popper hits the bathroom to wash off his shame" (*Rhymes*). At the climax of the film, Aila and her two friends Sholo (Cody Bird), Angus (Nathan Alexis), and Maytag (Kenneth D'Ailleboust) dress up like in monster costumes (including an impossibly old woman) and raid the school. They reverse the truant dynamic by entering the boarding school not as students but as thieves and political activists. Agent Popper transforms into an even more hateful and violent bureaucrat as he attempts to get his money back and ends up dead of a gunshot wound when Jujijj saves Aila from an attempted rape. By contrast to the Agent's death, the final appearance of Aila's mother shows that she's no longer zombie—the scene is just a memory, where Aila remembers her mother's art.

These texts offer transformations and reversals of death as a way to show how life—and resistance—is still possible after capture. In the Epilogue of *The Indolent Boys*, old storyteller Mother Goodeye describes how, when the frozen boys are taken by wagon to the graveyard, "a strange thing happened": the man driving the wagon wearing a blue coat with brass buttons gets hung up awkwardly in a tree as "the brake handle gets up inside the back of his coat, and [he] hung dangling there, his feet well above the ground, his arms and legs thrashing" until he falls out of the tree (71). Here, Mother Goodeye avoids the tragedy of the scene by emphasizing how the boys' burial caused embarrassment to an army officer. Moreover, she interprets the event as a posthumous prank on the part of the boys that questions the certainty of their death and takes aim

at settler hierarchies. The boys disrupt the boarding school's disciplinary power, too: Goodeye recounts how the Kiowa community gathers in protest of the boarding school after the boys are found. She herself goes to the school intending to kill disciplinarian Barton Wherritt with her knife, but she "couldn't find him" because "he hid in the rafters of the school. … And then he ran away. No one saw him after that. Just as well, you see. Superintendent did not fare so well. He was found and beaten up. But later it was decided among our chiefs that he was not so much to blame, and so, you see, the man who beat him up had to give him a horse. *Eh neh neh neh!*" (70). This demonstrates two surprising reversals: first, the disciplinarian and teacher becomes runaway, and superintendent becomes the victim of discipline. But the Kiowa community shows itself to reject physical punishment, the ultimate rejection of Euro-American culture, particularly its models of education. Finally, John Pai, who already revealed to Carrie that he has run away before, gives up his place at seminary school and runs away to the Kiowa camps—to the "dejection" of the superintendent (70). These expressions of escape generate a field of truancy where characters of different positionalities run from the profound ideological effects of settler education and assimilation. These instances disrupt the systems of surveillance and leave the administrative archive weakened by knowledge produced communally (not hierarchically), in dream sequences and hallucinations, delivered by the undead.

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CHAPTER FOUR: RECORDING THE VICTIM: NEW JURISDICTIONS OF VIOLENCE, SURVIVANCE, AND JUSTICE

> The Federal laws relating to offenses committed by Indians against the person or property of other Indians or persons within the limits of any Indian reservation include only murder, manslaughter, rape, assault with intent to kill, assault with a dangerous weapon, arson, burglary, and larceny. There are other offenses committed by Indians for which they should be punished. We are trying to transform the Indian into a law-abiding citizen, but at the present time a number of offenses against society, morality, etc., are allowed to go unpunished, as they are not crimes under our laws. This condition is detrimental to good citizenship and the maintenance of law and order.
>
> —Cato Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1915[1]

Violence against women has increasingly emerged as a rallying point for Indigenous protest movements, which have in turn launched it into the international news cycle. As a tragic headline, it obscures the profound wounds suffered by many Native nations in the U.S. and Canada for centuries; but as fuel for the activism brewing across North America on the level of grassroots wildfires and global Internet thunderstorms, it demands change in the structures that perpetuate it. Media activists engage with the crisis at the interstices of administrative discourse and procedure, where settler-bureaucratic modes of organizing space, identity, and information precipitate violations of women's bodies and voices. Yet BIA officials said virtually nothing of this violence until the late twentieth century. They were always keen to note when Native people knew, Commissioner Cato Sells wrote in 1920, "the exemption in certain cases of Indians from responsibility for willful commission of offenses" (often petty crimes) by way of jurisdiction, but they regularly ignored the ways non-Native people likewise knew their own exemptions, particularly for crimes as heinous as sexual assault.[2] Native stories "premised upon a relational perspective of the world" have made visible to settler agencies the experiences of violated women (Kovach 35). These restorative narratives that emerge from wounded communities disrupt settler-bureaucratic technologies of control by situating violence and recovery in an archive of collective memory rather than the state.

A new flashpoint in the story of this violence arose with the expanded Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in February 2013. After a push by Native advocacy groups, legislators in the U.S. sought to close loopholes in the original act that had left Native women vulnerable to most forms of domestic and sexual violence.[3] Rep. Tom Cole (OK) of the Chickasaw Nation explained that the new amendments "strengthen … tribal jurisdictions where, frankly, we've had an epidemic of sexual violence."[4] Legal gaps allowed two-thirds of sex crimes to go unpursued by federal prosecutors.[5] The new VAWA signifies a major victory, yet it only adds domestic violence statutes for those married to non-Native men; victims of assault by nonresidents remain unprotected. Yet this complex problem is not limited to the U.S. It exists as a transborder public health crisis that has in turn inspired transborder advocacy. Months before the new VAWA provisions, numerous Native and human rights organizations demanded that Canada take action on *its* hundreds of unsolved cases of missing and murdered aboriginal women, eight years after Amnesty International exposed "systemic biases in the policies and actions of government officials" in the treatment of such cases in a 2004 report.[6] Human Rights Watch condemned the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for its part, citing sexual abuse of First Nations detainees and negligence in the investigation of sex crimes.[7] Prime Minister Stephen Harper claimed that a federal inquiry wouldn't help fix the problem, where victimized women and girls are silenced by shame, fear of retribution, legal limbo, public and official indifference, and death.[8]

Loretta Saunders, one of few to make national headlines, understood the scope of this silence. As an Inuk college student, Loretta was researching Canada's backlog of assault cases when she went missing and was later found murdered in New Brunswick in February 2014, on the median of the Trans-Canada Highway, signifying the crisis on its national scale. #MMIW—Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women—was trending on social media within hours of her

disappearance. Loretta knew that such violence and silence co-produce each other; they remain rooted in relations between Indigenous nations and bureaucratic institutions that have eroded the freedom of Native women to speak for themselves. Dian Million observes that, at last, it is "our contemporary logic that any peace after … violence is rarely accomplished by silencing victims. … The belief is that when victims … speak their truth in the presence of oppressors, a new story will emerge, a reconciled national history" (2-3). Reconciled histories often exclude the voices of women, however, continuing a legacy of imperial discourse and policy that denigrates the story of Native womanhood and nationhood. Métis filmmaker Christine Welsh articulated the crisis from an Indigenous point of view in her 2006 National Film Board documentary, *Finding Dawn*. Welsh highlights three women, including one who vanished along British Columbia's notorious Highway of Tears, on the opposite end of the continent.[9] She nonetheless emphasizes mobilizations by rights activists, exhibiting a spirit that refuses to acquiesce to victimhood. Recovery projects like these stoke the fires of activists calling for change in the RCMP and Department of Aboriginal Affairs, yet they have failed to move Prime Minister Harper and his cabinet. Behind a public discourse that still preconceives the tragic disappearance of Native people, there lives a silence left by thousands of violated women.

New media ecosystems may interrupt the twin silences of bureaucracy and victimhood. They cut across the exclusionary mechanisms that sustain them. The Save Wįyąbi Project created an Internet crowdmap that locates acts of violence against Native women, indicts bureaucratic geographies by exposing their methods of exclusion (i.e. via abstract classifications that determine what qualifies as a pursuable "case," a "crime," a "homicide," and so on)—in effect, charting a counter-geography of state violence.[10] The visualization transgresses the borders between settler-colonial states and their policy systems, expressing Indigenous protocols for

communal action and thereby resonating with other Native mapping projects. Alternative alliances have emerged, which further elude state power by decolonizing institutional knowledge[11]: Anonymous-affiliated group Operation Thunderbird helped the Save Wįyąbi Project develop, maintain, and publicize the crowdmap through social media platforms.[12] Domestic violence advocacy group No More Silence partnered with Indigenous organizations and First Nations researchers to build a community-run database for documenting violent deaths of Indigenous women and Two-Spirit individuals.[13] These initiatives challenge the settler-bureaucratic archive, an epistemic performance of state power that borrows from colonial information structures and thus has little legitimacy to evaluate its own violence. Among the "core values" expressed by the project's Indigenous partners, No More Silence lists "ceremony (healing, grieving, honoring)," sovereignty "over our bodies and stories," "alternatives to the state," and "community collaboration," reflecting a multipronged Indigenous approach to disrupting settler-bureaucratic violence.[14]

But this has only been one arm of the response. Literary circulation, too, thwarts bureaucratic spatial formations in cultivating social justice movements across the borders of settler-colonial nations. Recent literary works have paralleled advocacy initiatives in their expression of protocols for communal action as a response to violence. In the process, they have cultivated a poetics of visibility to interpose on the ways agencies remain blind to violence against Native women—through a willful lack of bureaucratic surveillance as well as discursive exclusion. Three novels of differing genre, scope, and public recognition offer a survey of the literary axis of Native advocacy: Louise Erdrich's *The Round House* (2012), Thomas King's *The Red Power Murders* (2006), and Frances Washburn's *Elsie's Business* (2006). Beth Piatote explains how such texts may expose legal bureaucracy: "[L]iterature illuminates the web of

social relations that law seeks to dismantle. Literature challenges law by imagining other plots and other resolutions that at times are figured as nonresolution or states of suspension" (Piatote 10). In this, literature narratively challenges the settler-bureaucratic archive, an epistemic performance of state power that borrows from colonial information structures in its violation of Native identity and experience. These texts search the ways that settler bureaucracy reorganizes space and manages Native women's bodies and lived stories of violence as data.

The startling prevalence of sexual assault, the jurisdictional loopholes that enable it, and the few resources state governments have been willing to devote to the problem went largely unheeded in human rights reports, but Louise Erdrich's 2012 award-winning novel, *The Round House*, helped bring them to popular attention in the United States. Its story centers on the violent rape and attempted murder of Geraldine Coutts, an Ojibwe tribal enrollment specialist. Her husband, a tribal judge, must contend with a settler-bureaucratic system that essentially permits the attack, as conflicting sovereignties and legal codes leave the perpetrator free from prosecution. The interplay of their professions highlights the link between sexual violence, bureaucracy, and the integrity of Native communities. Million maintains that "the violation of the sovereignty of any Native woman's body [bears] relation to the sovereignty of a Native nation, a trauma that occludes any community health foundational to a self-determining people. … Rape interrupts and dissolves the ontological presence of person and community" (37). As a profound breach against the autonomy of women, who generate and anchor Native community, sexual assault ruptures the Indigenous body politic and traumatizes communities at their authorial core. Loretta Saunders proves also that we cannot pursue abstract political concepts like "territorial sovereignty" and "justice" for Native people without valuing the bodies and stories of

women. The stories she wanted to speak through her research remain crucial to ending sexual violence and maintaining healthy communities.

Jurisdiction, derived from the word-concepts *iuris* "law" and *dicere* "to speak," reminds us what's at stake in the relationship between space and story ("Jurisdiction"). Whose voices write the story of this place? Who may speak for its victims? In *The Red Power Murders: A DreadfulWater Mystery* (2006), Thomas King takes up these questions by anchoring a detective story with the thirty-year disappearance of "Red Power Movement" activist Lucy Kettle—a thinly-veiled analog for Anna Mae Aquash, a Mi'kmaq American Indian Movement activist who went missing in the winter of 1975, now known to have been murdered under suspicion of being a government informant. Lucy's disappearance looms as the central mystery behind a series of murders and as the key event in the failure of the rights movement. Lucy's missing voice echoes loudly through the novel; this present absence stresses the importance of reconstructing her story. Joy Harjo's poem, "For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash…," makes this very appeal. As Anna Mae's absence becomes palpable partway through, Harjo addresses her need to speak:

> You are the shimmering young woman
> who found her voice,
> when you were warned to be silent, or have your body cut away
> from you like an elegant weed. (7)

Anna Mae and her fictional counterpart Lucy Kettle refuse to stay silent, refuse to betray the ideals of their respective movements. Before her disappearance, Lucy grounds the RPM as its leading female voice behind the brash celebrity persona of murder target Noah Ridge—"*Time* magazine once called him the Che Guevara of North America" (King 6)—a stand-in for AIM figures like Dennis Banks and Russell Means who has visited town on a book tour. Both women suffer under patriarchal Native activism in the '70s, which adopted dominant values and denied a feminist spirit that has for centuries been present in Native politics. Aquash lost her life to that

internalized misogyny. Yet a more pervasive threat surfaces in settler-bureaucratic structures and regulations that obscure and thus codify violence against Native women.

Experiential stories work against these codifications. They reconstruct acts of resistance by those silenced by legal-bureaucratic erasure. Literature charts routes toward accessing these stories: Beth Piatote argues that Eurowestern "law names particular subjects, but unnamed subjects remain within its grasp. By viewing the law and literature together, it is possible to see the effects upon the unnamed as well as the named subjects in the ordering of social hierarchies and the distribution of political rights" (Piatote 10). The purposely unnamed suffer from a lack of visibility; the law punishes these subjects by the exclusion of their bodies and stories. Frances Washburn's *Elsie's Business* hinges on the reconstruction of a dead Dakota woman's story of poverty, sexual assault, and murder in small-town South Dakota. Elsie Roberts suffers multiple violences before the start of the novel: her attackers leave her by the roadside after her rape; she survives, only to be found murdered three years later. Elsie lives the intermittent years in a nearby town as a wounded, disabled woman. Washburn never explicitly names the narrator, and only on the final page implies that he is Elsie's father, a black seasonal farmworker who has come to learn her story and repatriate her body. Though Elsie and her mother begin as outcasts—even from the neighboring Lakota—residents from fictional Jackson, South Dakota receive Elsie after her attack. With a "ghost feast, a wiping of the tears ceremony [held] for Elsie," the Lakota finally embrace her, indicating how women provide the vital fulcrum for Native community. The "official reports" of her life misconstrue the violence brought upon her; but it's the "unofficial" stories about Elsie, told by "one of the grandfathers," Oscar DuCharme, that her father has come for (1). Oscar tells how the three white teenagers who commit the initial rape begin by dehumanizing her with racist catcalls and then kick her throat to disable her. Washburn

highlights this wound, for by breaking Elsie's larynx and leaving her voice permanently damaged, the boys steal her ability to tell her experience. *Elsie's Business, The Round House,* and *The Red Power Murders* illustrate how experiential woman-centered stories resist the "official" accounts of bureaucratic institutions—embodied by FBI agents, sheriffs, social workers, reservation superintendents and police, and the BIA—that execute a secondary violence against the testimony of victimized women.

These accounts limit justice to the formation of a quantifiable story that delineates and catalogues violence, closes the "case"—constituted by "victim" and "perpetrator" as well as the rules, infractions, and their punishments—and then archives this data, without any awareness of how this management of *experience* as *information* might violate Native women. This produces a gap in surveillance practice by occluding women's stories. Bureaucratic narratives fetishize the official archive as the locus of proof and naturalize violence in spatial practice, converting the assault against Geraldine Coutts, for example, into not a crime but an inevitable tragedy to which she may not bear witness—since no institutional space or figure will hear her testimony. The town simply "doesn't have a case" (*The Round House* 196). In addition to selectively redacting information relative to Native women's experiences, archives may collect information for the specific purpose of keeping it secret or controlling its *lack of usage*. Lisa Gitelman notes how sometimes "documents are documents merely by dint of their *potential* to show: they are flagged and filed away for the future, just in case" (1-2, my emphasis). They become a way to make community information disappear or to threaten its use when it serves the bureau. Million claims that "a regulatory violence … coalesces in the evisceration of Indigenous women's constitutive power to inform their own Indigenous nations" and home spaces (6-7). Regulating women's experiences as mere data, rendering it unfit as "evidence" in a system that has always-already

disqualified it, performs this evisceration and exclusion. Lucy's disappearance in *The Red Power Murders* captures the link between Native women, nation and space: as a descendent of Black Kettle, the revolutionary Cheyenne leader who fought intrusion by white settlers in the nineteenth century, she represents a deeper legacy of resistance than celebrity activists like Noah Ridge. Lucy speaks to *all* the people; Noah plays to the cameras. When Rep. Cole indicated the "effort to strengthen tribal jurisdictions," he recognized the need to privilege voices internal to Native space, bureaucratically construed as it remains.

We may consider the relationship between story, space, and power under this rubric of jurisdiction. As a technology of sovereignty, jurisdiction allows bureaucratic institutions to write their systems onto the land, to effectively *over*write Indigenous systems in the process. Each expresses a distinct conception of land-as-text. Differential power between Native nations and Eurowestern states has always been embedded in political relations in North America and—as the VAWA demonstrates—even codified into law. Radical disparities in violence against women between Native and non-Native communities reveal how differential power writes itself into the built environment, the socially and culturally constructed places that, in turn, condition our lives. This includes spaces contrived under settler bureaucracy—reservations and agencies, boarding schools, and IHS hospitals, for example—which, along with their discourses and officials, project rationalized order on Native spaces long believed to be disordered. This axis of colonization teaches patterns of violence and indifference against Native people (Hart and Lowther 192); the vestiges of this conflict engender long-term cycles of abuse and sanction this abuse through bureaucratic procedures and legal Catch-22s. Yet the voices of suffering communities rarely register in bureaucratic ears. Policy-makers remain deaf to the correlation

between public policy and violence, preserving an atmosphere of discrimination that smothers Indigenous attempts at justice.

The heart of justice lives not in punishment but interpretation—like jurisdiction, justice operates as a storytelling practice. Acts of justice gesture toward a narrative horizon of equity; as such, ideal justice exists only in the possibility of its own realization, a quality Jacques Derrida called the "yet-to-come" (27). Instead, actions that move us closer to one vision of justice often create new sites of *in*equity: while the expanded VAWA gave legal recourse to sufferers of domestic violence on reservations, for instance, legislators failed to protect assault victims. Whose vision do we trust to carry us forward? In the U.S. and Canada, where state governments have long privileged a colonial vision, the Native Other always stands outside a state-sanctioned, juridical administration. Truer justice for Native people means recognizing Indigenous values and ethical practices, starting with a restorative model that honors (and narratively constructs) community health over disciplinary laws and institutions. Andrea Smith describes restorative justice as a "reconciliatory rather than a punitive framework" (139); for Erdrich, Washburn, and King, this emerges through personal and communal reclamation, self-determination, and a shift away from bureaucratic narrative and statutes that leave no room for negotiation.

U.S. and Canadian legal bureaucracies have always denied alternative visions of justice, despite how an enforced Eurowestern paradigm generates violence in its limitation of the rights and voices of Native women. During the VAWA negotiation, legislators decided how competing visions would be projected across Native space, where in the past these decisions have always generated stark spatial injustice. Louise Erdrich took inspiration for *The Round House* from a 2009 Amnesty International report, which noted that more than a third of Native women are raped in their lifetimes and nine of ten sexual assaults are perpetrated by non-Native men. In the

New York Times, Erdrich addressed the disturbing trend of recreational rape enabled by these settler-bureaucratic fault lines: she noted, "this gap in the law has attracted non-Indian habitual sexual predators to tribal areas. [In Minnesota,] rapes on upstate reservations increase during hunting season. A non-Indian can drive up from the cities and be home in five hours. The tribal police can't arrest him" ("Rape…") Recent research has exposed how Native women are also trafficked in the sex trade on freighters across the international border on Lake Superior, violated by dislocation and commodification as well as sexual abuse (Stark, "Garden of Truth"). Joe Coutts, narrator of *The Round House* and son of the story's central victim, learns in adolescence that his people must maintain sovereign spaces like the eponymous "round house," analog for a mother's body—"the poles [her] ribs, the fire [her] heart"—in order "to keep [the] people together and to ask for mercy from the Creator, since justice [is] so sketchily applied on earth" (*The Round House* 214, 315). This echoes Million's interpretation of the relationship between the female body and Native nationhood. As the product of a settler-bureaucratic landscape that engenders violence against women by disqualifying their bodies and experiences, "sketchily applied justice" reflects a dysfunction in opposing juridical models, spatial management, and sexual regulation. In this sociospatial system that enables and even authorizes violence against Native women, Erdrich and other writers appeal to a visionary model of justice.

Stories and Spaces of Sexual Violence

As a Native woman from the Midwest, Erdrich's investment in the issue of sexual violence cuts deep into community experience. *The Round House* fits into the larger arc of her work as a novel in which a profoundly violent act pierces Native life: after a double-incident of rape and attempted murder disrupts a mixed off-reservation community in North Dakota,

Geraldine's son Joe sits outside her hospital room while she must give her statement—her story—as the victim:

> There was a state trooper, an officer local to the town of Hoopdance, and Vince Madwesin, from the tribal police. My father had insisted that they each take a statement from my mother because it wasn't clear where the crime had been committed—on state or tribal land—or who had committed it—an Indian or a non-Indian. … I already knew … that these questions would not change the facts. But they would inevitably change the way we sought justice. (12)

Joe observes the legal ambiguities that tinge the novel, for the jurisdictional gap that appears in this moment (the very gap Erdrich decries in the *Times*) is a gap in the possibility for justice. Three officials, each representative of a distinct community, political constituency, and jurisdiction, must interpret and record the story of the crime. But the gap these men signify cannot simply be mended by fixing the law, because the law operates from a settler-colonial juridical framework that cannot be undone. As his mother retreats into silence from traumatization and to protect the identity of a fellow victim, Joe sets out on a frantic investigation with the help of his friends. He interweaves the stories of his mother, Geraldine; father and judge, Bazil Coutts; the attacker, Linden Lark, and the Lark family; as well as other residents, to construct an aggregate narrative. Each "official" account must contend with this story, and their discrepancy offers a wisdom that will penetrate the fog of Joe's shock and innocence. Though a missing tribal enrollment file provides the fulcrum for the plot, the collective story articulates the violence done to Geraldine and three other women as well as how the community will pursue justice when the law fails them.

Conflicts of jurisdiction, like those embodied in the VAWA and portrayed in *The Round House*, indicate conflicts of storytelling practice. They involve negotiating the rules of story: whose voices and conventions will be privileged in the telling, who will be vindicated, villainized, and victimized. *The Round House* maintains that storytelling, as a profoundly

important social practice that fosters communal well-being, may be the best way to unravel the violences that plague Native communities. The presence of FBI agent, state trooper, tribal officer, tribal judge, and Geraldine's enrollment work reveal Erdrich's concern for community and its entanglement with bureaucracy in the lives of Native people, generating both *author*ized accounts and local, unofficial stories. Authorized accounts, counterintuitively, may have no author but the procedures that direct their construction; unofficial stories have human and not institutional voices at their centers.

The narrative voice in *Elsie's Business* begins by declaring this distinction. Elsie's father discovers when he arrives in town that "[i]f you want to know more about Elsie's story than just the *official reports* you have to ask one of the grandfathers, because they know all the old stories as well as the new ones, the latest gossip, and sometimes it's all the same stories happening over and over" (1, my emphasis). Native story traditions identify cycles of violence and their structural embeddedness by disrupting overdetermined religious, scientific, and juridical discourses about Native sexuality that frame violence one-dimensionally—one direct, causal relationship—in a way that recursively legitimates those institutions. Such discourses perpetuate a tragic story of Native *victimry*, which according to Gerald Vizenor casts Native people as unspeaking "representations … of vanishment; …the absolute victims of modernity" (*Fugitive* 91). Eurowestern modernity, with its attendant metanarrative of civilization and social progress, discursively damns Indigenous people as its fated victims. Fundamental to its formation, bureaucracy served as modernity's organizing model and lent it the values of instrumental rationality and procedural management. Modernity thus became the compulsive machine that sought to record the "Indian" and vested space with its narrative desire to divide, exclude, and control racial and sexual otherness.

Bureaucracy reinscribes and manages space through its administrative structures and procedures, imposing *jurisdiction* on communal, lived places. This spatio-legal imposition disseminates what Mishuana Goeman calls "settler spatial imaginaries," which engender violence by devaluing the rights and stories of Indigenous peoples; she argues that "[t]he mapping of Indian land and bodies through the narrative of the law is more than a violent event of the past in which the nation must be forgiven" (*Mark My Words* 124). As narrative, U.S. law extends deeply through time, construing Native space and the social and political relationships within it according to its first vision—an essentially imaginative process enacted through settler bureaucracy. Cartography and population management are thus mutually constituted. Its juridical story advances with a momentum commensurate with colonial power. Patrick Wolfe observes similarly that, since colonial invasion in the U.S. constituted the imposition of "a structure rather than [just a single] event, its history does not stop" (402). Such a structure rests on and conveys persistent expectations of Indigenous extinction, although Eurowestern institutional discourse has always excluded Native women's voices and written them even out of this narrative of disappearance, leaving them doubly vanished in historical narratives.

When in *Elsie's Business* the town holds an inquest to determine the circumstances of the Dakota woman's death, a series of men testify and come up with few official answers (180). This contrasts Oscar's circular but shrewd stories, which he interweaves with traditional Lakota "deer woman" tales and the personal experiences of Nancy (a white woman who befriends Elsie) and other community members. A public inquest scene exudes an ironic atmosphere of incompetence: the series of white male officials who testify—the sheriff and county coroner, as well as physicians from Mobridge (site of Elsie's rape) and Jackson (site of her murder)—find no answers, despite conspicuously discussing Elsie's story without her present, thus implicating

them all. (The novel's title, after all, connotes the invasion of a private story, of someone's "business.") The officials fail to classify her life, violation, and death. Conversely, Oscar's daughter Irene stresses the efficacy of local storytelling near the end of the novel, when Elsie's father misreads a tale that might lead him to a truth beyond the official accounts: "You got to *listen* to the stories," Irene says. "They'll give you the answers" (195). Erdrich similarly codes *The Round House* with a rubric for mapping the complex nexus of institutional space, violence, and story, where tribal bureaucracy—modeled on the Eurowestern bureau—suffers from an internal contradiction between Indigenous models of identity, community, and justice, and the ways it must collaborate with U.S. federal and state agencies and laws.

As a vestige of Eurowestern imperialism, sexual violence in its military and bureaucratic forms has always inordinately targeted women. These flourished partly because they legitimize and coproduce each other. Million borrows from Andrea Smith to articulate how violence and discourse work together as the seeds of management: "Rape and sexual violence have always been normative to the subjugation of colonized peoples. … Even a cursory reading … reveals that rape, murder, and sexualization of Indigenous women [have] been constitutive to the founding of western nation-states" (Million 38). Religious discourse during the colonial era, for example in proto-bureaucratic texts like those of the Jesuits, associated Native sexuality with "the debasement of savagery": Father Jean de Brébeuf warned seventeenth-century New France to segregate themselves from the "brutal and sensual" Indigenous people, so as to avoid assuming their licentious ways (Blackburn 60-1). Colonial writers cast Native men as violent rapists and Native women as wanton whores to create two venerable facets of the imaginary *Indian.*[15] Institutional religious literacy, which appears in many Erdrich novels, enabled a moral surveillance that fed into settler administration in the form of monitoring and regulation by the

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Health Service, and other agencies. Regulation monopolizes the definitions and narratives of Native experience and manipulates them as a tool for social management.

When in *The Round House* Geraldine must tell her story to the three bureaucrats who will convert her testimony into a closed, "official" account of the crime, the procedures and the *kinds* of information they value dictate the story. David E. Wilkins and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark argue that a hierarchical but "divided system of justice … limits local tribal control … and forces dependence on federal officials to investigate and prosecute crime in federal court rooms that are often hundreds of miles [away]," which privilege procedural testimony (98). This indicates a nexus of political, geographic, and discursive fields in the problem of exclusion: a trio of male officials determines the evidentiary story, and the institutional space of the U.S. courtroom, a signifier for colonial dominance with its own bureaucratic-linguistic rules, waits on the horizon. Testimony operates as an epistemological genre, as a discursive site where the evidentiary meets the experiential; yet while Geraldine may recount material details of crime (if she can recall any), her experience of the violence has no place in the record. Only what qualifies toward the "case." This precludes elements placed outside jurisdiction and excludes all sociocultural and historical significance of the round house itself—as Linden Lark chose the location to violate both the spiritual integrity of the Ojibwe and Métis community (knowing its ceremonial function) and the bodies of Geraldine and Mayla Wolfskin, the other woman present (knowing it to be a jurisdictional dead zone). The exclusion of experience and cultural practice, as well as the privileging of the rights of attacker over victim, perpetuate the very system that created the conditions for the rape in the first place.

A tension mounts in each novel as men, in their role as officials, carry the decisive authority to reconstruct (or obstruct) the stories and experiences of Native women. In *The Red Power Murders*, the retired Native detective Thumps DreadfulWater, who himself participated in RPM activism in the '70s, must interact with the local sheriff as well as FBI agents and files in order to sort through Lucy Kettle's disappearance, which the officials believe to be irrelevant to the current murder. Moses, a tribal elder, provides the key to solving the case, because he knows it depends on reconstructing Lucy's story: "What happened to Lucy, …[w]e've been wondering about that for years. Always hard to understand the present if you don't understand the past." (King 78). The degree to which officials in these novels disregard personal and social histories suggests that change will elude us. Though Native elders also relate their stories—Oscar DuCharme in *Elsie's Business*, Moses Blood in *The Red Power Murders*, and Mooshum in *The Round House*, Joe Coutt's grandfather—women themselves ultimately embody both the history and the continuance of the people. Joe explains how his mother, the lone woman working in the tribal office among male officials, remains responsible for community history through its genealogy—including its unseemly parts:

> It was my mother's task to parse the … interbranching tangle of each bloodline. … At the tip of each branch of course the children are found, those newly enrolled by their parents, or often a single mother or father, with a named parent on the blank whose identity if known might shake the branches of the other trees. Children of incest, molestation, rape, adultery, fornication beyond reservation boundaries or within, children of white farmers, bankers, nuns, BIA superintendents, police, and priests. …[T]here was now a backlog of tribal enrollment applications piled up at her office. (149)

This passage describes the impact disruptions may have upon the larger community "tree," recalling the opening scene of the novel, in which Joe and his father unearth stubborn treelets from the family home's foundation while Geraldine runs to her office to pick up a mysterious enrollment file—just before Joe sneaks inside to read his father's copy of Cohen's *Handbook of*

Federal Indian Law (1-2). This metaphor situates disruptions in the genealogical tree, frequently enacted through violence against women, according to a root system of federal Indian policy. Geraldine's work at the nexus of community history and federal bureaucracy signals the difficulty of disentanglement from a system that allows little female agency; it also underscores the link between sexual violence and regulatory violence. Geraldine must cooperate with federal regulations on *Indian* blood quantum in determining citizenship, and "white farmers, bankers, …BIA superintendents, police, and priests" may be conventionally understood to be male figures that regulate the lifeways of Native people or, at minimum, take advantage of regulations that have dispossessed them. While these figures are differently embedded in bureaucratic institutions, each participates in an administrative landscape that puts regulatory pressure on Native bodies, activities, and spaces.

Native men who take on official positions present a useful incongruity, as they become trapped in and "doubled" by Eurowestern-derived bureaucratic systems—the *Indian* on the one hand and his managerial role on the other, which then always construes the individual partly as subject, partly object. The problem compounds itself in their interactions with Native women, whom are doubly objectified by Eurowestern bureaucracy. These effects exist within a larger remodeling: Goeman recognizes that, even today, "various colonial policies … structure much Indian law, policy, material reality, and socialities experienced," where bureaucracy offers a unifying framework (*Mark My Words* 124). Tribal judge Bazil Coutts and FBI agent Spencer Asah in *The Red Power Murders* demonstrate the trouble of this position: while Coutts fears the costs of working outside legal bureaucracy in *The Round House*, preferring to compromise in order to sustain political sovereignty in a flawed system, Asah becomes corrupted by that system and finally reveals himself to be a villain.

When women speak, *to whom* they speak may implicate bureaucratic control. In *The Red Power Murders,* detective Thumps suspects that Lucy Kettle was "Massasoit," an FBI informant from his activist past who took the name of the Wampanoag leader that helped Plymouth Colony survive its first winters. Though this suspicion ironically reiterates women's place at the center of Indigenous nationhood, it resonates with real-life suspicions about Anna Mae Aquash and reflects colonial regulatory pressures placed on women's speech. It does little judicial good for women to tell their stories to elders or the tribal police, since these individuals have no authority to make arrests in such cases—and many suffers of sexual violence fear reprisal from non-Native authorities if they share their experiences. Wilkins and Stark argue that gender violence "threaten[s] to engulf tribal judicial systems already understaffed, undertrained, and underfunded," beyond the ability of anyone to effect justice (238). This forces women to speak to federal officials, who usually don't listen "for lack of resources." (NCAI). The contradiction resonates with how "subsequent gendered Indian policies … altered any once-reciprocal gender relations into well-entrenched hierarchical patriarchal power relations that gave Indian men an inordinate power over Indian women…" (Million 126). Such policies informed Native activism of the 1960s and '70s, which took aim at the bureaucratic legacy implanted in tribal governments but not their sexism. Contemporary Native activist novels carry tension between the borrowed sexism of earlier rights movements and the more egalitarian movements and campaigns of the past twenty years, like Idle No More and #MMIW, in which women have taken the helm.

These forces play out in *The Round House,* as officials criticize Geraldine for her reluctance to provide information—including her husband, the judge—who will then "fix" the problem of her assault for her. Yet she is more concerned with protecting the identity and enrollment status of Mayla Wolfskin and her child than with punishing the man who attacked

them. When interrupted and pressed by Bazil for *usable* information, Geraldine shouts, "Get [your mind] out of the courtroom, get the damn hell out" (160). The juridical script encodes and transmits ideological norms, while Geraldine wants to relate her experience of violence outside the constraints of institutional procedure. This exchange reveals the effects of legal bureaucracy on Bazil Coutts' knowledge and ethical practice. His heterogeneous positionality with regard to his wife's assault—as husband, male Native community member, and judge—shapes his desire for retribution differently, leading him to overlook Geraldine's desire for restorative justice. In *The Round House* (as well as *Elsie's Business* and *The Red Power Murders*), withholding story details ("evidence") from officials signals the limits placed on Native women. Institutional control over women's stories imbues them with predetermined categories and contains Native women as victims. Even their bodies become data: during the attack, Linden "picked up the baby and said to the baby in a baby voice, I don't know what to do with the evidence. Silly me. Maybe I should burn the evidence. You know, they're just evidence" (162). Linden reduces the women to "evidence" in an act that constitutes both physical and settler-bureaucratic violence; the archive will enact a final burial of their marginalized experiences and bodies. Meanwhile, Geraldine resists and complicates the tragic narrative of victimry that feeds the impulse to manage the *Indian*: while presumably Linden successfully burns Mayla alive, Geraldine manages to escape and not just survive but tell her story on her own terms, despite the institutional pressures that beset her.

The tension between survival and what Vizenor calls *survivance,* an "active sense of presence over absence … [and] the continuance of stories," emerges as an essential dynamic in Native activist texts (*Native Liberty* 85). Agency in story-creation, where a Native teller expresses active presence as opposed to predetermined absence as the Indigenous victim in an

institutional narrative, underpins the transformative process of female characters who have suffered gender violence. Their movement from survival to survivance involves creating new stories for themselves beyond the reach of bureaucratic categorization. *Elsie's Business* illustrates this self-narrative process. Between the time of her assault and death, before her father arrives in town, Elsie lives as a wounded woman who can hardly speak. The novel's central conflict tracks her self-reclamation, as she learns to assert herself in spite of irreparable trauma, permanent audible scars from the attack, and the many conditions placed on her speech. Her voice, now "too harsh and raspy," must confront the sexual impulses of men triggered by their conception of her as victim. In this case, violence against women, compounded by regulatory violence, signals different aesthetic responses. A scene from the original attack on Elsie, for example, alludes to her future transformation from survival to survivance. The boys who find her walking along a snowy road at night dehumanize her and project onto her their own racist and misogynist desire: they call her a deer, a "slippery whore," a "dirty bitch," and a squaw (12). After the abduction and rape, the boys drive to a remote mile-marker, where a "dark heavy bundle emerges full-grown from the womb of the vehicle, flopping limply like a newborn onto the icy ground" (14)—Elsie, unconscious and pushed out onto the roadside. The supreme acts of violence committed against her leave her fundamentally changed, birthed into a state of trauma. Her caretakers in Jackson want her to rest afterward, to merely survive, but Elsie takes up Lakota leathercraft and beadwork techniques inherited from her mother in earnest, a vital occupation that expresses creative transcendence over the story of victimry imprinted on her. Vizenor notes that a practiced "aesthetics of survivance" can be identified by "a sense of narrative resistance to absence, literary tragedy, nihility, and victimry" (*Fugitive Poses* 1). Elsie's craftwork operates as

visionary storytelling, expressing resistance to victimization by eluding tragic representation. She has not disappeared into either real or narrative nonexistence.

Due in part to histories and discourses of settler colonialism which preposition victims for (at best) mere survival, cultural stories map routes toward aesthetic survivance. In *Elsie's Business*, mythic "deer woman" stories undergird the Lakota community's interpretation of the central assault. The narrator reminds himself, "You want to know the rest of Elsie's story, but you wait for [Oscar] to tell you in his own time. He tells you a different story," and it is these old stories that the elder storyteller shares with Elsie's father—including Washburn's account of Sinte Sapela Win, the black-tailed deer, who seduces men with her beauty but punishes them when they succumb to their desire and betray their wives (16). After his description of how the teenagers beat and kidnap Elsie (but before they rape her), Oscar begins to associate her with the deer woman, calling her "a deer, wounded and run to earth, not dead yet, but waiting for the final shot" (12). Tension surfaces between this association and the words of Elsie's attackers, who have also referred to her as a deer but in the language of racism. For them, the deer remains separate, a prey animal; for Oscar, the vulnerable deer serves as the first stage in a transformation to deer woman. Oscar explains how the deer woman stories may bridge the gap between retributive justice and survivance: "Men who see the deer woman go crazy, but women who see her are rewarded with the ability to make beautiful things—maybe beadwork or quillwork" (59). The deer woman, also said to have appeared to Elsie's mother, delivers creative resistance as well as retribution when the violent teenagers are lured into a car accident after the rape by what is either a supernatural figure, optical illusion, or coincidence: they swerve to avoid the "biggest deer they've ever seen," which leapt onto the road, but all three die upon impact with a tree (23). Their death satisfies the sheriff—but a greater justice, dependent on Elsie's well-being and

resistance to victimhood, the recovery of her story by her father, and the repatriation of her body, drives the novel and only resolves in the final paragraph. The threat of further violence looms as Jack Mason, the father of the wealthiest boy, haunts the narrative: Elsie's father believes Mason might have been the one to finally "silence" Elsie (out of twisted revenge for the loss of his son), and he grows agitated at the possibility that the man has come to town to silence him as well. The specter of Mason's presence disrupts the effort to reconstitute Elsie's story.

Colonial discourse tends to conflate sex/gender and race/ethnicity, casting Indigenous women as seductive exotics and displacing its own sexual aggression onto Indigenous men, depicted as ever-ready to prey upon white women. The United States bears this legacy even in its literary heritage. Sabine Sielke argues that nineteenth- and twentieth-century U.S. literature often "reduced both (female) sexuality and (male) sexual violence to the representation of particular bodies (like that of the adulteress, the prostitute, the rapist), to marginal races, alien ethnicities… Accordingly, …sexual violence and aggressive sexuality remain limited to the realms of … ethnic or racial minorities" (35). The construction of the *Indian* in colonial-era religious texts fed into popular literary discourse as well as managerial public policy, and these realms of discourse in turn fed each other. In her analysis of literary history, however, Sielke doesn't consider the work of Native authors, who challenge popular literary representations of Native sexuality and construe violence in a web of bureaucratic regulation, a sociopolitical condition unique to Indigenous people in the U.S.

Native North American literature since the '70s swims in ironic discourse about race, a way for authors to push back at popular racist constructs. Native characters use race jokes to shed light on the absurdity and distress of living within a bureaucratic system so stacked against them, a discourse that interpellates them as either criminals or victims of their own essential

culture or biology (since the mid-twentieth century, genetics). In *The Round House*, Joe's uncle Whitey jokes about the identity of the rapist in order to critique colonialism's projection of its own sexual violence onto Native men and to cope with what everyone knows—that legal justice so unjustly hinges on racial identity:

> Maybe the pervert really is an Indian, said Uncle Whitey. He was carrying an Indian suitcase.
>
> What Indian suitcase? I said.
>
> The plastic garbage bags. (31)

Whitey Wishkob, an Ojibwe man, plays on socioeconomic disparity and racial identity, while his name positions him as an ambiguous figure. He and his wife Sonja run the gas station that put the non-Native Lark family out of business after their matriarch, Grace, tried to steal tribal land from the Wishkobs (who had adopted her daughter). This essentially transnational, interracial, and inter-familial drama stokes Linden Lark's hatred and partly inspires his attack on Geraldine, as her husband ruled against his family in the land case. Whitey exploits a racist presumption about the identity of the rapist to riff on systemic discrimination as well as the paranoid projection of perversion and violence onto Native men. He crafts an ironic story that exposes both colonial narratives and bureaucratic injustice: one can imagine a U.S. courtroom—even today—where garbage bags could be used as evidence of "Indian" identity.

Whitey and Sonja serve *The Round House* as portraits of racial irony, but as a couple they also constitute a microcosm for the examination of another form of gender violence. Whitey married a "a tall, blonde, [Swedish] weather-beaten ex-stripper" whose "exotic dance persona" had been the Amazonian "Red Sonja" with "revealing barbarian armor" (*The Round House* 24, 32). Their relationship contains a strange inversion: an Ojibwe man named "Whitey" couples with a blonde Swedish woman who has taken the persona of an Indigenous "red savage" in a profession predicated on the sexualized objectification of women. And yet Joe witnesses

Whitey's violence, during a drunken battle in which he jealously hits Sonja over a presumed affair (thanks to a mysterious pair of diamond earrings) and she knocks him out with a beer bottle. By this point, Joe and Sonja have become close: first by Joe's adolescent crush on his aunt, and then as he confides in her about the forty thousand dollars he finds stashed in a baby doll that has surfaced from a submerged car belonging to Mayla Wolfskin—suggesting she Mayla dead. Neither Joe nor Sonja knows of Mayla's disappearance; the domestic violence Sonja experiences, however, establishes a line of kinship with the missing Native woman, who has been raped and murdered by jealous suitor and fundraiser for the governor, Linden Lark. Another link manifests when Joe discovers that Sonja has secretly purchased the earrings with the recovered hush money.

Mayla disappears after being caught between sociopathic Linden and Curtis Yeltow, the white governor with a love-hate Indian fetish—he uses "the prairie nigger word for Indians" but "[c]ollects war shields [and] Indian beadwork. Pays homage to the noble savage but tried to store nuclear waste on sacred Lakota earth" (Washburn 166)—with whom she interned and entered a coerced relationship. Yeltow tries to pay her off and adopt their baby, the narrative implies, as a way to conceal the indiscretion. As governor, his actions symbolize bureaucratic violation against Lakota woman, community, and land; Mayla, as the missing woman roughly analogous to Elsie and Lucy (though Lucy does not suffer sexual assault), represents the true Native victim, the absent Indigenous woman who not even settler administration has bothered to notice and who cannot bear witness to violence but through the stories of others. In opposition to the institutional formulation of testimony, which relies on a procedural management of information, the most significant "data" in *The Round House*, *Elsie's Business*, and *The Red Power Murders* is in fact the unrecoverable experience of the missing victim. By limiting her narrative to Geraldine's

viewpoint, Erdrich restricts readers' access to the events surrounding Mayla's abusive relationships, the identity of her child, her assault and death. Though Geraldine may testify to her own assault, as a survivor she bears the responsibility of recovering Mayla's voice from the depths of their shared trauma and silence—even from the tribal records, which also violate Mayla and her child within a racialized bureaucratic system that excludes them from justice. *Elsie's Business* struggles differently with the unsolvable problem of representing the missing victim's experience, relying on a diverse (and problematic) community to testify on Elsie's behalf after she dies and can no longer speak for herself. Elsie, Mayla, and Lucy serve as imperfect witnesses. Their bodies are lost, yet they gesture beyond their role as tropes in narratives of Native disappearance. Such absence operates at the heart of a poetics of Native visibility and survivance. These women cannot testify themselves; only their reconstructed stories have the power to inform their home spaces in pursuit of justice.

When Geraldine hears of the attempt to adopt Mayla's child, she recounts the attack for her husband despite the bureaucratic frame guiding his interpretation of her story. Bazil believes that compiling evidence will repair her: he explains, "We are finding things out little by little and when you are ready to tell us about the file and the telephone call we will certainly know more, …and there will be justice. … That will help you even though you seem to believe now that it won't help you…" (156-57). And while Linden's motives differ, he demands similar information of Geraldine: she recalls that, during the assault, Linden pressed her for the official enrollment file on Mayla's son. Geraldine instead concerns herself with an experiential, *emplaced* sense of justice, one which gestures at a recovery of Mayla's voice by echoing her recognition of the ceremonial significance of the round house. Geraldine recounts solemnly, "Mayla asked to meet me at the round house. … She said her life depended on it, so I went

there" (159). Though Geraldine's account indicates that Linden tricked her, using Mayla to lure her to the round house, the trick reveals the tangled relationship between space, settler bureaucracy, and the realization of justice; simultaneously, it signifies the importance of Native women to ceremonial place, and of ceremonial place to Native life, which bureaucratic space violates. Later in her conversation with Bazil, Geraldine observes this ethical breach in the bureaucratic spatial paradigm, its tendency to become disoriented when its codes fail:

> Where? said my father.
>
> Somewhere[, Geraldine replied.]
>
> Can you say anything about where?
>
> Somewhere. That's where it happened. He kept the sack on me. And he raped me. Somewhere. (159)

Geraldine's language signals the obstruction that jurisdiction represents in the pursuit of justice for Native women. She and Bazil question the ability of a Eurowestern legal regime to enact justice, differing only as to where the failure lies. Their son ultimately decides that in order to achieve justice for his mother he must kill the perpetrator who will go unprosecuted because of a spatial-bureaucratic technicality—"somewhere."

"Somewhere": Visions of Justice Beyond Bureaucratic Space

Loretta Saunders, Idle No More,[16] #MMIW, the Save Wįyąbi Project and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center—founded in 2011 by Tillie Black Bear, who passed on in July after a lifetime of activism on behalf of sufferers of domestic violence[17]—mark a growing trend of women claiming their place in Indigenous rights movements, which now operate in the digital world despite remaining moored to the material.[18] More than ever, they show that Native sovereignty hangs on women's contributions to jurisprudence. Likewise, a potent trend of activist literature from Native and First Nations women has grown since a handful of exemplars

in 1970s and ‘80s: Leslie Silko’s *Ceremony* (1977); Paula Gunn Allen, *The Woman Who Owned the Shadows* (1983); Erdrich’s first novel, *Love Medicine* (1984), which features trickster-activist Nanapush; Okanagan author Jeannette Armstrong’s *Slash* (1985); *From the River’s Edge* (1991) by Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Dakota), who casts most Native writing as automatically “protest or resistance art that works toward liberation and decolonization movements” (Udel 70); and Ojibwe activist Winona LaDuke’s *Last Standing Woman* (1997); and in poetry, the first book by Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok), *Hopi Roadrunner Dancing* (1973), which chronicles her involvement in the American Indian movement in the sixties, and *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* (1994) by Haunani-Kay Trask (Native Hawaiian). These texts illustrate an engaged commitment by Native women to Indigenous sovereignty and human rights.

Despite their male storytellers, *The Round House*, *Elsie’s Business*, and *The Red Power Murders* stress an Indigenous sociospatial model in which women focalize community, rather than one whose discourses demean and patronize them. Each novel juxtaposes contrasting regimes of law and justice in this regard, exposing the limitations inherent in a system ruled by bureaucratic order. In the customary legal traditions of many Native nations, Million argues, “women figure as [the] embodiment of the relations that configure order to the community, the community’s relationship to the earth and to life. In portraying rape as a crime against the community’s “foundational wellness,” it signifies that there is no law that will protect this center, not the customary, and certainly not the colonizer’s” (38). Young Joe Coutts learns a similar principle through his experiences, indicated by his resolve to kill the man who brutalized his mother. Joe’s unilateral redress falls far from what his father calls “traditional Anishinaabe justice,” but it does arise as an imperfect resolution—what he has discovered through his grandfather’s traditional stories as “sketchily applied justice,” a justice patchworked together

against divergent ethico-legal systems. His mother's assault shakes the internal structures of their community and its ability to protect itself. Yet Eurowestern law suppresses and even criminalizes "traditional justice" and provides few answers for Geraldine, let alone Mayla, situated as they are in a settler-colonial bureaucratic landscape.

Rep. Cole's remark about "strengthening tribal jurisdictions" reveals the settler-colonial occlusion of Indigenous juridical authority as well as the bureaucratic dismissal of Indigenous models of spatial justice, in which *communities* negotiate responses to violence and power is not consolidated in a sexist, hierarchized authority within a strictly demarcated territory. This dismissal has powerful effects in the case of violence against women, as "[n]ew codifications of gendered relationships were instrumental to colonial spatial restructuring," and these inequitable relations became embedded in space itself (Goeman, "Tools" 94). Certainly in the case of treaty negotiations, the privileging of only a few male representatives of Indigenous nations by U.S. officials, to the exclusion of women and broader tribal communities, facilitated the dispossession of an unspeakable amount of lands and resources. The existing traces of this power differential signal the futility of a syncretic solution, as bureaucratic order refuses compromise. Million explains that the "imposition of another order … transgresses and forbids the Indigenous nations' own jurisdiction, [so there] cannot be first a plea for the strengthening of customary law, of women's centrality to Indigenous order, because that order is not available; is has been destroyed or thwarted" (38). In *The Round House*, customary law continues to shape the lives and actions of Ojibwe people but does not present as a viable legal alternative. Partly, this results from the U.S. government's shifting interpretations of Native nations' sovereign status, which allows it to construe that sovereignty differently between different agencies or offices, whenever political conditions suit it.[19] Along with *Elsie's Business* and *The Red Power Murders*, *The Round House*

expresses this failure but still operates on a narrative impetus to restore the voices of violated and disappeared women, laying the foundation for restoring the people and, only then, law. Traditional knowledge and story practices aid in this process. Judge Coutts tells his son that the clan system was "the first system of Ojibwe law" (154); this knowledge, story, and kinship complex establishes relations within and beyond the community, including with other species. It confers specific rights and responsibilities and provides community solidarity. *The Round House* shows how the denigration of customary law impairs Native sovereignty and how contrasting legal regimes generate dead zones, spaces of mutually exclusive relational modes.

Jurisdiction reveals how justice, community, and spatial organization remain enmeshed. How institutions project "the law" in space establishes opposition between sovereignties, the functions and meanings of place, and the stories that underpin them. Exclusion written into the settler-bureaucratic landscape—the institutionalized discourses, places, contexts, and figures that "manage" Native life—operates as a spatial story that expels the Other from the narrative of justice. Native people dissolve as participants from the land and become invisible victims at best, one-dimensional criminals at worst. In response, as Goeman claims, "Native forms of justice [become] inherently spatialised accounts of geographies made consequential by histories of settler colonialism…" ("Tools" 90). True justice for Native people cannot be enacted within settler-colonial geographies, because these geographies marginalize Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge, however, might offer ways beyond spatialized bureaucratic procedure: Wilkins and Stark argue that "[t]ribal courts, in both their present form and their "traditional" predecessors, …have been centrally concerned with the overall concept of justice and have oftentimes managed to be free of the obsession with technicalities that has so often plagued non-tribal court systems" (73). Native stories of restorative justice emerge beyond technicality, as

counter-geographical critiques of bureaucratic administration, though complete restoration from the vestiges of settler-colonialism will always elude us. The managerial atmosphere in *The Round House* construes Indigenous people as casualties, divorcing them from their places and resources, their languages and stories, and their law. Bazil Coutts explains to his son the divergent images of justice attendant with life as a tribal judge, revealing the devil's bargain from which Coutts must fight for agency and efficacy: "I wish I could hang [Linden]. … I imagine myself the hanging judge in an old western… But beyond playing cowboy in my thoughts, there is traditional Anishinaabe justice. We would have sat down to decide his fate" (196). Coutts sets communitarian Anishinaabe tradition against a unilateral, bureaucratic vision of justice that he has agreed to operate within (at least partly)—the law of the frontier and its "hanging judge," a figure of imperial justice. He resists this violent legal performance, believing himself accountable to an Indigenous model.

While the spatial axes of violence against Native women reverberate through time as a consequence of colonial bureaucracy, in contemporary Native fiction they exist within a context of "western-style justice," so formative to the U.S. national narrative, where the "hanging judge in an old western" presides over a near-lawless frontier steadily vanishing under the advance of civilization. In a nod to a late-twentieth-century sci-fi version of this trope, Erdrich names each chapter in *The Round House* after a different episode title from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, a television series that poses questions of justice and racial diversity in a "new [galactic] frontier." Starfleet, the bureaucratic military and exploratory organization in the *Star Trek* franchise, marks the abstract and hierarchical system that manages lived experience in the shifting space of the galactic frontier. Brian Martin explains how bureaucracy operates as "a root of war because it facilitates the maintenance of elite power and smashes or pre-empts non-

hierarchical and self-reliant forms of human interaction. The military is bureaucratic in form, and indeed in many ways is a pioneer and model bureaucracy" (*Uprooting War*). Evoking the history of the U.S. frontier, a shadow of war looms in most of Starfleet's explorations, since each bureaucratic decision might precipitate conflict between the Federation and a foreign people, nation, or species. In *Star Trek*, individuals within the system must craft their best solutions toward justice, far from (human) "civilization." The same is true for Judge Coutts, who positions himself against the "hanging judge" in order to articulate a new vision of justice for Native people. Both stories confront the incongruity of "imperial justice."

Star Trek explores the role of bureaucratic order in a way the traditional western, one of its generic predecessors, does not. In the eighth episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, "Justice"—chapter three of *The Round House*—Captain Jean-Luc Picard claims, "There can be no justice as long as laws are absolute." Though not always a topic of discussion, Starfleet lends a hidden bureaucratic presence within which the core protagonists exist but are always at odds, as "non-institutionalized sensibilities collide with … institutionalized attitudes toward the administration of justice" (Chaires and Chilton 200). Starfleet's "Prime Directive," a set of regulations that prohibits contact with pre-space-flight civilizations and interference in any planet's politics whatsoever, is said to not be a human development but from the Vulcan species. The Prime Directive constitutes an implicit anti-colonialist critique, yet it still conveys a narrative of separation between civilized colonials and primitive natives. Nevertheless, the *Star Trek* story relies on the premise that the final frontier creates a "disturbance of ethnocentrism"—an "estranged, critical perspective on one's home culture" (Rieder 2)—which allows us to critique imperial ideologies. This disturbance marks sci-fi colonialism as a genre yet differentiates it from the western. It supposes a more ethical colonial project, one that respects

Indigenous lifeways, spaces, and legal models. Eurowestern law, as bureaucratized in *Star Trek*, remains "distinctive from other forms of social control [for] the specter of a penal sanction imposed by government" (Chaires and Chilton 11)—Indigenous law, however, does not function this way. Violence eludes control and in fact proliferates through the bureaucratic compulsion toward control: the starship crews of *Star Trek* find themselves defying regulations in order to achieve more ethical interactions with other species—exemplified by Captain Kirk from the original series and Captain Picard from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, the series that Joe Coutts and his friends watch obsessively in 1987-88 in *The Round House*.

The Round House sets these questions about colonial law and justice against a legacy of revolutionary violence. Both Joe and his grandfather Mooshum tell how Mooshum's father fought alongside Métis revolutionary leader Louis Riel during a second resistance movement against the Canadian government in 1885, after the first led to the establishment of Manitoba as a Métis province in the Canadian Confederation. Riel's movement pursued justice by challenging the consolidation of state power and the settler-colonial tactics that left his people without representation in a new bureaucratic spatial scheme. *Star Trek*'s characters, though positioned differently with regard to bureaucratic oversight, must resist Starfleet in their attempts at justice in a fluid frontier space. Judge Coutts similarly illustrates the failure of top-down management of a place by abstract, non-local sovereigns: he tells Joe, "There is nowhere to stand. No clear jurisdiction, no accurate description of where the crime occurred. He turned over a scrap of paper and drew a circle on it… He made a map" (196). Despite his authority, the judge remains unmoored, with "nowhere to stand." This "nowhereness" is one mark of the maze of legal statuses represented in Indian Country—many places, each attending to multiple bureaucratic authorities. Coutts must "make a map," rendering disregarded spaces visible; he must orient

himself to the deeper structures at work in the case if he has any chance of negotiating its pertinent geography. Just as the violence perpetrated against his wife slips through the juridical cracks, so must the justice that may heal her wound and the larger wound that has disrupted the community. The contradiction reveals itself: justice becomes divided at the level of abstract laws and real-life, restorative solutions.

In another sense, "nowhere to stand" signals Coutts' place in U.S. legal history, where several miscarriages of justice by the Supreme Court since the early nineteenth century established precedents that continue to obstruct justice for Native people today. When in *The Round House* FBI agent Soren Bjerke arrives in town, Joe reflects on the suppression of Native jurisprudence that starts with "Ex Parte Crow Dog and then the Major Crimes Act of 1885. That was when the federal government first intervened in the decisions Indians made among themselves regarding restitution and punishment" (142). Joe explains that on the "reservation Bjerke's presence was a statement of our toothless sovereignty" (142). Bazil Coutts' map-making act instead marks a new jurisdiction of resistance to such operative and symbolic encroachments. He admits that he must confront the unsolvable problem of *whereness*. Behind the round house,

> you have the Smoker allotment, which is now so fractionated nobody can get much use out of it. Then a strip that was sold—fee land. The round house is on the far edge of tribal trust, where our court has jurisdiction, though of course not over a white man. So federal law applies. Down to the lake, that is also tribal trust. But just to one side, a corner of that is state park, where state law applies…
>
> … So the problem remains. Lark committed the crime. On what land? Was it tribal land? fee land? white property? state? We can't prosecute if we don't know which laws apply.
>
> If it happened anyplace else…
>
> Sure, but it happened here. (196-7)

"Here" denotes Native land contrived by settler-colonial control, split into a kaleidoscope of distinct spatial rule-sets. It invokes a narrative contact zone where differing stories of place, law,

and personal and community well-being fight for preeminence. Through this process, bureaucracy may rely on "categories of race and gender to set up a settler grammar of place that maintains state power over space, bodies, and time" via spatial language (Goeman, "Disrupting" 257). The bureaucratic narrative of settler-colonial space derives from what Patrick Wolfe calls "a logic that initially informed frontier killing [which] transmutes into different modalities, discourses, and institutional formations as it undergirds the … development … of settler society" (402). Overlaps, dead zones, and other discursive paradoxes characterize this geography. Scott Lyons likewise argues that policy-makers have always intended to rewrite the "logic of Indian space" (17)—from colonial charters to treaties, reservation and allotment policy, government housing programs and resource extraction. This history shows how colonial power naturalizes and recapitulates itself through the settler-bureaucratic control of bodies and environments. The signature "checkerboard" of Native space further fractures justice, because "[s]pace imagined as a checkerboard means different people are ruled by different sovereigns at different times" (Lyons 17)—meaning divergent projections of race and gender, too. The maze of jurisdictions determining Geraldine's case reveals a unique "nowhere" that defies rationality, one familiar to many Native communities. Million describes how such checkerboard spaces form from the "sediments of previous colonial campaigns to constrain Indian sovereignty," leaving Native places "without resources or jurisdiction to prosecute violent offenders … [due to the] intergenerational dismantling of lives, of lands and polity" (37). Polity can only be restored across jurisdictions if it is not subordinated to settler surveillance and regulation.

Erdrich demonstrates how bureaucratic geographies may provide a platform from which to launch discursive resistance. *Story space* conceived as a checkerboard unfolds new routes toward justice. The possibility for transformation exists, since such "unjust geographies of

political power can also be enabling, creating the foundations for resistance and potential emancipation. It is important to remember this double-sidedness, how the spatiality of (in)justice can be both intensely oppressive and potentially liberating" (Soja 37). This paradox of "double-sidedness" frequently provides the basis for ironic resistance. The "old log round house" built near Reservation Lake, a dead zone, remains marked by settler-colonial bureaucracy and functions as a subversive ceremonial space. Joe describes how "[d]uring the old days when Indians could not practice their religion—well, actually not such old days: pre-1978—[it] had been used for ceremonies. … By the time the priest or the BIA superintendent arrived, the water drums and eagle feathers and the medicine bags and birchbark scrolls and sacred pipes were in a couple of motorboats halfway across the lake" (59-60). At heart, ceremony operates as a storytelling practice that narratively aligns culture and community. The round house works, then, as a spatio-aesthetic assertion against the bureau, a fulcrum for community survivance. Joe notes the conflict between restorative tribal practice and Eurowestern law, discovering that justice must be pieced together outside the emplacements of state power. Because, as Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith observe, "gender violence and heteropatriarchy fundamentally structure the conditions of possibility for settler colonialism" (16). In their bureaucratized forms, they set the bounds for transformation within administrative systems. Compromise with bureaucracy's discourses, narratives, and structures is not possible.

When Oscar DuCharme tells Elsie's father, "The spirits take care of justice, you know," he refers to deer woman, who provides retribution but also transformation as Elsie attempts to restore herself through aesthetic acts (185). These acts must find place, and Elsie appropriates a church building into a traditional craft space, against the orders of the priest. Because her attackers died immediately after the assault, the novel poses the question of emplaced survivance

free from the question of punitive justice. The bulk of the narrative involves what *follows* retribution—justice is not simply constituted by punishment. *Elsie's Business* offers a restorative model that approaches Andrea Smith's ideal of consulting all involved "(perpetrators, victims, and community members) in determining the appropriate response to a crime in an effort to restore the community to wholeness" (Smith 140). Elsie's beadwork, especially her turtle pattern—fashioned after the three turtles she kept since childhood—reflects a survivance aesthetic that merges personal with communal history and helps integrate her into the local Native community as well as the Dakota family of her past.

The Red Power Murders complicates these visions of justice by presenting the possibility of syncretic survivance. When it becomes clear that the central mystery revolves around Lucy Kettle, one man becomes a key link in learning her fate: as an "upstanding citizen" and Lucy's longtime lover, Reuben Justice conspicuously personifies his namesake. The narrator paints a syncretic vision of Justice, "one of those rare individuals who was able to manage the intricacies and dangers of living in two worlds. He was a traditional singer, organized the community sweats and ceremonies, and he worked at the university hospital as a paramedic" (161-2). He signifies aesthetic healing in both Native and non-Native paradigms, capable of operating within Eurowestern institutions yet eluding their oppressive managerialism. Reuben turns up murdered and mistaken for Noah Ridge, implying that justice falls as a casualty of celebrity corruption and hypocrisy without an ethical anchor like Lucy. Dakota Miles, a lifelong friend of Lucy, tells Thumps that "The publishers are bringing out a second printing [of Ridge's book]. … But I don't suppose you see that as justice" (289). An account by a male celebrity activist does not stand for the account of a witness, nor for the voices of Lucy or Mayla.

Native novels that feature violence against women juxtapose the experiences of victim, survivor, and witness in ways shaped by settler-bureaucratic management. In the timeline of *Elsie's Business*, Elsie manages to play all three roles, witnessing as to her own survival in court and then, finally, becoming the invisible victim that can no longer speak; Geraldine testifies to her own assault but can only partly witness as to the violence done to Mayla Wolfskin, the voiceless victim in *The Round House*. In *The Red Power Murders*, Dakota Miles can only speak as an intimate friend of Lucy Kettle's during the RPM years—hers is not the story of the survivor. However, the three speaking women must present information to officials in institutionalized contexts and discourses that confine their testimony to its procedural value. Jean-Francois Lyotard differentiates between victims, survivors, and witnesses of violence in *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, but for Indigenous people these positions differ in their relation to violence and settler-colonial bureaucracy. Lyotard identifies the unspeaking victim, silenced by institutional language games or missing and forever unheard. Transformation from *survivor* (*plaintiff*, in Lyotard's usage) to *victim* occurs when "one loses [the] means … to prove that one has been done wrong" (8). Bureaucratic discourse censors those who do not follow its rules, by limiting the questions we may ask of it: Hummel notes that "[i]f you want something from bureaucracy, …you've got to say it on their terms. Write a letter, fill out a form" (138). Rules and procedures in force in institutional spaces make good earplugs. Accordingly, the roles of victim, survivor, and witness carry a profound sense of loneliness, isolated from sharing experiential information. Each novel here encourages readers to overcome this sense of isolation by remaining sensitive to experiences—not just officials accounts and records—of violence, toward the affective resistance of a legacy of violence against women that persists as a product of settler-colonial history and deaf neocolonial institutions.

The voices of Native communities play a role in combating the isolation of victimhood. Native literary activism often involves an interplay between bureaucratic spaces and communal responses in the pursuit of justice—in line with Andrea Smith's call for "community-based justice programs" (140). Here, authors depict institutional encroachment from the outside, signaling their peoples' "toothless sovereignty." This bureaucratic intrusion announces itself through its officials, like agents from the FBI or BIA, who have been authorized to infringe on local communities and overwrite their stories. References to political movements in these novels generate an activist counter-atmosphere, in which characters and communities struggle against narrative institutionalization. While Harjo's poem, "For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash...," and *The Red Power Murders* draw on explicit connections with the real-world AIM, *The Round House* evokes both recent campaigns against sexual violence as well as the history of resistance symbolized by Louis Riel—both involve communities aggressively claiming voice. These tie restorative violence to the reclamation of territorial sovereignty from a colonial government. King delineates specific dynamics between bureaucratic authority, geography, and community involvement in political action: protagonist Thumps recalls that activist "Noah [Ridge], like Dennis Banks and Russell Means, had brought national attention to the problems Native people faced. He had taken on government indifference and corporate colonialism. He had helped organize young people on reservations and in cities," despite the celebrity act that discredits his stance in the eyes of some (21). Organizing communities against institutional indifference, across the bureaucratic landscapes of urban and reservation life, creates a space for speaking outside the bounds of procedure.

Institutional spaces require that Native people forget kinds of violence that fall outside their purview, particularly at the conclusion of bureaucratically-enacted "justice." When at the

end of *Elsie's Business* George finally meets the father of one of the boys who raped his daughter, the man whose threatening absence has haunted him like a phantom, Jack Mason suggests that George leave everything in the past, mirroring neocolonial rhetoric that pressures Indigenous suffers of violence to "forget" their trauma:

> "Let it go," [Jack] says, and he turns his back to you. "There's been enough dying."
> "Yes. There's been too much dying. Too much violence altogether, and it didn't start with Elsie. It began a long time before that." (210)

Elsie's father instead echos the wisdom of Moses Blood from *The Red Power Murders*, alluding to structural violence and its relationship to current cycles of sexual assault. The experiences of three murdered Native women bear relation to those of the untold others who came before them. Because of the racial difference between Elsie's father, a black man, and Jack Mason, the father of one of the white teenagers, a tension gestures toward a much larger history of racial violence in a New World colonial space whose bureaucratic structures are deeply entrenched but do not go unchallenged in its political and social geography.

Together, these novels generate a unique conversation about sexual violence and settler bureaucracy. *The Red Power Murders* problematizes Native activism as well Native participation in bureaucratic enforcement—since its first murder victim is a white man connected to the FBI, the Bureau is present from the start. *Elsie's Business* centers on community recovery with respect to law enforcement and the Catholic Church. Erdrich explores the intricacies of federal, state, and tribal law and U.S. legislative history in *The Round House*, showing how checkerboard spatial codes generate violence. She articulates the price of participation in tribal law, as Joe will follow in his father's footsteps and become a lawyer to seek a justice that eludes bureaucracy. These examples reflect how bureaucratic justice enforces its codes as a way of legitimizing itself. Derrida argues that "Law's interest [is] ... to exclude any individual violence threatening its order

and thus to monopolize violence, ...which is also to say authority. ...This monopoly doesn't strive to protect any given just and legal ends ... but law itself" (33). The narrative of law controls violence by controlling the categories and definitions of violence, legitimizing some while criminalizing others—including the violence of political resistance. Located outside these regulations, Joe's retribution becomes delegitimized; Linden's assault does not. Yet Judge Coutts explains that his son's crime "is a wrong thing which serves an ideal justice. It settles a legal enigma. It threads that unfair maze of land title law by which Lark could not be prosecuted. His death was the exit" (306). Each novel explores "ideal justice," but *The Round House* asks explicitly how U.S. bureaucracy, the Catholic Church, and Native ethico-legal traditions construe "justice" differently. The judge declares that he will "protect the person who took on that task … even to the extent of attempting to argue a legal precedent. … Traditional precedent. It could be argued that Lark met the definition of a wiindigoo, and that with no other recourse, his killing fulfilled the requirements of a very old law" (306). Joe's sketchily-applied justice sits between customary and bureaucratic law, as the act did not involve the community. But because it effects some restoration, Coutts argues that, from a subaltern position, it might qualify under Indigenous precedent.

The kinds of violence constituted by Linden's assaults and Joe's reprisal underscore the relationship between storytelling and violence. Mooshum's traditional story about Liver-Eating Johnson, the white wiindigoo who "used to track down Indians and kill us and take and eat our livers," helps redefine justice beyond the reach of a legal-bureaucratic story, presaging Joe's final act (236). A third juridical narrative, signified by colonial Catholic doctrine and its local representative, Father Travis, establish yet another counterpoint to storytelling's role in

interpreting and seeking justice, especially in differing institutional spaces. Joe provides some history about the imposition of doctrine:

> Priests and nuns have been here since the beginning of the reservation. Even the most traditional Indians, the people who'd kept the old ceremonies alive in secret, either had Catholicism beaten into them in boarding school, or had made friends with some of the more interesting priests, ...or they had decided to hedge their bets by adding the saints to their love of the sacred pipe. ... There were ... Actual, Formal, Habitual, Material, Moral, Original, and Venial Sin. There were special types of sins: those against the Holy Ghost, Sins of Omission, Sins of Others, Sin by Silence, and the Sin of Sodom. There were Sins Crying Out to Heaven for Vengeance. (249-50)

A Christian colonial doctrine provides Joe an ironic justification and the basis for naming his retributive act: "Sins Crying Out for *Justice*." In search of an alternative code, Joe turns to Father Travis for an explanation of "Sins that Cried Out to Heaven for Vengeance" and finds a list of wrongs he knows to be immoral but not enforced by the law, since Linden Lark remains at-large despite his crimes. The priest tells Joe that "the sins that cried out for vengeance were murder, sodomy, defrauding a laborer, oppressing the poor. I thought I knew what sodomy was and believed it included rape. So my thoughts were covered by church doctrine..." (251). Joe writes his own doctrine and charts a path to solving the unsolvable violence that Linden has visited on his mother. Erdrich plays with institutional language to highlight divergent juridical models as well as the overlap between vengeance and justice.

Father Travis delineates a radically dissimilar model from Native ethics by separating evils that we *can't* do anything about from those we can. He expresses a view that "[t]here is material evil, that which causes suffering without reference to humans but gravely affecting humans. Disease and poverty, calamities of any natural sort. ... These we can't do anything about. We have to accept that their existence is a mystery to us" (253). Father Travis remains deluded by the evacuation of political context and structural determinants of wealth and health: the narrative conversion of poverty and disease into "natural" and "unavoidable" ills perpetuates

radical disparities in political power and quality of life. Erdrich points to a rupture in Catholic doctrine. As Joe prepares to kill Linden, he "dedicate[s himself] to a purpose which [he had] named in [his] mind not vengeance but justice. Sins Crying Out to Heaven for Justice" (260). Here too justice remains in the "yet to come": Derrida explains, "There is … no justice except to the degree that some event is possible which, as event, exceeds calculation, rules, programs, anticipations and so forth" (27). True justice must move beyond rigid doctrinal procedure, beyond administrative forces that attempt to control justice in Native space; even Joe's retributive act gestures poorly toward that horizon.

These novels show that in order to combat violence against Native women, we must undo the exclusion of Indigenous people from narratives of spatial justice. Derrida underscores the tenuous role storytelling plays in the constitutive process of jurisdiction, indicating how, despite the harm done by institutional narratives, we must use counter-stories to continuously remake our legal models: "To be just, the decision of a judge [must reaffirm the value of law] by a reinstituting act of interpretation… In short, for a decision to be just and responsible, it must … be both regulated and without regulation…" (23). He constructs a paradox that opens itself to a syncretic model of justice, a constant refashioning free of bureaucratic, regulatory violence. This dovetails with Coutts' conception of law: the Ojibwe tradition to which he always refers remains valuable because it involves ground-level community discourse and emplaced reinterpretation.

Native place-making practices maintain an ethical stance against colonialism by construing social justice contrary to bureaucratic values, but sometimes they learn to play by bureaucratic rules in order to effect justice. *The Round House* offers yet one more model that visualizes justice. Mooshum tells how Old Buffalo Woman, upon whose body the round house is modeled, "said wiindigoo justice must be pursued with great care. A place should be built so that

people could do things in a good way" (187). In the context of *The Round* House, "wiindigoo justice"—referring to the way Liver-Eating Johnson is tricked into eating himself—implies a process by which Native stories trick bureaucracy, according to its own rules, into consuming its ability to dispossess Native people, thus dissolving as a landscape. This echoes Edward Soja's claim that "achieving justice [is] … an intrinsically geographical problem," one that requires a *geographic* solution, or one rooted in stories about places (85). Settler-colonial bureaucracy suppressed Indigenous geographies in the U.S. partly by denigrating the role Native women play in creating and maintaining places and their stories. Spaces construed by bureaucratic processes have a direct effect on Native people: when Geraldine and Elsie are sick, we know it is because their places are sick. Their hierarchical relations don't lend themselves to good geographic cures.

In its function as an Anishinaabe spatial practice, the round house deconstructs settler-bureaucratic geographies by revealing structural agents of violence. It operates on community and requires the voices of all—not only an abstract, institutional authority—for justice. This expression as a spatial-narrative model allows the round house to facilitate relational, experiential, *unauthorized* stories and spaces, generating creative and restorative responses to violence rather than the closed, retributive justice of settler bureaucracy. It thus constitutes a useful concept in the decolonial poetics of contemporary authors and activists, who take communal aim at the administrative procedures that leave Native women unprotected and without recourse to voicing their experiences. Louise Erdrich, Thomas King, and Frances Washburn signal a restorative social and political ethic in the reinforcement of Indigenous rights movements that since the '90s have made resistance domestic and sexual violence as a vital rallying cry—culminating in #MMIW, the Save Wįyąbi Project, and other media initiatives that have begun to receive national attention. Their stories unravel the settler-bureaucratic accounts

that restrict justice, naturalize sexual violence, and execute a procedural violence against the testimony of victimized women. These and other Native writers critique the ways U.S. bureaucracy, through its spatiolegal model and the hierarchical and procedural relations it enforces. *The Round House*, *Elsie's Business*, and *The Red Power Murders* specifically help deconstruct the bureaucratic management of the traumatic experiences of Native women as mere data. By juxtaposing contrasting regimes of law, space, and story, they reveal the limitations inherent in a system ruled by bureaucratic procedure. Round house discourse stimulates true justice by generating and reinforcing a new jurisdiction of survivance, a space for women to speak back against the bureau.

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NOTES

Introduction Notes

[1] Although the settler-colonial and national contexts central my argument remain largely Anglo-Western, I use "Eurowest" to refer to a larger ideological transference to the Americas via (admittedly) different modes of projecting European bureaucracy in the various colonial projects of England, France, and Spain. Differences between U.S. institutional and Native health paradigms and geographies lie at the center of contestations of Native bodies and space, particularly in how they shaped federal Indian policy. Daniel Justice (Cherokee) argues that "*Eurowestern* ... acknowledges a number of shared cultural and political values held by colonizers of those European nation-states that are widely understood as 'Western'" (xvi). His critical point-of-view is "an open assertion of the liberating potential of our Indigenous histories and experiences, not a blanket rejection of Eurowestern ideas and traditions" (8).

[2] I use the word "Indian" either in quoted material, in its official usages (in proper names, for instance), or to connote its popular usage among Native people to refer to themselves intertribally, where I tend to favor the term "Native" because of the linguistic residues of a violent colonial mistake that are still written into "(American) Indian." When italicized, I partly borrow "*Indian*" from the language of Gerald Vizenor, who refers to the generalized colonial sign or image of the Native with the word "*indian*": he describes the *indian* as "a simulation of pure imagination" and "a case of cultural nostalgia" (*Fugitive* 38); and as an "aesthetic scapegoat" and "a fugitive object, the uncut cord of colonial dominance" (*Fugitive* 33). Finally, I use "Indigenous" to refer either to Native people globally or, more frequently, as a subject position within colonial experience that has purchase as a theoretical concept.

[3] *Journals of the Continental Congress v. 25, p. 602.*

[4] In an analysis of F. W. Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), Bill Cooke argues that "[r]acism was used to justify the [colonial] assumption of [the] right to manage" both Indigenous American and African peoples (Cooke 1911).

[5] In light of research into Indigenous proto-bureaucratic forms, "[t]he readiness of a Native American organization to accept and function well within the tenets of legal/rational bureaucracy has to be understood in its historical context" (Weibel-Orlando 90).

[6] Native bureaucrats were often viewed with suspicion, despite how many Native advocates worked (or had worked) for the Indian Service Cahill notes that Carlos Montezuma "was part of a group of SAI members called "the radicals" who questioned the participation of Indian Service employees in the society. This became an intense debate that strained the society's meetings. The SAIs founders, for example, had discussed whether or not service personnel should hold "principal offices" (231).

Chapter 1 Notes

[7] Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in serial 2100, p. 11.

[8] Hiram Price served as chief clerk of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and then the Commissioner of Indians Affairs from 1881-1885. Before that, he had served as a recorder for Scott County Iowa, a three-term Iowan congressman, and a bank president.

[9] The pertinent clause of Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution reads, "Congress shall have the power … to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes." In this case, one major part of "commerce" was the sale and trade of alcohol, etc.

[10] In a co-written paper, Joseph Gone and Patrick Calf Looking describe the problem in full, pointing out that, "among a large sample of southwestern AI men, the lifetime prevalence of alcohol dependence was estimated at

70%, among the highest ever reported" … "lifetime prevalence rates of 20.5% for AI women and 30.5% for AI men from a northern Plains reservation (in comparison to rates of 8.2% and 20.1% for adult Americans). The inclusion of alcohol abuse, as well as other drug abuse and dependence, yielded lifetime rates of substance use disorders (SUDs) for this same population of 31.0% for AI women and 43.1% for AI men" (291). Other scholars note that, despite a higher prevalence of substance use disorders across the board among Native people, there is still considerable variation among different regions and tribal groups (Szlemko et al. 436).

[11] Among other instances, the industrial teacher at the Hualapai Agency observed alcohol intoxication as a problem among the local community in 1899 (154).

[12] See Francis Prucha's *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* for statements from the Board of Indian Commissioners on Native drinking, as well as the ways Protestant ideology found its way into the federal bureaucracy managing Native life (217-222).

[13] The "drunken Indian" has been critically recognized as an explicit stereotype of Native behavior and culture since well before French 1975.

[14] Peter Mancall observes that "The prospect of intoxicated Indians rampaging through colonial villages…terrified most colonists, and their terror ensured that the stereotype of the drunken Indian survived for decades" (26). Leslie Fiedler goes further back, calling Caliban in William Shakespeare's *Tempest* "the first drunken Indian in Western literature" (237).

[15] Paula Gunn Allen writes of the common theme of alienation in Native writing: "Alienation, as a theme, is more than a literary device. It is an articulation of a basic experience, one that is characteristic of the life and consciousness of the half or mixed breed. … Aside from the historical reasons discussed earlier, the preoccupation with alienation, in its classic dimensions of isolation, powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, lowered self-esteem, and self-estrangement, accompanied by a pervasive anxiety, a kind of hopelessnes, and a sense of victimization, may be so strong because the writers are predominately breeds themselves." ("Stranger" 4).

[16] Commissioner of Indian Affairs Francis Ellington Leupp wrote in his 1906 report, "…please give particular attention to the proprietary medicines and other compounds which the traders keep in stock, with special reference to the liability of their misuse by Indians on account of the alcohol which they contain. The sale of Peruna, which is on the lists of several traders, is hereby absolutely prohibited. As a medicine, something else can be substituted; as an intoxicant, it has been found too tempting and effective. Anything of the sort under another name which is found to lead to intoxication you will please report to this Office" (*Annual Reports…1905* 29). The use of medicines as intoxicants was noted well into the twentieth century as a problem in Indian Country; the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1920 notes the problem among the Choctaw, especially (14).

A 1904 expose in *Colliers Magazine* by Samuel Hopkins Adams—two years before Leupp's report—outed Peruna as one of many phony medicines at the time. Even Peruna creator, Dr. Samuel Hartman, admitted that Peruna did not cure any of the dozens of illnesses it was claimed to cure. Furthermore, Adams "reported that the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs already had banned the sale of Peruna on Native American Reservations because the tonic was 28% alcohol"; the *Colliers* article, furthermore, "spurred Congress to pass the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906" (Sullivan 30).

[17] According to Chingachgook, "The Dutch landed, and gave my people the fire-water; they drank until the heavens and the earth seemed to meet, and they foolishly thought they had found the Great Spirit. Then they parted with their land. Foot by foot, they were driven back from the shores…" (Cooper 32).

[18] A piece titled "Origin of the Term Firewater," which appeared under the "Temperance" section in a 1910 issue of *The Sacred Heart Review*, a small Catholic newspaper published in Boston from 1888 to 1918, offered this popular explanation: "When the Hudson's Bay Trading Company began their trading among the Indians it was found that by selling the Indians liquor they could more easily be induced to trade their peltries. … Traders soon became aware of the fact that by diluting the whisky with water more furs could be obtained. This was practised for some time, but the Indians learned that good whisky poured on a fire would cause it to flame up, whereas had the whisky been

diluted the fire would be quenched. It was by this simple experiment that the term "fire-water" became a common word among Indians. A chief who had experienced the bad effects of whisky among his people said it was most certainly distilled from the hearts of wildcats and the tongues of women from the effects it produced.—*Red Man*" (12).

Historian Stuart Banner describes how alcohol worked in concert with bureaucratic rules to corrupt the land speculation process. He notes that "unscrupulous purchasers" were able "to ply prospective sellers with alcohol" (89). He provides one glaring instance of the ways bureaucracy and alcohol colluded to perform what Benjamin Franklin's text suggests: "Agents of the Holland Land Company bribed individual Senecas with money and alcohol to obtain their assent to the sale of much of the tribe's land in western New York. The transaction was ostensibly supervised by U.S. Indian Commissioner Jeremiah Wadsworth, who had to approve the purchase on behalf of the federal government before it could be consummated. Wadsworth was not entirely disinterested, however—he and his family were among the most prominent land speculators in the region" (142).

[19] After meeting a group of *Indians*—a "people apt to get drunk, and, when so, are very quarrelsome and disorderly"—Franklin notes that "[t]heir] dark-colour'd bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, form'd a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagin'd…" (128). He sees this as a cause of their extinction: "And, indeed, if it be the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for cultivators of the earth, it seems not improbable that rum may be the appointed means. It has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the sea-coast" (129).

[20] Taylorism (otherwise known as Scientific Management), the theory that undergirded the Efficiency Movement during the Progressive Era, took as its core values instrumental rationality, standardization, documentation, economic efficiency, and a contempt for tradition, all of which would provide disastrous once they made their way into federal Indian policy. Initiatives toward public health reforms during the Progressive Era also emerged through Taylorist ideals, including the Temperance Movement.

[21] *House Made of Dawn*, *Ceremony*, James Welch's *Winter in the Blood* (1974) and *The Death of Jim Loney* (1979), Gerald Vizenor's *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* (1978), and Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine* (1984) and *Tracks* (1988) anchored the prose side of this assertion of Native presence in U.S. literatures. Wendy Rose's *Lost Copper* (1980), Simon Ortiz's *From Sand Creek: Rising in This Heart Which Is Our America* (1981), and Joy Harjo's *She Had Some Horses* (1983) would do the same for poetry. The contested term "Native American Renaissance" was coined by Kenneth Lincoln in his 1983 book, *Native American Renaissance*, in which he argued that Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* helped catalyze a reclamation of Native heritage through syncretic literary forms as well as a scholarly reclamation of earlier Native authors and works.

[22] Stephen Graham Jones' *Ledfeather* (2008) and Louise Erdrich's *Shadow Tag* (2010)

[23] Franklin's depiction of the cycle of alcohol addiction emphasizes violent movement: "Their dark-colored bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, formed a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagined; there was no appeasing the tumult, and we retired to our lodging. At midnight a number of them came thundering at our door, demanding more rum, of which we took no notice" (153).

[24] Leslie Fiedler writes that "[e]ven drunk, Caliban remains a poet and visionary, singing that new freedom in a new kind of song" (236).

[25] The phrase "wards of the government" comes from Chief Justice John Marshall's decision in *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823), which asserted the *discovery doctrine*, granting title to Eurowestern "discoverers" of American lands, as the basis for federal power. Justice Marshall's decision in *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832) then set down the phrase "domestic dependent nations" to describe the U.S. government's conception of Native sovereignty and nationhood. The court further stripped Native sovereignty in its usage of the language "wards of the nation" in *United States v. Kagama* (1885).

[26] The jurisdictional status was unclear since the tribe then had formal federal recognition with eligibility for BIA services but also had a continuing relationship with the State of Iowa due to the tribe's private ownership of land which was held in trust by the governor. ("History of the Meskwaki Tribe")

[27] When Indian territory delegates from the Women's Christian Temperance Union brought Jane Stapler, a Cherokee activist, back to Indian Territory, she spoke about her connection to eastern Oklahoma and the Cherokee Nation: "You do not know, my sisters, what it means to me to come back after an interval of generations to the state where I was born and be welcomed so tenderly by my comrades of the white ribbon, who are fighting with me against the 'fire water,' that has been the curse of my race as well as of your own" (qtd. in Ishii 147).

[28] Jodi Byrd draws from the work of Gayatri Spivak to explain how settler-colonial discourse naturalizes itself in the construction of new social environments: "Key to this discursive work is the paradigmic uninscribed, uninhabited earth, the *terra nullius* convenient colonial construct that maintained lands were empty of meaning, of language, of presence, and of history before the arrival of the European. For a worlding to take place to such a degree that the native comes to cathect her/himself as other, the native must be rendered as an unknowable blankness that can then be used to reflect back the colonizer's desires and fantasies. And such a worlding is accomplished by denying that an "originary" world or peoples exist" (64). The organizational structure that enacts this process remains essentially bureaucratic in form.

[29] Szlemko et al. observe this relationship: "Indeed tribal beliefs and values are almost universal in that they prohibit drug or alcohol use as well as violence toward others. Researchers have found that higher levels of substance use occur among those individuals who most closely identify with non-Native American values; they also found that the lowest rates of use occurred among individuals who were bicultural, that is, they were equally comfortable with Native and non-Native American values. Among some individuals, policies such as relocation, reservations, and boarding schools, may result in feelings of shame toward their tribal culture. At least one group of researchers has linked this sense of ethnic shame to increased risk of drug abuse (Kulis, Napoli, & Marsiglia, 2002). Centuries of attempts by the government to force Native Americans to integrate into the dominant society have likely contributed to a sense of acculturation stress, and to the increased risk of alcohol use" (444).

[30] "Some Native American people refer to this trauma as the *soul wound*, a profoundly spiritual trauma that has been visited upon them (Duran & Duran, 1995). Also referred to as historical trauma, the soul wound reflects a multitude of actions and policies of both the U.S. government and individuals that contributed to the massive decline in the number of Native Americans and the extreme contraction of native lands" (Szlemko et al. 439).

[31] The CDC contributes pertinent health surveillance data on Native communities largely through its Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

[32] The Whapmagoostui Cree health paradigm of *miyupimaatisiiun* ("being alive well").

[33] Here Thatcher borrows from MacAndrew and Edgerton's *Drunken Comportment: A Social Explanation* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969).

[34] These phrases appear on the back cover of the 1989 edition of *House Made of Dawn*.

[35] Thunderbird Halfway Houses are spread across the Pacific Northwest and the Great Lakes Region, and they specifically serve men. Their counterparts are the Wren Halfway Houses for Women.

[36] Christopher Scales notes that powwow culture carries "official and unofficial borders. For instance, a central policy for all powwows is the prohibition of drugs and alcohol. However, to say that drugs and alcohol are not a part of powwow culture would be misleading, because, in truth, some powwow participants engage in the use (and sometimes abuse) of both. Forty-nine dances (more often simply referred to as forty-nines or forty-niners)—events in which drugs and alcohol may be routinely found—are a regular part of the powwow experience for many participants, and at many powwows, as the night wears on, talk begins about where the forty-nine will be. … Drinking or drug use may also take place *on* the powwow grounds, although usually late at night an always covertly

and with discretion. While powwow participants readily acknowledge these activities, they are rarely referred to as "part of a powwow."" (289-290)

[37] Franco Meli explains that "The song opens with a precise reference both religious and cultural-geographic. Tségihi is one of the most important divinities in the religious universe of the Navajo, tied to the power of Eagle and Thunderbird. The prayer opens with the description of the space occupied by the god: Tségihi's "house" ends up being the microcosm which encloses all that is animate and inanimate on the earth. Elements of light and darkness are presented, the masculine elements are integrated by the feminine ones, and the animal world and natural phenomena are in equilibrium. Additionally, Tségihi, precisely because it refers to the house of the divinity, is a specific geographic reference that holds an important role in the cultural history of the Navajo. Therefore, the ceremonial words are intertwined with a specific point of the Indian land—" (224-225).

Chapter 2 Notes

[1] MacDonald's comments have been widely cited, by his contemporary Mr. Cameron in the Official Report of the Debates of the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada, Fourth Session–Fifth Parliament, 49 Victoriae, 1886. Volume 21; and more recently in an article in the Globe and Mail by James Daschuk, "When Canada Used Hunger to Clear the West" (Jul 19, 2013); as well as more recently in an article on "Idle No More: Starve Those Indians" (January 9, 2015) by Elyse Bruce.

[2] Jones, 163-4.

[3] U.S. reservations were created in the "Appropriation Bill for Indian Affairs" (1851); in Canada, the Indian Act (1876) established the system of reserves for First Nations peoples.

[4] The Office of Indian Affairs, precursor to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, was established in 1824 under the authority of the War Department, by Secretary of War John Calhoun, without authorization from elected officials. It remained there until 1849, when it was transferred to the Department of the Interior.

[5] I adopt the terms "Indigenous," "Native North American," "Native (American)" and "First Nations" for overlapping but related purposes. I use "Indigenous" to broadly refer to aboriginal peoples and particularly their distinct political and ideological relationships to colonial occupation; "Native North American" offers a categorization with which I refer to both Native American and First Nations (Canadian) nations, communities, and individuals. Finally, the term "Native" becomes valuable, much like "Indigenous/Indigeneity," in denoting the peoples, knowledge traditions, experiences, theories, and so on, of Native North American people in a Eurowestern (neo)colonial context.

[6] Qtd. in James Daschuk's *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* (114). Liberal politician Malcom Cameron leveled this charge against MacDonald, accusing him of instituting a policy intended to coerce First Nations peoples into compliance through deliberate starvation.

[7] Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1905. Indian Affairs, Part I. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906. p329.

[8] Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1884. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884. p115.

[9] Qtd. from the performance collaborative Enduring Critical Crows' "Enduring Critical Crows: A Caw and Response," with Jane Haladay, Molly McGlennen, Kim Blaeser, and Gordon Henry at Native American Literature Symposium, Minneapolis, MN, March 2014.

[10] "The Rights of Indigenous Peoples to Food and Food Sovereignty." Eleventh session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Discussion on 14 May 2012 (1).

[11] In *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class and Sustainability*, Alison Hope Alkon and Julian Agyeman argue that "the food system is implicated in many of what Omi and Winant (1994) call *racial projects*, political and economic undertakings through which racial hierarchies are established and racialized subjectivities are created" (4-5).

[12] By "bureaucratic embeddedness," I refer here to the particularly Native and First Nations experience of bureaucratic institutions in their role in the dominant food regime, against which food activists position themselves and construct counter-meanings. Madeleine Fairbairn borrows from Harriet Friedmann's work (2005) to demonstrate how activists engage in "a parallel project which frames potential solutions to the crisis and thereby contributes to the construction of a successor regime" (Fairbairn 218).

[13] According to Edwards and Patchell, "On many reservations, malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies were endemic. Despite recommendations to improve Native American diets, food aid provided to the tribes was usually insufficient and of low quality. Also, the food aid did not include traditional foods, leading to further deterioration in health. …[A]s recently as the late 1990s, almost one-fourth of Native American households were food insecure, meaning that they did not have access to enough food to meet their basic needs and one out of twelve experienced food insecurity coupled with hunger (Henchy, Cheung, & Weill, 2002). Access to food is complicated by the geographic isolation of many reservations and Native communities. The failure of federal food programs to include or support the continued use of traditional foods has contributed to the reliance of Native Americans on less healthy foods and culturally inappropriate patterns of consumption (Bell-Sheeter, 2004)" (32).

[14] Speaking to this consistent and all-encompassing relationship, Jennie R. Joe and Robert S. Young write in *Diabetes as a Disease of Civilization: The Impact of Culture Change on Indigenous Peoples* that "the extent to which such colonized groups do or do not enjoy "good" health and/or have access to adequate medical care is determined by agencies and policymakers outside their society" (6). This works in concert with neoliberal market forces, which allow corporate actors to take advantage of local, bureaucratically-construed economic landscapes.

[15] According to Jones, this was Thomas Wessel's *A Historical Report on the Blackfeet Reservation in Northern Montana*. Docket No. 279-D, Indian Claims Commission. Bozeman, MT: Montana State University, 1975.

[16] Along with Eckert and other writers, Terry C Johnston has kept the genre alive and well from 1982-2001, in more than thirty novels on the Indian Wars, including *The Plainsmen Series*. These popular tales of U.S.–Native military history follow in a long tradition that stretches back to James Fenimore Cooper's series, *The Leatherstocking Tales*, of the colonial-era frontier. Of these, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) has been the most famous.

[17] Jones, 49.

[18] Qtd. in James Daschuk, "Old Tomorrow's Bicentennial: Don't Think Motivation, Think Law." *ActiveHistory.ca*

[19] In a letter to the Commission of Indian Affairs in 1864, six chiefs of the Creek Nation at Fort Gibson demonstrated their understanding of settler-colonial paternalism when they wrote, "The Creek chiefs desire to say this to our father: To whom must a suffering child call for help except to its father? We therefore call upon you as our father, to help us in this our time of need. We can see nothing but starvation before us. Already we have had a taste of what is to come this winter. Our agent is doing all he can for us. If there was food in the country, he would get it for us; but there is none here. We did not get here in time to raise anything for ourselves; we are therefore destitute of everything. Months intervene between the arrival of each train, and the supplies they bring are barely sufficient to keep us alive from day to day. … If there were any provisions that those who have charge of us could get hold of, we should get them. They are like ourselves, helpless. All the officers of the Indian department do all they can to relieve us. Our agent takes as much interest in us, and tries as hard to relieve our wants, as he could if we were his children. Indeed, we have no complaints to make of any one; we only ask that steps be taken to keep us from perishing until we can raise a crop next season" (Report 343-44). Their language reflects a consistent use of deferential rhetoric to secure food and other supplies from bureaucratic officials, rather than a strictly critical approach.

[20] Mark David Spence notes in *Dispossessing the Wildness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks*, "Black Elk [among others] understood all too well that wilderness preservation went hand in hand with native

dispossession" (3). Spence argues, further, "The Blackfeet may have used Glacier Park area in the past, but tourists and park managers believed that only the citizens of an emerging world power could experience the mountains with appropriate awe and reverence" (86)—despite the fact that more than a third of the Blackfeet depended on the resources in the Park for their subsistence. While park managers prohibited Blackfeet hunting within its borders, they manipulated its ecological makeup, creating unsustainable numbers of popular species for viewing by tourists in its fantasy "natural" state.

[21] In *Civilizing Nature: National Parks in Global Historical Perspective*, Bernhard Gissibl et al. explain how bureaucratic institutions like the National Park Service imposed a central set of categories but that "[t]he clarity and comparability provided by such instruments came at a price. On the one hand, categorizations created their own incentive structures, inviting superficial compliance rather than effective preservation. On the other hand, categorizations hardly captured the complexity of the phenomenon at hand and created their own blind spots. For decades, this was the case with the social aspects of parks and their impacts on local livelihoods" (16).

[22] Halpern outlines research from the 1960s on the so-called "thrifty gene," which "might have enabled individuals to store surplus calories as fat during times of abundance and to use the energy more efficiently during times of famine, thus surviving periods when food was scarce. This gene was helpful as long as there were periods of famine, but once these populations adopted the typical Western lifestyle, with less physical activity, a high fat diet, and access to a constant supply of calories, this gene began to work against them, continuing to store calories in preparation for famine but contributing to unhealthy amounts of fat" (37). In the following decades, researchers expanded this theory to include a complex of illnesses: Halpern notes that "Weiss et al (1992) put the thrifty gene hypothesis in a broader context when they described the "New World Syndrome," a complex of conditions with high prevalence among AIs. These conditions include obesity, gallstones, gallbladder cancer, abnormalities of cholesterol metabolism, and non-insulin type 2 diabetes. They hypothesized that these co-occurring conditions increase together in prevalence in AIs in proportion to the degree of modernization of life-style and suggested that some underlying abnormality in lipid metabolism must be responsible for the syndrome, in interaction with modern diet and exercise patterns" (37).

[23] Felicia Mitchell identifies diabetes as the fourth leading cause of death for Native and First Nations people, with prevalence rates as high as 33.5 percent in some regions—4 times the overall rate of diabetes for non-Hispanic white people in the U.S. (71). Mitchell goes on to historicize what is a recent development in Native North American communities: "Before 1930, there was only one case of diabetes reported within a Southwest tribe that now has some of the highest documented rates of diabetes in the world (Wame, 2006)" (72).

[24] Erdrich writes of wiindigoo hunger in *Love Medicine* (1984), *Tracks* (1988) and *The Antelope Wife* (2008), among other novels. She notes in her Afterword to *The Round House* that she drew from John Borrows' *Drawing Out Law: A Spirit's Guide* (219). In his unique narrative exploration of wiindigoo law, Borrows emphasizes that "[w]indigos come in different forms today. There are other harmful forms of cannibalistic consumption that destroy lands and people" (226). Erdrich's metaphoric deployment of the wiindigoo in *The Round House* reflect this broader understanding of the symbolic uses of the figure. Female wiindigoog also appear in Haisla author Eden Robinson's "Dogs in Winter" from her debut collection *Traplines* (1996) and *The Fast Red Road: A Plainsong* (2000) by Stephen Graham Jones (Blackfeet).

[25] The list includes Jim Jarmusch's postmodern "acid western" *Dead Man* (1996), starring Johnny Depp. In her foreword to Smallman's *Dangerous Spirits*, Grace Dillon also notes the stock character's appearance in several films, including "Larry Fessenden's "Wendigo" (2002) and *The Last Winter* (2006); Norma Bailey's (from the book by Gordon Sinclair, Jr.) *Cowboys and Indians: The J.J. Harper Story* (2003); Grant Harvey's *Ginger Snaps Back: The Beginning* (2004); and, of course, Jerry Bruckheimer's *The Lone Ranger* (2013)" (18)—this time, starring Johnny Depp as Tonto, a Comanche wiindigoo hunter.

[26] Leslie Silko in *Ceremony* (1977) and Gerald Vizenor in *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* (1978).

[27] With the passage of NAGPRA (1990), all federal agencies and institutions that receive federal funding must return Native remains and other cultural items (including funerary and sacred objects), acquired in excavation or through other means, to those people's current descendants.

[28] *The Night Wanderer: A Native Gothic Novel* is a novelization of Taylor's 1992 play, *A Contemporary Gothic Indian Vampire Story*. The novel would be adapted, too, into a graphic novel: *The Night Wanderer: A Graphic Novel* (2013).

[29] Smallman cites a handful of oral stories recorded across Canada, from the Rock Cree in Northwestern Manitoba to the Mi'kmaq on the Atlantic coast, wherein the wiindigoo arrives at a home having eaten parts of its lips, face, and shoulders (43, 55).

[30] Among these, Ray Young Bear's *Black Eagle Child: The Facepaint Narratives* (1992).

Chapter 3 Notes

[1] L.W. Parker is recorded as reading a paper titled "Discipline" on Wednesday, July 24th at the Indian Summer Institute in Tacoma, WA in *Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools to the Secretary of the Interior* (1895), 69.

[2] From Henry's *The Failure of Certain Charms: and Other Disparate Signs of Life*.

[3] Among them, the Battle of Washita River, which even the Bureau of Indian Affairs condemned as a massacre (Hardorff 29).

[4] Sarah Winnemucca (Pauite) established the first Native-run boarding school in 1885, and immediately piqued the interest of donors in the East, because it differed from the federal Indian boarding school program started by Richard Pratt. Winnemucca and her brother, Natchez, built a school at Lovelock, Nevada, on the Pyramid Lake Reservation. Called the Peabody Indian School after its primary patron, Mary Peabody Mann, the small institution offered dual-language instruction in English and Paiute—including interpretation of Christian hymns in the Paiute language (Canfield 232). Based partly on the Carlisle Industrial School, The General Allotment Act of 1887 was amended in 1891 to include a clause establishing compulsory English-language boarding school education for all Native children.

[5] David Wallace Adams writes that off-reservation schools operated on an "expanded curriculum" that involved training in farming, "wagon building, shoemaking, tinsmithing, carpentry, painting, tailoring, and harness making. Most of these departments were run like small shops, managing to turn out a considerable number of articles" (149). "For girls, the curriculum called for more instruction in the domestic sciences. Sewing, cooking, canning, ironing, child care, and cleaning—the standard duties of Victorian housewifery—were once again the general fare, although a few schools such as Carlisle and Haskell offered special training in stenography, typing, and bookkeeping" (149-150).

[6] L.W. Parker also served as the recording secretary for the Pacific Coast Institute at Tacoma, an "institute for teachers and employees of the Indian Department in the Western States" (*Call*). As noted in the *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* in 1902, "The purpose of holding [these] institutes each year is to bring the system of Indian education to a higher standard of efficiency" (75). This was one institute among many, including the National Education Association, with which the Department of Indian Education regularly met during this period.

[7] Katanski explains the connections of these authors to boarding schools: "Silko's Aunt Susie, Grandma A'mooh, and Grandpa Hank, for example, were students at Carlisle and Sherman; Louise Erdrich lived on the campus of the Wahpeton, N.D., Indian School, where her parents taught during her youth.7 N. Scott Momaday's mother (a Haskell student) and father both taught at an on-reservation Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school at Jemez Pueblo" (167).

[8] Katanski describes how administrators "attempted to regulate representations of Indian identity," and such a "voice was created in Carlisle's student newspaper, the *Indian Helper*, between 1885 and 1900, as if spoken by "the represented Indian"—the Indian identity most amenable to the school's goals. The represented Indian was constructed and narrated in the pages of the newspaper both by "paper Indians" (fictional Indian characters invented

by the educators) and by appropriating the writing of Indian students (allowed into print under tight control so they would appear to vocalize / the ideology of the educators)" (47-48).

[9] Amelia Katanski explores the relationship that Momaday establishes between a historical Kiowa winter count of the event and the story as it is reproduced by *The Indolent Boys* itself: "Drawing upon the story associated with the winter of 1890-1891—"schoolboys frozen"—Momaday brings about his own history-telling and history-shaping in the performance of his play" (180).

Chapter 4 Notes

[1] *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1915 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915), 62.

[2] *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1915 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 18.

[3] Jurisdictional restraints prevent tribes from prosecuting all felonies, including sexual assault, and non-Native men completely escape tribal jurisdiction. Coincidentally, "more than 80 percent of sex crimes on reservations are committed by non-Indian men, who are immune from prosecution…" (Erdrich, "Rape on the Reservation"). The National Congress of American Indians and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, among other organizations, campaigned heavily to address these injustices.

[4] qtd. in Kavitha Chekuru, "Violence Against Women Act Includes New Protections For Native American Women," *Al Jazeera English*, republished by *Huffington Post*, March 10, 2013.

[5] According to the National Congress of American Indians website, "U.S. Attorneys decline to prosecute 67 percent of sexual abuse and related matters that occur in Indian country." Most cases go uninvestigated under the auspices of a "lack of resources." Retrieved from http://www.ncai.org/policy-issues/tribal-governance/public-safety-and-justice/violence-against-women.

[6] Amnesty International, *Stolen Sisters: A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women in Canada*, 3. As of 7 May 2015, the Save Wįyąbi Project counts more than 1,400 missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada and the U.S. since the 1970s.

[7] According to the HRW report, *Those Who Take Us Away: Abusive Policing and Failures in Protection of Indigenous Women and Girls in Northern British Columbia, Canada*, "women and girls who expressed their interest in meeting … later withdrew their request to be interviewed. They cited fear of exposure and potential retaliation from police as inhibiting factors" (4).

[8] Finally, a landmark RCMP report, "Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview," confirmed in May 2014 the findings of the Native Women's Association of Canada "Sisters in Spirit" initiative: nearly 1,200 such women from 1980 to 2013.The report, (2014). The RCMP report states, "Police-recorded incidents of Aboriginal female homicides and unresolved missing Aboriginal females … total 1,181—164 missing and 1,017 homicide victims" (3); the same report lists 225 unsolved cases of missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. The RCMP was compelled to do their study by the NWAC, with whom they cross-referenced their data.

"Sisters in Spirit" was the first government-funded database of cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, begun in 2006. Canada's federal government stopped funding the program in 2010. Critics of the cut say it was meant to silence the Native Women's Association of Canada, the group behind the database. The final report released by NWAC made clear connections between violence and landlessness, colonial child welfare policies, and poverty resulting from exploitation of resources and bodies. More information at http://www.itstartswithus-mmiw.com/background.

[9] Along Highway 16 in British Columbia—known as the "Highway of Tears"—up to 45 women have gone missing or been murdered in the last forty years, most of them Indigenous. The RCMP and Canadian media failed to seriously investigate or report on these cases until after the 2002 disappearance of Nicole Hoar, a white Canadian woman

[10] The Save Wįyąbi Project crowdmap can be accessed at https://missingsisters.crowdmap.com/. The group relaunched "an updated and revitalized map and database of missing and murdered Indigenous women" at the 2015 South by Southwest festival, in a panel called "Technicians of the Sacred." http://save-wiyabi-project.tumblr.com/

[11] Among these, In January 2015, Toronto illustrator Evan Munday began tweeting one black-and-white sketch of a victimized Indigenous woman to Prime Minister Harper daily. Munday ended his Twitter memorial project after being contacted by families about the images' lack of respect for Indigenous cyberspace protocols for cyberspace, but his interest signals increased non-Indigenous involvement. Munday used ink and brushes to create a total of eight images of the more than 1,200 women who are currently listed in the RCMP's database as missing or murdered. More available at http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/evan-munday-stops-tweeting-images-of-missing-murdered-women-1.2900833

[12] A group of Anonymous members traveled in-person to Thunder Bay to protest the lackluster police response to a recent wave of disappearances, too, exceeding the typical bounds of Internet activism.

[13] Families of Sisters In Spirit and the Native Youth Sexual Health Network.

[14] "Sisters in Spirit" was the first government-funded database of cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada started in 2006. Canada's federal government stopped funding the program in 2010. Critics of the cut say it was meant to silence the Native Women's Association of Canada, the group behind the database. The final report released by NWAC made clear connections between violence and landlessness, colonial child welfare policies, and poverty resulting from exploitation of resources and bodies. (http://www.itstartswithus-mmiw.com/background

[15] Notable depictions of Indigenous debauchery in the colonial era include those found in William Bradford's instrumental *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1630-1651), where colonists were suspected of consorting with "treacherous" Indigenous men and "lascivious" Indigenous women (112, 237, 275, 424). A more complex but still problematic depiction of Native men and women during the colonial era may be found in Mary Rowlandson's *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682).

[16] Begun by Nina Wilson, Sheelah Mclean, Sylvia McAdam, and Jessica Gordon in November 2012, Idle No More has seen a number of First Nations women step forward to lead the movement, including Theresa Spence and Shelley Young (each of whom initiated hunger strikes), in support of Indigenous environmental sovereignty against encroachments by the Canadian government and energy corporations.

[17] Tillie Black Bear consulted the Department of Justice on the Violence Against Women Act (2000) and was the driving force behind the VAWA authorization of the Tribal Coalitions Program. In 1978, she testified at the first U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearings on domestic violence.

[18] Many others have come to the fore as leading Native rights activists: Jacqueline Keeler of Eradicating Offensive Native Mascotry in 2014, Adrienne Keene of Native Appropriations, and the women of the Waawaasegaming Water Walk, begun in 2003 by a pair of Anishinaabe grandmothers. These activists and organizations all have prominent digital presences to augment their real-world protest work.

[19] Wilkins and Stark explain that "…tribes are sometimes treated as "distinct, independent communities" capable of exercising a significant measure of sovereign power, as when negotiating treaties or administering justice, but they are also described as domestic dependent nations limited to exercising a reduced degree of internal sovereignty subject to federal dominance" (47).