# Princesses in Buckskin: Interrogation of a Stereotype

by

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ABSTRACT

The Indian princess began as an imposition, a Eurocentric conception based in preconceived notions of cultural structures and gendered power roles - a mixture of noble woman and provocative demure maiden - created by Anglo men to epitomize an idyllic image of otherness and womanhood. This analysis begins by exploring the history of the icon that was first conceived through sixteenth century explorer's tales of exotic queens then traces her progression through the romantic idealizations of the Indian woman Pocahontas. Research then explores how the character, comprised of a mixture of feathers, beads, and buckskin, was implemented into performance, and discusses how her flesh and blood enactment became critical to her survival. Drawing on the theories of contemporary critics, final examination turns to twentieth century perceptions of the Princess and reactions to her by contemporary Native artists whose manipulations of the character opens alternative dialogs about the stereotype to offer reconstructions of her historic discourse.

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I dedicate these pages to my mother Joan and father Richard who taught me perseverance and hard work.

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Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

Formation of the Indian Princess into the "hybrid" we know today was a process that took place over the course of more than four hundred years. Her birth and evolution began in the mythologies of patriarchal colonizers and was built around preconceived notions of gendered power roles. [1] Whether fictitiously rooted in Pocahontas legends or romanticized on the Land O' Lakes butter containers her likenesses unquestionably remain an allusion to an idealized past. Yet, behind the quaint demeanor is a menace used to promote colonization, assimilation, and justify genocide. This analysis seeks out the identity of the pervasive figure, created as a fetishized trope of Native American women, to reveal how she has maintained her prominent standing well into the modern era.

Research of this thesis has been limited to the examination of some of the most popular historic and contemporary portrayals that circulate within the broader population. These images are commonly referenced in critical discourses, but critical writings that focus on representations of the indigenous female body are inadequate. The purpose here is contribute to the discussion by addressing misconceived depictions, how they continue to be cultivated in contemporary society, and consider what advances, if any, have been made towards dispelling the stereotype.

As a term "Indian Princess" is problematic because it is centered within both positive and negative connotations. The concept, although tied to

perceptions of power, privilege and distinction, is a misnomer. Theorist and activist Gerald Visnor asserts that there is no such thing as an "Indian." The term Indian, taught to most American grade school children, was an error of designation assigned by the explorer Columbus who he thought he had arrived at his planned destination of India.[2] A "Princess" is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as: "A female member of a royal family other than the queen, *esp.* a daughter or granddaughter of a monarch (also as a prefixed title)."[3] The word was illogical when applied to any Native woman because indigenous people did not have European governmental structures. The concept was an invention, created to suit the needs and desires of patriarchal colonization.

**Development**

The earliest renderings of indigenous American women appeared in Europe in the sixteenth century. Introduced as savage Queens, uninhibited and wild as the New Land, they were soon transformed into allegoric representations of the fourth continent to join the existing sisterhood of nations that included Europa, Asia, and Africa.[4] Johannes Stradanus's print *Vespucci Discovers America* (ca.1575) which was possibly the most widely circulated depiction of its time and among many in existence, has become more popular in contemporary analysis.

This print that is believed to provide insight to Amerigo Vespucci's first encounter with South American inhabitants is addressed by many scholars, some who define the scene as a sexual encounter where the white explorer is in control,

while others cite the barbarous cannibalistic act of the narrative, the lack of civilization and the relation of the feminine to the land. Chapter One purposes that Stradanus's allegory contains all of this and more. Ultimately the Queen was a fantasy - crude, erotic, and powerful an object to be conquered; however, she may have also been an indicator to the framework of Native hierarchies, many of which held the goddess figure at the center of their cosmologies.

Popularity of allegories faded in the later seventeenth century and portrayals of Indian women became scarce in European art. England's interests in North American grew due to rumors of Spain's success on the continent. Anglo and Native relations were critical. Negotiations among the two groups at times involved the trading of indigenous women as trappers, traders, and soldiers in settlements along the eastern coast into Canada took Indian wives.[5] The governing aristocracy found such unions reproachful and for the most part did not acknowledge their existence with the exception of the union of Captain John Rolfe to the Powhatan woman Matoaka, the well-known Pocahontas.

Near the end of the eighteenth century Robert Blake's *Europe Supported by Africa and America* (1782) demonstrated a marked change in depictions of female bodies. His recreation of the allegoric tradition that was a complex commentary to colonization and racism was nonetheless a sexist reduction of women of color.[6] Molded into a more manageable form his subdued "America" lacked the power of the Queen. The more child-like figure would serve as a basis for the formulation of a young Pocahontas into the first Indian Princess.[7]

In the opening decades of the nineteenth century narratives revived the rescue of Captain John Smith. The tale grew first in fictional literature then as a popular subject of artists whose many prints, paintings, and sculptures displayed the incident. However, John Gadsby Chapman's *Baptism of Pocahontas* (1840) would present a different version of the Pocahontas story that would establish her American nobility through her conversion to Christianity and her marriage to John Rolfe. Significantly this image, which was commissioned for the rotunda of the nation's capitol, established the Indian Princess as an emblem of national identity. Demonstrated in the panel is her allegiance to country and white men, and her conversion and devotion to Euro-American society, something all Native peoples could and should strive toward. In this time of civil uneasiness Chapman's governmental commission would promote assimilation and a united sovereignty.

**Performance**

The eighteenth century further saw embodiment of the Indian Princess completed through the enactment process that Diane Taylor suggests is essential in the formation of memory.[8] In chapter three Taylor's as well as Philip Deloria's theories of mimicry are applied to examples of the Pocahontas dramas. Centered on justification of violence and establishment of authority these plays incorporated both the story of Smith's rescue and of her marriage. Playwrights James Nelson Baker, George Washington Custis, and Charlotte Barnes are acknowledged by scholars for their portrayals of the first Indian Princess as they

advanced her through the first half of the century. Yet, after the Civil War began, Pocahontas lost favor and a romantic version of the figure emerged.

We are introduced to her in the 1880's Wild West shows that were formulated by of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Through spectacle under a westernized thematic that included sharp shooters, Indian attacks, and a re-creation of "Custer's last stand he brought to the stage a unique style of performance that was completely American."[9] Cody himself was known to play Custer and would also cast Natives to play themselves. The dramatic interpretations helped to reestablish the idea of indigenous peoples as savages and more often portrayed them as enemies to settlers. Notably these shows created the pan-Indian style that is still recognized today. This section explores the women who played the character of the Indian Princess to Victorian audience's fascinated with the West and how choices in their performances would come to affect perceptions of the figure into the twentieth century.

While early images had implanted damaging mythologies about Native women, performance would inextricably bind the Princess to the mindset of the nation. Pocahontas lore had helped to create a figure attached to American sympathies. The romanticized version established a fanciful being, innocent, and fundamentally submissive to white males and their country's social order. Her Indianness fixed her to the wilderness while gender bound her to natural mother earth. She appeared on calendars, cigar tins, and fruit crates scantily dressed, sometimes in a neo-classic style tunic, but more often in fringed buckskin. Her

black hair was long and braided, she wore a headband, sometimes with a single feather, and she was always displayed against a backdrop of nature. She was also whitened; artists painted her skin lighter, illustrators portrayed her as identical to women of European decent, and white skinned actresses enacted her in dramas and Wild West shows. The Indian Princess became the ideal of womanhood and as a promotional strategy which was also embraced by contemporary indigenous women.

Sarah Winnemucca, Molly Nelson, and E. Pauline Johnson, all of Native decent, took over the personae and stylized it to suit their own purposes. The act proved to bring them, as well as others, opportunities in a social climate that was unfavorable toward the advancement of women. However, to what end? Performing the character turned into such a part of these women's identity that it became impossible to extract her from their lives. Depictions were complex in that the romanticized and sexualized figure was a mockery of indigenous peoples. Confused societal expectations proved more than any one woman could successfully achieve.

Nineteenth century enactments provided the power and celebrity needed to propel the Indian Princess into modern times. In the desire to preserve American values the idealized concept was imparted to the minds of children as part of the Campfire Girls mission in 1910. Through mimesis, girls procured Indian names, made stylized costumes, and ritualistically danced. [10] In the twentieth century the Indian Princess was commercially illustrated as a Gibson

girl set in exotic wilderness scenes dressed in eroticized fragments of buckskin, feathers, and beads. Then she became a screen star. In the movies she would shine as a showgirl, save white men, and sacrifice herself over and again. Her repetitive appearance in most Western films and television programs transformed her into a stock character. In the 1960's and 1970's she was an icon for the civil rights movement and selected by actors such as Marlon Brando whose 1973 utilization of the figure, through the actress Sacheen Littlefeather, drew national attention.[11] At this time identifiers of the Indian Princess, along with her birthright, became fashionable as the public donned fringed leather vests and beaded headbands and additionally flaunted claims of lineage that ran back to the legendary Pocahontas.

**Response**

Post colonial theorist Homi Bhabha asserts that stereotypes are powerfully ambivalent creatures. Their predictable uncertainty and repeatability are what makes them successful in the process of Othering. Only through the denial of their original identity are we able to strip offending objects of their authoritative positions.[12] Through examination of contemporary admonishments of the Indian Princess Chapter Four addresses the development and adaptability of this icon into stereotype, her relationship to the North American trickster figure and how performance, which first assisted in her creation, now contributes to her disavowal.

Possibly the most successful reference to this Native stereotype is the Land O' Lakes advertising logo. First presented in 1939, this version of the Indian Princess remains an ever-present entity on grocery store shelves across the United States. Her tenacity and ubiquity have made her a familiar figure throughout the world and although mentioned in many contemporary discourses she has never been examined in detail. Why and how the Minnesota based corporation chose to utilize this image is explored here, with emphasis on the contradictions in their method and disparities in their mission.

The Land O' Lakes depiction is also a recognizable character in the work of Chippewa artist David Bradley whose satirical humor defines the absurd existence of the Indian Princess in works such as *Land O'Bucks, Land O'Fakes* (1998) and *Land O' Fakes Bitter* (2007 and 2010).[13] These re-creations of the popular illustration provide a more satirical, cynical, and even bizarre look at what has become accepted in society today. Playwright Monica Mojica also finds a role for the corporate emblem in *Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots,* a play that questions established perceptions of Native women. Characters representing symbolic women, including the Butter Princess and Pocahontas, act to guide audiences to formulate their own conclusions about the fabrication of American history.

In contemporary society indigenous women continue to perform the Indian Princess in pageants that take place across the country. Billy Luther's documentary *Miss Navajo* provides examples of current tribal sensitivities toward

the figure and how claims to the European based concept have become a basis of tribal pride. Participants seeking the title in events such as Miss Indian USA, Miss Navajo, and Miss Indian Arizona are expected to be exemplary ambassadors for their tribe and all Native peoples. Although these competitions bring a level of favorable acceptance, as exhibited through the examples of Sarah Winnemucca and Molly Nelson, the character also confounds issues of identity.

Chapter four also examines the work of artist Kent Monkman whose brash and provocative drag portrayals of the Princess are rooted in deflecting damage produced by the image as a stereotype. Identified here is how Monkman's combined performances of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality sanctions theories of mimesis brought about by Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Philip Deloria. His series of photos *Emergence of a Legend* (2007) are specifically examined not only for their confrontational value, but also for acknowledgement of past female enactments. Monkman's use of the "performative, "as defined by theorist Judith Butler, produces subversion by identification of the Indian Princess's incongruous nature.

It is not possible in this thesis to include with sufficient detail all of the artists who have addressed this pervasive stereotype within their work; however, significant pieces, such as *Princess* (1980) and *Totem Princess* (1981) by Bob Haozous, *Jingle, Jingle* (1997) by Judy Lowery, and *Minniehaha Knotsberry Farm Maiden; Fine Feathered Friends; Wild West Princess; and Washo Indian Woman with Papoose* (2002) by Jean Lamarr were also considered. The basis of

this thesis was launched through interest in development and retention Indian Princess as a stereotype of Indian women. The following pages seek out her identity and distinguish those who challenge her existence to question how mythologies have established and perpetuate this social depravity of American Indian women.

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[1] Anthropologist Néstor García Canclini first defined hybridization as a "sociocultural process" that occurs through the collision of cultures in the development of new structures, objects and practices from customs that were already established. See Néstor García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1995), xxi.

[2] Gerald Visnor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on PostIndian Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), vii.

[3] *Oxford English Dictionary.* Oxford University Press, 2009. http://dictionary.oed.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/entrance.dtl (accessed: September 14, 2010).

[4] Clare Le Corbeiller, "Miss America and Her Sisters: Personifications of the Four Parts of the World" *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 19, no. 8 (April, 1961), 213-216.

[5] Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 37.

[6] Elsie Marubbio discusses how Blake's work is a visual commentary on the rhetoric of colonialism, while other scholars find that the work more aptly indicates European support of colonization. See Elsie Marubbio, *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 2-4. See also Nicholas M. Williams, *Ideology and Utopia in the Poetry of William Blake* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 128.

[7] Feminist theorist Laura Mulvey asserts that anxieties from fear or guilt are formed from difference. This is counterbalanced by "devaluation" and "saving of the guilty object." Native women when viewed as a fetish became more "reassuring" than "dangerous." See Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 21.

[8] Diane Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the America's* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 3.

[9] Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 252-255.

[10] Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 112-113.

[11] In 1973 Marlon Brando had the Native actress Sacheen Littlefeather accept his academy award for *The Godfather*. The young woman claimed that Brando refused to appear because of the deplorable way Hollywood portrayed American Indians. The "stunt" was almost successful, until the media revealed Littlefeather's somewhat untruthful and sordid past. See Raymond William Stedman, *Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press), 17-19.

[12] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 96.

[13] This work was on display in the exhibition *Transcending Traditions: Contemporary Native Art Work* at the Mesa Arts Center in Mesa, Arizona. David Bradley explained to me that this piece, first shown in Washington, D.C., has and would continue to evolve.

Chapter 2

# EARLY IMAGES: EVOLUTION OF THE INDIAN PRINCESS

Indigenous American women were first introduced to Europe in the fifteenth century in the form of allegoric bodies. Formulated renderings of mythological Native Queens, now discussed in contemporary discourses, sprung from exotic tales from explorers such as Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci about their journeys to the South Sea Islands and continents of the Americas. Predecessors to the demure mate and savior of Anglo men they were provocative, savage, and cannibalistic. Idealized by the desires of colonizing patriarchal nations, Native female bodies became devices of persuasion toward civilization of the New World and through generations of manipulation, they emerged into the stereotype we know today. This chapter examines early recognizable portrayals of Native women depicted as royalty and traces transformations that led to establishment of the Indian Princess image that was popularized in the twentieth century.

## Initial Encounters

In 1493 illustrations of indigenous Americans surfaced in Italy and Spain shortly after Columbus's letter of his "New World" discoveries to Ferdinand and Isabella was published. Visual narratives of first contact scenes, which were drawn from the accounts of the expedition, depicted groups of nude aboriginals meeting their white counterparts (Figure 1). Modeled after human figures found in European woodcuts of the period, Native bodies, proportionately taller than those

of the clothed explorers, were posed so as to conceal their breasts and genitalia.[1] This lack of costume and gender dehumanized the population.

In the first decade of the sixteenth century European knowledge of the Americas was idealized at best and for most, an unfathomable mythological horror. Through the assistance of skewed illustrations emphasizing the uncommon and bizarre, citizens were introduced to a land of uncivilized opulence. Depicted on broadsheets and other publications were massive topographies of tall swampy forests filled with brightly colored birds and oddly configured animals. The later introduced inhabitants were also exotic and furthermore erotic, as they were drawn nude shown partaking in open sexual encounters and the consumption human flesh. In 1503 Amerigo Vespucci published his most popular writings *Mundus Novus* and *Lettera di Amerigo Vespuddi delle Isole Nuvamente Trovate*, commonly known as the "Soderini letter," for its recipient the Italian statesman Piero Soderini.[2] His explicit descriptions of Americans' vulgar habits, along with gruesome details of their cannibalistic practices, amply fed artistic enthusiasm toward visual representations that would accompany his remarkable tales.

Circulated throughout sixteenth century Europe, Vespucci's writings stimulated the curiosities of the general public through the introduction of a new folklore, based in Northern European legend. Wild Men-of-the-Woods (there were wild women and children as well) emerged from stories dating back to writings found in the Hebrew Bible and spoke of a sect of humans who had gone mad and retreated to the wilderness.[3] Wild people were a metaphor for the savage

fears and longings of civilized man, their mythology entrenched in humanity's basic yearnings of power over nature and their trepidations of the unknown. Likened to these untamed creatures, Native Americans became objects both feared and desired by colonizer; in addition, evidenced even in early portrayals of explorers' quests, control was best sought through the bodies of women.

In early scenes of first contact female figures were pictured greeting arriving vessels. They were nude, with the exception of headdresses or waist belts, their erotic and sadistic nature exhibited through actions portrayed in illustrative narratives. One of the earliest examples is found in an engraving created to accompany the Soderini letter that depicts a clothed Vespucci who is met by three native women (Figure 2). Two attract his attentions while another approaches from behind, clutching a club that is poised to strike the explorer. Amidst the rocky backdrop a group of men engage in sexual activities with each other. This was an image of America that portrayed the imminent peril that resided in the land as well as the psyche of its hedonistic inhabitants, where women were seducers, capable of violent acts and men engaged in un-Christian behaviors at a time of high intolerance in Europe.[4]

Imagery became a method of Othering that aided toward promotion of colonization, but scenes depicting cannibalism among the North American people was a common form of rhetoric. Scholar Michael J. Scheffler asserts that illustrations involving the consumption of human beings, essentially acts of power, were represented as if they occurred daily, rather than being a ritualistic

phenomenon.[5] Discourses from the sixteenth century to the contemporary assert that these portrayals were a method of differentiating indigenous peoples from European society, however, lacking in discussion is the apparent connection between cannibalism and the feminine.

In drawings of South American people from the middle to the late sixteenth century, female characters are shown as central to the preparation of human bodies. A case in point involves a series of gruesome woodcuts created in 1557 by German soldier and mariner, Hans Staden. The engravings depicted Native Brazilians, primarily women, filleting and roasting corpses in the same manner one would splay and dress an animal. The carcasses intended for feasting upon were from the bodies of slain male enemies a fate Staden narrowly escaped.[6]

Notably these drawings revealed Natives fulfilling their roles in community settings, but it is difficult to determine if these visual representations indicate women in roles of power, equality, or subservience within their own communities. Staden's firsthand accounts indicate that women held positions of importance, yet their style of government was not familiar to Europeans. Contemporary critical discussions surrounding these representations more often refer the sexuality that was ascribed to Native women, rather than their communal role. Vespucci's writing *Mundus Novus* is often cited in critical discourse for its detailed descriptions of the populace's cannibalistic lust and the women's vigorous appetite for sex.[7] Even with knowledge of the grave dangers of the

uncivilized territories interests in colonization grew among the major European powers and in this time Native women took the form of allegory to emerge as all powerful Queens.

**Vespucci Awakens a Sleeping America**

Well into the sixteenth century governing bodies in Europe avoided issues of how to deal with of the perplexing American inhabitants who existed without valuing possessions, religion of idolatries, or European forms of government.[8] Spain first attempted to build trading stations in South America modeling them after the Portuguese posts in Africa, where natives were acquired as serfs. However, the people of the America's did not surrender to subservience, nor were they physically capable of handling the manual labor expected of them. Ultimately their immune systems were unable to resist diseases carried by the Europeans and they soon began to die off.

Christian factions were most concerned about the indigene's capacity to embrace monotheistic beliefs and in 1528 Domingo de Betanzos, a Dominican father, determined that the Americans were not of the human race and should be rapidly exterminated. Still, there were missionaries who wished to rescue the Indian souls and they appealed to Catholic sovereigns in order to protect their potential subjects.[9] The solution to saving these barbarians would be to systematically assure the European populous that the Natives had value and could be controlled. Christianity became a powerful ally in the process of colonization

and imagery, concentrated on womanly forms, promoted idealistic representations of the people.

Allegories of America appeared in the last decades of the sixteenth century when interest in the New World intensified. These personifications were, for the most part, female, their likenesses and attributes inspired from Vespucci's writings. Resembling her emblematic sisters Europa, Africa, and Asia, America possessed royal attributes unique to the land and the people she represented. Writer and activist Reyna Green provides a composite of the familiar figure:

> Draped in leaves, feathers, and animal skins as well as in Caribbean jewelry, [the Indian Queen] appeared aggressive, militant and armed with spears and arrows. Often, she rode on an armadillo, and stood with her foot on the slain body of an animal or human enemy. She was the familiar Mother- Goddess figure - full-bodied powerful, nurturing but dangerous embodying the opulence and peril of the New World.[10]

These earliest portrayals of the continent were of nearly naked women (their pubis often covered with some sort of draping) placed in a setting of nature, equipped with a spear and at times held a severed limb, or head. They were Othered by their cannibalistic savage nature, but labeled Queens they were recognized in accordance with the governmental structures of Europe.

In 1573 explorer Jean de Léry argued that monarchal configurations were assigned to indigenous cultures in order to define hierarchy, which in turn was synonymous with civilization.[11] By imposing an analogous social organization upon Native populations Europeans were able to accept them as human. As primitives, without history or culture, they could not conceivably be reasoned with; therefore, structural organization tamed fears and allowed colonists a

strategy to deal with indigenous inhabitants. The powerful body of the Queen symbolized not only settlers' apprehensions about dangers of the American landscape, but also signified their aspirations of domination. Contemporary feminist, racial, colonial, and post colonial discourses define her representation as a tool of the patriarchal colonizer that could be used to entice, through suggestion of her erotic nature and even her ferocity.[12] Like mythological goddesses of the Greek, the Caribbean American Queen was fabricated as an ethereal dominatrix.

America first appeared in Giovanni De' Vecci's 1574 rendition of the four continents. Lavishly presented, she more closely resembled women from the country of India, dark of skin and fully clothed in yards of shimmering silk. She is pictured wearing a crown, gold bracelets that encircle her wrists and arms, and luminous bangles that entwine her legs and feet. The abundance of the unsettled territories is emphasized by the cornucopia that rests upon her lap. However, this illustration was more civilized than European citizens desired and depictions of the Queen bereft of grandiose garments and demonstrative of her brutal man-eating habits prevailed.[13]

These exotic allegorical figures peaked in the last decades of the sixteenth century and although many exist, the image most frequently analyzed in modern critical theory is Johannes Stradanus's (Jan Van de Straet, 1523-1605) *Amerigo Vespucci Discovers America* (ca. 1575, Figure 3). This artist's portrayal is one among many that depict America nearly nude; however, this bare breasted woman wears only a skirt and a feathered headdress (that will later become an identifier

of American Indianness). She is popular in discourse today because of her appearance and more importantly for her involvement in the narrative. [14] The most common argument pressed among theorists such as Philip Deloria suggests that the woman's pose situates her as vulnerable to the overly dressed and armed male explorer, while her lack of clothing and reclining position also insinuate that she is sexually available to the "white colonizer."[15] She is a metaphor for the land that is fertile and awaits cultivation. Still, disregarded by contemporary scholars is that this image depicts the only confrontation between this allegoric figure and man and the instance of intimacy shared between the two representations is one that humanizes the Queen.

Stradanus's illustration, reproduced as an engraving by Theodore Galle, served as the cover to *Nova Reperta* (New Discoveries) a series of prints which introduced the New World and its people to the greater European populous. This allegoric version of an American Indian woman as an uncivilized ruler possibly served to entice and incite adventurous spirits in their pursuits of new territories. Yet, such engravings were not challenged for their discriminatory and sexual underpinnings until well into the twentieth century.

**Emergence of the Princess**

Some of the most accurate images of Indian peoples produced in this time are said to have been created by the English artist John White from his voyages to North America, specifically those created in his time on Roanoke Island in 1585.[16] Choosing to ignore the more barbaric aspects of the indigenous lifestyles,

White instead expressed interest in their intricately tattooed bodies and preferred to place them in settings of family and non-sacrificial ceremonial activities. The prints rapidly gained popularity and one image, *Indian Woman of Florida* (1585, Figure 4), after a sketch by Jacques Le Moyne, is often addressed in contemporary analyses Figure 4.[17] In varied discourses this rendering of a Timucua woman is pointed out as vulnerable and available to the colonizer. Like the Queen and due to her lack of clothing she could be viewed as erotic, but she was also subservient. Tattooed from head to foot the woman was an entrancing and peculiar creature to the European society that viewed her.

White's choices may have been directed by his political interests in one of the Virginia settlements, where he later became a governor. If his intent was to attract settlers to North America by demonstrating that the inhabitants were social beings he succeeded to some extent. More significant is that *Indian Woman of Florida* marked a change in the conceptualization of Native women. White's watercolors humanized the Natives and his Indian woman was a more feminine and accessible being than the wild Queen. She would become the model for the iconic Indian Princess, an image that would be chosen by the British in their efforts to promote colonization.

In the seventeenth century the nations of England, Spain, and France were competing feverishly to increase their territories in the Americas and in the more northern settlements Anglo and Native relations were critical. The British would come to depend upon the indigene for their very survival. Very quickly Anglo

settlers discovered that the North American peoples were more advanced in organization than they had anticipated. These savages maintained hierarchal forms of government, identified as chiefdoms, a system colonizers recognized and associated with their own manner of civilization. Through negotiations European men secured land treaties that at times this involved marriage.[18] Traders, trappers, and soldiers around settlements along the eastern coast into Canada took Indian women as wives and while some choose to stay in Indian societies, others lived in both Native and European settlements.[19] However, the English aristocracy viewed interracial marriages as "unnatural" immoral miscegenation and tended to ignore their very existence.

Although before leaving the European continent settlers were warned about comingling, the union of Captain John Rolfe to a young Native woman, best known as Pocahontas, solidified relations between the English and Algonquin Indians.[20] Through the fabled tale of her short life we are introduced to the first Indian Princess, and while legends transforming her into a savior of the white man expanded greatly after her death, only one image of Pocahontas was created during her lifetime.

The familiar illustration, from 1616 by the Dutch portrait engraver Simone van de Passe, demonstrated one Indian woman's conversion into Anglo society, and in turn assisted in promotion of assimilation (Figure 5). The inscription that surrounds her portrait defines her acceptance of religion and Anglo society via her marriage to Rolfe:

> Matoaks als Rebecka daughter to the mighty Prince Powhatan Emperor of Attanoughkomouck als virginia converted and baptized in the Christian faith and wife to the wor. M. Joh Rolfe.[21]

Scholar Karen Robertson argues that Pocahontas's appearance in this particular image signifies her transformation from savage heathen to Christian gentlewoman. [22] Her allegiance to cross and crown is exemplified in the severe English costume of fashionable women's Elizabethan clothing structured of heavy brocade. A starched lace collar frames her face, and in her bonnet, perhaps as an allusion to her Nativeness, rests a single feather.

In truth, there is relatively little known of the young woman formally recognized as Matoaka; furthermore, information revived by Captain John Smith occurred nearly seventeen years after their first encounter. The information relayed in his *Generall Historie* turned her life into the infamous romantic narrative that was and is contemporarily sensationalized.[23] However, recent scholars have assembled data that relates a more probable tale of her life and relationship with Smith.

Pocahontas came to be known as a princess because she was the daughter of the powerful chief Powhatan, who, by all accounts, was as interested in expansion of his territories as were the English colonists in expanding theirs. Historian Michael J. Puglisi asserts that Powhatan's tactics to gain control over all Algonquian tribes of eastern Virginia involved intimidation, murder, and even ordered payoffs from his subjects.[24] Taken captive, Smith, by order of the Chief, was threatened with execution. Performing her role in accordance to plan,

Pocahontas intervened just before the event was to occur. Puglisi argues that this was not done in the interest of love, but as part of a calculated drama where Powhatan gained advantage in his dealings with the English. [25] This dutiful enactment, bestowed to Pocahontas due to her standing in the tribe, may have held more significance than indicated in American history.

In her book *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*, Paula Allen Gunn argues that there are less publicized ethnographic records indicating that Coastal Algonquin women were able to inherit official positions within the political systems of the tribes.[26] Termed *sachems*, these women were often wives or sisters of male leaders whom they succeeded in the event of their death. Noted in John Smith's journal is that the 'Queene of Appamatuck,' a female authority was present during the council that decided his death and *she* was the member to relinquish the decision. [27] However, Pocahontas is not remembered as a leader of her tribe by either Indians or Europeans. All that is known of her is based in unsubstantiated accounts and contrived imagery that has morphed to suit the desires of each era and all necessitate her devotion to white men.

Anthropologist Christian Feest defines the story of Pocahontas as an American origin myth. First presented as the young woman of Smith's recollections she is the embodiment virginal America, who through his rescue legitimized Anglo presence in North America and finally, though her death made European expansion possible.[28] Her legend is critical to the development of the

Indian Princess as stereotype and reappears periodically to reinforce the colonial concept.

**William Blake and the Native Female Body**

After the American Revolution Indian women began to appear in the works of Euro-American artists and images of Native women as the romanticized Indian Princess emerged in great numbers near the end of the eighteenth century.[29] During this time period, indigenous Americans became part of the promotion of national identity, as the subjects of popular literature and trademarks that embellished commodities across the county. Indians became a pan-amalgamated trope, objectified into scopophilic articles of feathers and buckskin originating from desire, fear, anxiety, and guilt.[30] Disavowal towards Indian women by the colonists was directed toward their gender as well as their ethnicity. Confused European men, unaccustomed to matriarchal structures set in place by some tribes, refused to negotiate with Native women. Unfortunately, this attitude of masculine superiority transferred to some Indian men and contributed to the rise of subjugation of women within their own tribes.[31]

The patriarchal colonizer found a symbol of perfection for all women in the Indian Princess, making use of her body as a device that encapsulated the longings of the new nation defined in the doctrine and beliefs of "Manifest Destiny."[32] Lacking the strength and intensity of the Queen, she was granted the decorous femininity of a fetish that became, as stated by feminist theorist Laura Mulvey, "reassuring rather than dangerous."[33]

In 1796 artist and poet William Blake contributed to the evolution of the submissive Princess figure with his popular allegoric engraving of *Europe Supported by Africa and America* (Figure 6). Recognized by contemporary scholars as part of the artist's humanitarian affront to slavery, this engraving has been, for the most part, unnoticed for its portrayal of an Indian woman. Similar to White's earlier *Woman of Florida*, these three approximating figures, distinguishable only by skin color and hair style, resemble Botticelli's *Venus* and interpretations of the *Three Graces* by Raphael and Rubens from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In her discussion on slavery representations in Blake's work, feminist theorist Anne K. Mellor identifies that their identical physical appearances was perhaps a choice by Blake to make them appear more human, noble, or heroic. The artist's feminization of the continents was the "patriarchal trope of Nature as a feminine body designed for the aesthetic, sexual and economic gratification."[34] The woman Mellor speaks of is known to be a slave because of the bands drawn around her wrists and ankles; however, she neglects to mention that America wears the same semiotic identifiers. Although both races were thought to be less evolved than Euro-American males, Natives were not considered slaves.

Bracelets worn either on the arms or the legs appeared in even the earliest depictions of indigenous Americans. They are alluded to in tattoo designs etched upon the arms of John White's Timucua woman and shown on depictions of the Indian Princess into the twentieth century. Anthropological research indicates

that bands were worn by Natives (including those from Africa) to transform body parts or indicate status in their communities. For example, peoples from Mexico, including the Toltec, Aztecs, and Nahuatl, wore decorative straps, as did indigene of the Subarctic.[35] Therefore, Mellor defining the bands as representative of shackles may not be completely valid; furthermore, greater importance rests in manner to which Blake stereotypified portrayals of women of color.

Stylistically the women depicted in the illustration are identical in their physiognomy, yet conceivably more provocative, or sexually explicit to a modern audience. A comparable representation to *Europe Supported by Africa and America* is Blake's *Flagellation of a Female Sambo Slave* (1773). Here, the body of an anguished woman is tied to the branch of a tree, nearly naked save for the ripped loin cloth that hangs about her waist. Rather than the expended human figure that one might expect to see, is a more healthy being, seductively posed, one knee raised while her other foot touches the ground. Blake's methodology of Othering Black, Indian, and perhaps all women is conveyed through the curvaceous tortured body in her perplexing stance. [36]

Epitomized in this allegoric representation is the lascivious nature imparted to women of color that began at the moment of contact, alleged by explorers through unusual tales of lustful strong Caribbean, or Amazonian Queens. Blake chose to concentrate the gaze of nude Africa and America toward the viewer in contrast to Europe whose eyes are cast downward while a long tendril of her hair covers her pubis. The lure of exotic eroticism is reinforced

through their mythical sexuality that relates back to tales relayed by Vespucci. But the self-sustaining, powerful American Queen was more apt to be loathed and conquered; whereas, the innocent Indian Princess, determinately of a weaker ilk, needed assistance from men, presumably white, to survive. Ironically, she would become their savior, as the English found that aid from the Natives was crucial to prosper in unfamiliar territories. Therefore, even with disdain toward Indians, Euro-Americans turn to the story of Pocahontas to insure successful colonization.

**Princess Sanctions Miscegenation**

In the beginning of the nineteenth century images of the Indian Princess were not prevalent, possibly due to the failure of assimilation as envisioned by President Thomas Jefferson. European settlers did not understand the diversity that existed among Native populations and their early confrontations had been difficult at best, while at times, devastating. Thus, the "Indian problem" was dealt with through absolute force. This century would prove to be one of the most historically turbulent for Native North American peoples.[37] Many eastern tribes had established treaties with the English and adopted similar lifestyles establishing plantations they also took ownership of black slaves (although marriage to Africans was forbidden by law and intermarriage caused loss of tribal standing).[38] Jefferson had expected the assimilation of the Indians, but President Andrew Jackson supported separation and in 1830 Congress passed the *Indian Removal Act* that Jackson signed into law. Relations between the colonists and the Natives was unsettled in the years that followed, as thousands of Native people

died on the "Trail of Tears" march (removal of Choctaw 1831) in and internal war with the Seminoles began in 1835. Therefore, the subject of miscegenation was an issue that brought a general uneasiness to the Anglo-American populous. [39]

Trappers and traders had bargained for native brides since their entrance onto American soil. Because of their skills and knowledge of the American wilderness Indian wives offered what European wives could not and they became vital economic partners. Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson assert that there is even sufficient evidence to prove that Indian women were not opposed to seeking their own white husbands.[40] Although the government had a general aversion to marriage to the uncivilized people of the Americas, they were determinately in need of a methodology to regain control in relations with the Indians. The distressing events that had occurred between colonizers and Natives in the early part of the ninetieth century overshadowed Westward expansion and indigenous women were again turned to as instruments of persuasion. Marriage became a metaphor for Anglo/Indian assimilation, while more common unions of white men to Indian women were now romanticized in American literature, plays, and artworks. Still, in European society marriage was an act of control, a transference of property in which males held priority.

However, adoption of dress, marriage, and Christianity did not make the Indian Princess "white." She was idealized through a process of sublimation that, theorist Julia Kristeva writes, objectifies "borderline subjects" and shows no consideration for that who is Othered. Matrimony in miscegenation

symbolically justified Eurocentric desires of power, bound in lust and greed, to make it morally and socially acceptable.[41] In his book *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative*, Robert Tilton suggests that the story of Pocahontas and her marriage to John Rolfe became a model for assimilation, used as proof that the merging of Anglo and Indian cultures was possible and had been successful.[42] Through the life story of Pocahontas the legend of the Indian Princess was revived and throughout the nineteenth century her mythology would grow to assist efforts of expansion in North America.

**The Baptism of Pocahontas**

In her book *Images of Rape*, art historian Diane Wolfthal asserts that images possess the power to influence perceptions that in turn "affect actual events."[43] A single painting, the *Baptism of Pocahontas* (Figure 7), was influential in American history in that it not only helped to establish the Indian Princess, but also significantly changed perceptions of Indian women. The work, created by Virginia artist John Gadsby Chapman, was completed in 1840 and measures twelve by eighteen feet. Located in the rotunda of the United States capitol it is one among eight scenes depicting historic events from the American Revolution and colonization.

Chapman's choice in portraying the baptismal scene was surprising due to the fact that the incident surrounding her rescue of John Smith had risen to such popularity in the early part of the nineteenth century. By this time not only artists, but also authors, and playwrights, had reconstituted Smith's account from his

*Generall Historie* into dramatic translations; not to mention that the relief *Preservation of Captain Smith by Pocahontas* (1825) already hung over the west door of the rotunda (Figure 8).[44] Many other versions of the scene were in existence that portrayed Pocahontas bare breasted, wrapped in furs or fringed buckskin, throwing her body between the English Captain and the weapon of his demise. During this time Chapman had also created his own version of the incident (*Pocahontas saving the Life of Captain John Smith, 1836-1840*) along with number of paintings that had to do with the founding of Jamestown, including *The Landing in Jamestown, The first Ship, The Warning of Pocahontas,* and *The Crowning of Powhatan*.[45] Perhaps familiarity with the stories that surrounded the settlement of Jamestown had inspired Chapman, yet he chose to portray a narrative that no one before him had touched upon. More importantly the painting's implications and pretentious setting would allow for the spread of idealistic views of Euro-American and Indian relations.

In the *Baptism of Pocahontas* Chapman depicted the daughter of Native American Chief Powhatan as a beautiful young brown skinned woman awaiting the Rites of Christianity and her subsequent marriage to the Englishman John Rolfe. According to Tilton, Chapman had many models available on which to base Pocahontas's likeness, including engravings based on the Simon de Passe image and popular renderings of provocative Indian maidens, but none suited the ideal image of what this specific Indian Princess should look like.[46] Chapman's quest was to create a figure that was attractive, but not sexual, in order to suit the

religious ceremony he was depicting. He accomplished a satisfactory but ambiguous profile by situating the primary figure, head bowed and turned away from her audience and those in the painting who are identifiably Native, to emphasize the rejection of her heritage.[47]

Iconically Chapman's Pocahontas resembled depictions of Indian women rendered in the nineteenth century, but her dress is, as it was in the de Passe representation, stylistically European. The shimmering white satin gown she wears falls in heavy folds about her bent knees and appears to anchor her to the ground. In her hands she holds a burgundy sash, an apparent allusion to her "royalness" by European standards. Pocahontas and the Reverend Alexander Whitaker are bathed in light to emphasize the piety of the event. Poised to insure that the proceedings will consummate are Sir Thomas Dale and John Rolfe. The Indians present are in states of agitation and despair; only Pocahontas's sister (identified by Chapman) seated holding a baby, watches with great interest.

Tilton also points out that Pocahontas is rendered lighter than her relatives.[48] Chapman suggests that through Christianization she becomes less Indian, however she is not fully absorbed into Anglo society. Karen Robertson argues that Pocahontas was in reality betrayed, kidnapped, and conceivably, through her forced marriage to Rolfe raped. She was lured aboard a British ship and held captive for more than a year, at which time she was instructed in Christianity and then baptized. Robertson argues that writings of John Rolfe to

Ralph Homer, secretary to the colonies, functioned to help establish her fabled role as an erotic Indian woman desirous of the white man's sexual advances.[49]

The painting, as it is situated in the Capitol's Rotunda, exists to document an occurrence in American history. Most who view it see it as a factual account, however, it is a fabricated composition put together from fractional recollections of English men by a male artist some two hundred years after the event. Pocahontas's compliance with the colonizers made her a "good Indian." Through the imaginative ideologies of men and her implied sexual availability she became a "good Indian woman." Pocahontas's marriage to an Englishman, Tilton contends, allowed her mythological assimilation. Chapman presents an idealistic view of absorption where Pocahontas has "been granted a kind of perpetual survival," because of her complete conversion into Anglo society. [50] The formulated promotion also eased Anglo-American guilt about the destruction of Indians as a race.[51] The popularity of the *Baptism of Pocahontas* has risen and declined throughout decades, but it stands as a constant reminder of the legend of the first Indian Princess who surrendered everything for the progress of colonization.

**The Trappers Bride**

In the 1840's American artworks of Natives increased as they were romanticized into the ideal of a vanishing race. In this decade paintings of Pocahontas and other Indian maidens became widely popular, while the subject of miscegenation remained as a constant dilemma in the minds of government and

the Country's elite. In 1845 Alfred Jacob Miller, a colleague of John Gadsby Chapman's, produced *The Trapper's Bride* (Figure 9), a sentimental depiction of a swarthy European trapper bargaining for a Native bride. Art historian Lisa Strong contends that Miller chose to create the image (there are a total of five paintings) in response to the popularity of the topic in this period. Settlers pouring into the colonies had discovered westward expansion a lucrative prospect and they confronted their anxiety about Indians through representations of their assimilation or in the last days of their demise.[52]

*The Trapper's Bride* is worth mentioning in relation to the Indian Princess because the image is again a fabrication and a metaphor which makes use of the female Native body. Miller creates the peaceful transition of a young Native woman, again in the white symbol of Western purity, who is traded as property. Strong suggests that Miller's image is consistent with "Old Master" works, including, Raphael's *Marriage of the Virgin* (1504) and Peter Paul Rubens' *The Judgment of Paris* (1639). But Miller had claimed to have attended one of these ceremonies of interracial exchange, common among Rocky Mountain and Canadian fur traders. In his writings he describes that it was customary for the bride to be bathed and presented to her husband in white buckskin.[53] Thus, details included in the painting were representative of factual Plains traditions – but only to a certain extent.

Strong, along with other scholars, point out that the piece is of a "sexually charged nature."[54] In European paintings, such that of Rubens, women were

eroticized to emphasize their ability to procreate; Diane Wolfthal argues that these marital narratives are sanitized from the "violent and sexual aspects of the theme." They are essentially scenes of rape that "focus on the perspective of the rapist and the male relatives of the victim" and the outcome suggests a "happy ending."[55] Furthermore, these paintings served to establish the political authority of its patrons "elucidate the marital doctrine" and finally for "erotic stimulation."[56] Therefore, Miller and his wealthy Boston patrons were interested in images that mythologized Native women. In goddess form, they were again dehumanized. Moreover, *The Trapper's Bride*, like Chapman's painting of the Baptism, promoted a more peaceful solution to the relationship of indigenous peoples and Europeans.

Still, no consideration was shown for the women whose bodies were used as instruments to spread propaganda and insure success in colonization. Miller's painting also demonstrated that some Native men played a part in exploitation of female family members. Near the end of the nineteenth century popularity of the Indian Princess expanded through diverse venues, such as Wild West shows, dime store novels, and vaudeville performances on stages from San Francisco to New York City. Her image survived a multitude of manipulations from the Caribbean Queen to the devoted yet sexual Princess, whose development is deeply rooted in lore surrounding the Indian woman Pocahontas. Although she evolved into a mechanism of identity and control that becomes even more entrenched in American society as her ideology is embraced by Indians as well as whites, but

she is endeared to the public through her enactment. The next chapter will discuss how performance humanizes the image, which in turn makes it all the more powerful, and examine how the Indian Princess persists in contemporary society.

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[1] In contact representations throughout the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth Native Americans are often drawn larger than their white counterparts. I have found nothing to indicate that indigenous people were taller than Europeans, or why the stylistic choice was employed in the representations.

[2] Hugh Honour, *The New Golden Land: European Images of America from the Discoveries to the Present Time* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1975), 10.

[3] Wild people grew hair over the entirety of their body, lived and raised families, naked and unencumbered by societal constraints. Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 12.

[4] John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 281. Boswell asserts that intolerance of homosexuality escalated in the later middle ages. Furthermore, Vespucci's views of Native American peoples show similarities to attributes given to Muslims as cited by Boswell on the writing of Jacques de Vitry: "they can resist no vices but are miserably enslaved and ruled by carnal passions."

[5] Michael J. Schreffler, "Vespucci Rediscovers America: The Pictorial Rhetoric of Cannibalism in Early Modern Culture," *Art History* 28, no. 3 (Summer 2005), 295.

[6] Staden was captured by Tupinamba warriors in 1552, narrowly escaping his own execution. He recorded a book on the now extinct tribe in his writing *Hans Staden: The True History of his Captivity* in 1552 where he also published his drawings. See *Hans Staden: The True History of his Captivity,* translated and edited by Malcolm Letts (London, G. Routledge & Sons, ltd. 1928). See also Hugh Honour, *The New Golden Land*, 76-77.

[7] In instances where Native females coupled with European males, the women were looked to as the villainous instigators. Vespucci writes: "When they had the opportunity of copulating with Christians, urged by excessive lust, they prostituted and defiled themselves." *Mundus Novus Albericus Vespucius Laurentio Petri de Medicis salutem plurimam dicit* appears as *Vespucci Reprints, Texts and Studies*, vol. 5 trans. George T. Northup (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1915), 184-86.

[8] L.A. Vigneras. *The Journal of Christopher Columbus* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1960), 196.

[9] Honour, *The New Golden Land*, 55-61.

[10] Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," in *Native American Voices: A Reader*, 2nd edition, eds. Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot (Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2001), 205.

[11] Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Otherwise Called America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 33.

[12] Examples citing the image for its derogatory connotations are found in the following writings: Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex;" Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 29; Louis Montrose, "The Work of Gender in the Discourse of Discovery" 33, Special Issue: *The New World* (Winter 1991), 4.

[13] Allegories of the Four Continents became a favored subject of Flemish Artists in the last decades of the sixteenth century. See Honour, *This Golden Land*, 87.

[14] The feathered bonnet is style made popular in the eighteenth century and is addressed in detail in Chapter Three.

[15] Joseph Manca asserts that a sword, as seen in other images from the late Middle Ages, is a phallic symbol and here suggests Vespucci's virility. See Joseph Manca, "Sacred vs. Profane: Images of Sexual Vice in Renaissance Art," *Studies in Iconography*, 13 (1989-90), 152 and 173. See also Philip Deloria's assessment of the print in Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 29; Rebecca Blevins Faery. *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race and Sex in the Shaping of an American Nation.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 87-101.

[16] White was one of several early English colonists who in 1585 sailed with Richard Grenville in 1585 to North Carolina. In his time spent at Roanoke Island, he made numerous drawings and watercolors depicting landscape and native peoples. J.C.H. King, *First Peoples First Contacts: Native Peoples of North America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 31.

[17] White's depictions were more ethnographically correct than any allegoric representations; however, Le Monye's legitimacy is questioned by anthropologist Christian Feest, who argues that Le Monye's drawings are copied from Theodore de Bry. See Hugh Hounor, *This Golden Land*: *European Images of America from the Discoveries to the Present time* (New York: Pantheon Books 1975), 68-71. See also Stefan Lorant, ed. , *The New World; the First Pictures of America, made*

*by John White and Jacques Le Moyne and Engraved by Theodore de Bry, with Contemporary Narratives of the French Settlements in Florida, 1562-1565, and the English Colonies in Virginia, 1585-1590* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1965), 202.

[18] J.C.H. King, *First Peoples First Contacts* (London: British Museum Press, 1999), 232-234.

[19] Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 38.

[20]In his detailed book on the development of the Pocahontas legend, Robert Tilton describes a sermon delivered by William Symonds admonishing any form of "unnatural mixing." See Robert Tilton, *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 13.

[21] The Pocahontas Archive, http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/pocahontas/images. Last accessed 2/27/2009.

[22] Karen Robertson, "The First Captive: The Kidnapping of Pocahontas," in *Women, Violence and English Renaissance Literature: Essays Honoring Paul Jorgensen*, eds. Linda Woodbridge and Sharon Beehler (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2003), 73.

[23] David Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown* (New York: Vintage, 2003), 66.

[24] Michael J. Puglisi, "Captain John Smith, Pocahontas and a Clash of Cultures: A Case for the Ethnohistorical Perspective," *The History Teacher* 25 no.1 (November, 1991), 98.

[25] Ibid., 99.

[26] Paula Gunn, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 34.

[27] Gunn's quote is from Robert Grummet. See *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 34.

[28] Christian F. Feest., "Pride and Prejudice: The Pocahontas Myth and the Pamunkey," in *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*, ed. James A Clifton (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 50.

[29]See *Indians and Europe: an Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays*, Christian F. Feest, ed. (Aachen: Rader Verlag, 1987). Especially note articles by Rudolf Conrad, "Mutual Fascination: Indians in Dresden and Lipzig,"475-490; Daniele

Fiorentino, "Those Red Brick Faces: European Press Reactions to the Indians of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show," 403-414.

[30] In his *Three Essays on Sexuality* Freud refers to scopophilia (the pleasure of looking) as one of the "component instincts of sexuality" that exists independently from the erogenous zones. He associates it with the objectification of other people, as it subjectified them to a "controlling and curious gaze." Sigmund Freud. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Translated and Newly Edited by James Strachey. (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1962), 3.

[31] Laura Mulvey explains that anxiety that is formed from difference is "counterbalanced by devaluation, punishment, of saving the guilty object." See Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1989), 21. Emily Apter and William Pietz indicate that a fetish is not a predetermined entity but is rather a concept based in physical or conceptual appropriations. See Emily Apter and William Pietz, *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse* (London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 3.

[32] The Euro-American doctrine of Manifest Destiny used to justify expansion was popular during the first two decades before the American Civil War and coincided with growing racism towards Native populations demonstrated in art from the period such as *Osage Scalp Dance* from 1845. See Matthew Baigell, "Territory, Race, Religion: Images of Manifest Destiny," *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* 4, nos. 3/4 (Summer-Autumn 1990), 3.

[33] See Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures*, 21.

[34] Anne K. Mellor, "Sex, Violence, and Slavery: Blake and Wollstonecraft," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 58, nos. 3/4 (1995), 358.

[35] See Murdo J. MacLeod, *The Cambridge History of Native Peoples of the Americas: Volume II Mesoamerica Part I* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 184. See also Josephine Paterek, *Encyclopedia of Native American Costume* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), 348.

[36] Blake was greatly influenced by Captain John Stedman's writing *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negros of Surinam in Guiana.* Stedman viewed *Blake's Europe Supported by Africa and America* as an Emblem of friendship towards the "very Lowest of our dependants." Presumably this included Indians as well as Black inhabitants. See Anne K. Mellor, "Sex, Violence, and Slavery: Blake and Wollstonecraft," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 58, nos. 3/4 (1995), 345-370. See also Nicholas M. Williams, *Ideology and Utopia in the Poetry of William Blake*, (New York: Cambridge University

Press, 1998), 128.  See also John Gabriel Stedman, *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negros of Surinam in Guiana*: *Transcribed for the First time from the Original 1790 Manuscript* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 618.

[37] There were over 1000 diverse groups of Natives at the time of contact. Presently, are currently 511 tribes of American Indians now federally recognized. There are 200 or so unrecognized.  See Devon A. Mihesuah, *American Indians: Stereotypes & Realities* (Atlanta:  Clarity Press, Inc., 1996), 20.  The term white man as referenced here is in agreement with Elsie Marubbio's definition in *Killing the Indian Maiden.*  As stated:  "the term 'Whiteness' is a symbolic construct, an ideal image of purity, ultimate civilization, and culture that is held as a utopian model of excellence and desire." See Elsie Marubbio, *Killing the Indian Maiden*: *Images of Native American Women in Film* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2006), 242.

[38] Feest, "Pride and Prejudice,"  50.

[39] William L. Anderson, *Cherokee Removal, Before and After* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 10.

[40] Susan H. Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, *The Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 56.

[41]In her discussion of abjection Kristeva states that Othering is "openly manifested through symbolic practices, without the same token being integrated into the judging consciousness of those particular subjects."  See Julia Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 7.

[42] Robert Tilton, *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 12.

[43] Essentially these depictions of marriage are impositions that in turn are forms of rape. Termed "Heroic" by Wolfthal, the women depicted in these scenes have no say as to whom they will marry.  They are thought of as property to be traded, used for work, and to serve the sexual needs of their husbands.  See Diane Wolfthal, *Images of Rape: The "Heroic" Tradition and its Alternatives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 25.

[44] The *Preservation of Captain Smith by Pocahontas* will be further discussed in the second chapter.

[45] Most of the paintings by Chapman that involved the settlement of Jamestown were created in 1836, before his commission began.  Robert Tilton, *Pocahontas*:

*The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 105. See also Vivien Green Fryd, *Art and Empire: The Politics of Ethnicity in the United States Capitol, 1815 1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 47-51; Ann Uhry Abrams, *The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 117.

[46]Robert Tilton, *Pocahonta*s, 108.

[47]Ibid., 108.

[48]Ibid., 113.

[49] Karen Robertson, “The First Captive,” 73.

[50] Ibid., 137.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Lisa Strong, *Sentimental Journey: The Art of Alfred Jacob Miller* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 124.

[53] Ibid., 130.

[54] Ibid., 131.

[55] Diane Wolfthal, *Images of Rape*, 9.

[56] Ibid., 10.

Chapter 3

# IMAGERY PUT INTO PERFORMANCE

During the last three decades of the nineteenth century the Indian Princess became more universally known as a part of American history and a symbol of national identity. This chapter traces her steps from a literary sensation in 1800 into the celebrity status she achieved at the onset of the twentieth century. Moreover, analyzed here is how her conceptual development was meshed concurrently in imagery, legend, and performance.

In her book *The Archive and the Repertoire*, theorist Diane Taylor maintains that performance functions as an essential component in the transference of "social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity."[1] She explains that the act of remembrance exists in two components that are contingent upon each other. The first defined as "archive," is that which can be substantiated as a physical object and is resistant to change, items such as written documents, maps, and archeological remains, or appropriate to this thesis - paintings and sculpture.[2] The second mechanism is the "repertoire," or act, "usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge"[3]

In the case of the Indian Princess, archive and repertoire work together, continuing back and forth to aid her influence. Her complexities are based in mythology that is sanctified through imagery and then enhanced through performance. This process is a continuous cycle - exemplified in the legends of Pocahontas. Possibly no other life in the history of America has been more

formulated and reinvented. While iconic interpretations of her range in variation from saint to whore, current scholars have suggested that this one Indian woman, through the rescue of Smith and then marriage to John Rolfe, almost certainly saved the lives of all English colonists in the James Town settlement. In order to better understand the Native Princess of this discussion and her fixture in society we must turn again to Pocahontas, whose mythology, through the device of performance, was used to propagate nation-building at a time when Anglo-American's unity verged precariously near dissolution.

**Sex, Lies, and Dramas**

By the year 1800, any circumstances involving the Indian woman Matoaka were nearly two centuries old. Stories that circulated functioned as disavowal of the violence against indigenous people, affirmed aliened sexual desire, and promoted the acculturation of native peoples. Images from the first three decades of the century portrayed Pocahontas as a scantily clad buxom figure whose body was generally draped over Captain John Smith. One example, the *Preservation of Captain Smith by Pocahontas* (1825), located above the west portal of the capitol's rotunda depicts the precipitous violent moment of Smith's near demise. Creator of the relief, Italian sculptor Antonio Capellano, undoubtedly had little knowledge of American indigene as the Native bodies were rendered after Greek and Roman warriors.[4] Small, bare breasted and pleading Pocahontas is dwarfed by her male relatives, as is the Englishman Smith. The scene represents a struggle for power and an act of domination in which the

Natives had the upper hand and the moment in which Pocahontas changed the course of history.

Psychoanalytic theorist Julia Kristeva suggests that violence and sex have similar relations in their symbolism that blur the boundaries of possession and control.[5] Demonstrating aggression through indigenous bodies objectified and affirmed hostility toward them. Women were another matter, because they could be loathed and desired simultaneously. This "abjection," as described by Kristeva, is an intuitive opposition that must be compensated in some manner.[6] The Indian Princess was the formulated amalgamation of want and virtue that proved to override the colonist's social contempt of Indians and miscegenation. Pocahontas's role in colonization was one of great benefit to the English. With compassion she saved the settlers, and emphasis on her adoption of white society and religion would situate her as an agent to eradicate colonial anxieties of domination.[7] Furthermore, because the events of her history were so distant they could be manipulated to accommodate changing social and political climates for decades to come.

The romance of Pocahontas and Smith was attractive because there was no way of confirming legitimacy of the relationship and as a fantastical love story it subdued horrors and humiliations suffered by the first settlers. Writer John Davis published a series of novels beginning in 1800 that assisted progression of this romantic narrative to the public. In *The Farmer of New Jersey,* Davis introduces a farmer (ex-soldier and patriot) who retells a romanticized version of Smith's

rescue then expands upon the antidote in 1908 in the full length novel *The First Settlers of Virginia*.[8] Literature complemented already accepted imagery, but in order to promote national identity patriarchal colonists needed to authenticate the Indian Princess. Her live enactment proved a more viable method to establish her value as an iconic figure.

Pocahontas became a well known heroine in early dramas of the nineteenth century that elevated nationalism along with chauvinistic and racist ideas. These plays were significant not only in their promotion of sovereignty, but in their positioning of Euro-American and indigenous relations. They endorsed ideals of peaceful colonization where white males dominated. Scholar Eliana Chrestani asserts that because theatre was a public form it held a "particular power" in the struggle for a national identity.[9] Some stage narratives surrounding the first Indian Princess would fluctuate between the salvation and the romance of Smith, while others drew attention to her Christian conversion and marriage to Rolfe.

Robert Tilton explains that dramas pertaining to the story had surfaced in Europe in the later part of the eighteenth century, but they did not reach appeal to the American general public until James Nelson Baker's *The Indian Princess* was produced in 1808.[10] Stylistically based in Shakespearian formula, this play contained dialog laced with comedic sexual innuendos that revived past notions of lascivious native women. While Baker makes the rescue scene his central plot, he portrays a deep love between Pocahontas and Rolfe and a more stoic relationship

between her and Smith. Pocahontas, a chaste innocent, reverently loyal to her husband and England was all the more alluring to Anglo-American society. The ambiguity of her life story permitted her to be viewed as an "ethical entity" rather than a flesh and blood woman. [11] Thus, in the arena of performance, the Indian Princess was transformed again into allegory a symbol of a naive land that longed to be cultivated by European hands.

In the first and second decades of the nineteenth century dramas surrounding the Princess diminished, but plays about Natives would become a leading genre in American theatre.[12] In essence they served as commodity with the purpose of defining a national identity for the colonists by infiltrating into society a romanticized ideal of American Indian people. In 1830 (the year Jackson signed "The Indian Removal Act" into law), the Princess resumed her prominence on the stage through George Washington Custis's, *Pocahontas, or the Settlers of Virginia*, to a public that held grave uncertainties about the indigenous population. In this version Pocahontas converts to Christianity before her encounter with Smith and Rolfe. Her immediate infatuation with the white males is confirmed in her opening lines: "I know not what it is, but my attachments became fixed among the strangers the first moment I beheld them."[13] Her character was eroticized through Smith's telling of a seductive dance performed for him by Algonquin women who were dressed only in feathers and paint (in this play they dance fully clothed due to what playwright claimed was tribal custom).

[14] She is Othered through ethnicity and gender in the lines recited by Rolfe: "How full of grace and courtesy this princess-savage, is I should say" [15]

Custis's formula was well received by the American public as it substantiated amalgamation of the Indians into white society, their claim to the land, and acceptance of the Indian Princess. Even in their escape from monarchal rule European colonists still possessed an admiration for royalty to the point of idolizing them as divine beings. Blurring the lines between celestial and governing bodies was part of colonizing methodologies for all European nations. For example, the predominately Catholic Spanish created a hegemonic mechanism of the woman Mary, who in Christian cosmology was the Virgin Mother of Christ. Based in the same ideologies, the English found device through the Indian woman Pocahontas. Christened Rebecca, her conversion would, hundreds of years after her death, offer her sainthood. [16] Her story was exemplary-a savage who turned away from her own people to except European religion and lifestyle. She becomes the archetype of mother through the little known birth of her child, a product of assimilation and blood mixing that would later define other prejudices.[17]

However, in the American theater a woman would come to portray a different story of Pocahontas. The *Forest Princess,* or *Two Centuries Ago* (1844) by playwright Charlotte Barnes was produced just years after John Gadsby Chapman's painting was hung in the Capitol building. Undoubtedly Barnes was influenced by the Custis production in which her mother played the lead role,

however, her heroine, is in opposition to earlier portrayals. In her analysis of antebellum Pocahontas dramas Rebecca Jaroff asserts that this version presents a young Indian woman who is a "…non-white, non-male champion of equal justice, who boldly questions the right of the British to pursue racial and colonial domination."[18] It is also the only play of this genre to depict Pocahontas as a diplomat as well as wife and mother. Yet, Barnes narrative still holds bias towards race. Jaroff asserts that in Barnes the rescue of Smith is neither an act of love or bravery, but instead played out that "assimilation/banishment" of indigenous peoples was an inevitable fate.[19]

Like Chapman's Baptismal painting, Barnes drama had religious underpinnings. In one scene the arrival of a savior, comparable to the coming of Christ, is foretold, but the playwright's redeemer is George Washington. Similar to saints before her, Pocahontas has a vision that tells of a newly formed country:

> Like the great river of far western wilds,
> Improvement's course, *unebbing*, shall flow on.
> From that beloved soil where I drew breath
> Shall noble chiefs arise. But one o'er all
> By heaven named to set a nation free,
> I hear the universal world declare,
> In shouts whose eco centuries prolong,
> "The Father of his Country!" O'er the path
> Of Ages, I behold Time leading Peace.
> By ties of love and language bound, I see
> Their arms extend across the narrowing seas
> The grasp of lasting friendship to exchange![20]

Under the frame of Christian eschatology Barnes imparts, against historical record, that there was a peaceful mixing of Indians and English at the time of the American Revolution.

In the 1840's when this drama was being performed on stages across the country, Anglo-American internal relations were critical and a civil war loomed in the America's near future. Colonizers actively sought support from the Indians while prejudices from both the North and the South would be redirected toward African people. By the 1850's, the Indian Princess became part of the war efforts as the royal blood of Pocahontas was claimed as part of the aristocratic pretentions of Virginian plantation owners and politicians.[21] At the outbreak of the Civil War legends of the Indian woman Matoaka were well ingrained in the collective social conscious of America, but in the antebellum period the Princess figure emerged in a more romanticized form that captivated the attention of audiences world-wide.[22]

**Assimilation to Genocide in the Wild West**

During the years that followed the War Between the States into Reconstruction the representation of Indians in general fared poorly. Fear and misconception generated an intense racist climate where indigenous Americans were categorically grouped with those of African origin (including freed slaves) and also immigrants who were now entering the Country in large numbers. Virginia, who earlier had esteemed Princess Pocahontas, lost interest in the ideology of assimilation along with the rest of the nation. However, conceptually the Indian Princess remained during this time of civil renovation and her popularity grew in the twentieth century. While her appearance would become

even more standardized and sexualized she would also be embraced for her emblematic prowess by the Native women she represented.

In the last thirty years of the nineteenth century changing attitudes of the general public towards Indians became evident in graphic representations advertising the now popular Wild West shows. Instead of depicting Native Americans as assimilated into European society, they were Othered through clothing that suggested a pan-Indian style, promoted their lack of civilization and reinforced their dangerous potential. But Indians were now thought of as a vanishing race on the verge of inevitable demise. Although visual and literary representations of the Indian Princess continued, she was removed from any royal refinement and acquired a persona that suited ideals of expansion.

Even Pocahontas, along with her Algonquin relatives became "westernized" in their appearance. Victor Nehling's, *Pocahontas and John Smith* (1870), is a later depiction of the rescue that placed the cast of familiar characters in the Plains style clothing that by this time was an identifier of "Indianness." In this painting eroticism is strongly suggested in both male and female bodies through the exposure of their well formed muscular chests and the snugness of their buckskin clothing. However, portrayals of Pocahontas, sensual and ethereal, became less frequent after William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody introduced a newly designed Indian Princess in his Wild West shows.

Cody was paramount in developing the stylistically romanticized image that is still recognized as American Indian today. The covers of "dime" novels

assisted in introducing warriors dressed in fringe buckskin and feathered headdresses and enactment embedded the ideal of the spectacular figure into societal mindset.[23] A woman called He-Nu-Kaw was one of the first princesses pictured on an advertisement for one of Buffalo Bill's Combination Shows. She appeared on posters, arrow pith flung over her shoulder, wearing a sparsely feathered headdress, laced moccasins, and a bead-worked fringed leather dress. The image, although striking, was also inaccurate. This style, contrived by the show's creator, was based on clothing once worn by males of the central Plains tribes. Originally, the rare full feathered headdress that reaches the ground would have been impossible for battle and was worn only for ceremony. Buckskin dresses were worn by Plains women, but there are no records indicating that they ever wore feathered head regalia under any circumstance.[24] Nevertheless, the dramatic style was well received by audiences around the world and survives in popular culture as the stereotypified dress of all indigenous Americans due greatly to Wild West performances.

Cody's Indian costumes were most likely derived from his experience as a Chief Scout for the United States Army during the Plains Wars (1851-1890). In *The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians,* Sherry Smith asserts that warrior Indians were far more interesting than Natives who farmed or fished and chose a less violent method of dealing with Anglo-American settlers.[25] The military respected fierce spirits and those who would fight for their homelands. Plains warriors affirmed soldiers' manhood, not to mention

profession, and were, as described by Smith, representative of the last link to "…a life of liberty and independence."[26] Because of his familiarity and some say his friendships with Indians, Cody keenly established what would stylistically appeal to his audiences. Undoubtedly, he also recognized the value of women as evocative enticement and oversaw what costumes they wore to perform. The type of regalia he created provided a dramatic look for the Princess and referenced images of first contact where she was known as Queen.

Ancestry of the woman who performed as He-Nu-Kaw was never confirmed. She may have been Native, European, or Half-blood and perhaps possessed no royal blood lines. Imagery of Natives in the last decades of the nineteenth century showed them darker than their white counterparts, but their physiognomy was still identical to figures found in European art.[27] At this time Americans were engaged in a romantic fascination with the West and Buffalo Bill Cody was recruiting Indians to play "themselves."[28] Yet, it was the Italian ballerina Giuseppina Morlacchi who would be the most remembered of all who performed the Indian Princess in the Wild West Shows.[29]

Wearing a feathered headdress and layers of beads, Morlacchi played the role of Pale Dove (the cast also included a Dove Eye and a Hazel Eye) where she demonstrated not only her acting abilities, but also her skills as a dancer. Her repertoire included formal ballet as well as the provocative Can-Can.[30] Newspapers of the time described her as an added attraction to the heroes of the piece namely Buffalo Bill and another "Indian hunter," Texas Jack.[31]

Costumed in what is now considered stereotypical, Morlacchi's own European appearance helped to transform ethnic perceptions of the Indian princess. Furthermore, she enacted the character Reyna Green describes as the "good Indian," one who leaves behind her own people to be with in the Wild West scenario murderous colonizers.[32]

Other women built their careers around falsification of their Indian Princessness. Such was the case of Lillian Francis Smith who was born in California and began working with Cody when she was only fifteen years old. Billed as a "Sioux Princess" most of her professional working life, she first performed as a sharp shooter under guise of "The California Girl." Her stage name "Princess Wenona" developed later in her career when she had performed in Oklahoma for another Wild West conglomeration known as the 101 Ranch.

In his detailed account of the 101, Michael Wallace confirms that that while Smith may have had some Native ancestry she was a self promoter who created unfounded stories about her heritage. One example was an article that appeared in a local newspaper in 1911. It was in conjunction with a show promotion and alleged that her parents had been emigrants on a train that was attacked by Sioux Indians; nearly all passengers had been massacred except her mother.[33] Kidnapped, she was forced to become one of several "squaws" of an unknown chief the article stated that Wenona was born some years later, ostensibly through consummation of this profane union.

Fabrications as such substantiated settler's fears of the Indians and justified violence towards Native people. Smith's self proclaimed Princess heritage may have been a manner of career advancement, yet, it also served as methodology to repress miscegenation. In opposition to myths such as that of Pocahontas where Indian women fell in love with the colonizer, stories of Native men forcing white women into marriage were equated with slavery and functioned to instill terror, anger, and distrust.

**The Darker Side of Performing the Princess**

A Northern Paiute woman named Sarah Winnemucca forged her own style of the Princess as a method to address Native American Civil Rights. According to anthropologist Joanna Cohan Scherer, Winnemucca was the daughter of a man of high standing in her tribe; however, their traditional governmental system did not adhere to a power structure that supported individuals as absolute rulers. Rather, family groups would follow the lead of a "headman" primarily during distinct events and then his authority was relinquished after the occurrence. Scherer asserts that Winnemucca was central to the campaign that placed her father in the position of head chief and ultimately delegated his as tribal spokesperson. [34]

Articulate in the English language Winnemucca acted as her father's interpreter while her commanding stage presence captured the attention of the media. Compared to the famed Pocahontas, she realized the attention her position could command and took to claiming the identity of a "Chief's daughter." In

1879, after the Northern Paiutes had been exiled to the Yakima Reservation, Winnemucca stepped onto the lecture circuit donned in the costume of an Indian princess. Noted by in San Francisco *Chronicle*:

> San Francisco was treated to the most novel entertainment it has ever known, last evening, in the shape of the address by Sarah, daughter of Chief Winnemucca, delivered in Platt's Hall. The Princess wore a short buckskin dress, the skirt bordered with fringe and embroidery, short sleeves, disclosing beautifully rounded brown arms, and scarlet leggings with trimmings of fringe. On her head she wore a proud headdress of eagle feathers, set in a scarlet crown, contrasting well with her flowing black locks.[35]

Playing to the sensibilities of what white Victorian society recognized as "Indian," under the pretext of prescribed roles of colonization, Winnemucca found a manner in which to voice dire concerns of the Northern Paiute people. Nevertheless, falsification of her identity, along with her activism put off government politicians that dealt with Indian affairs and in 1884 she was denied employment in government schools and employment as an interpreter, a position she had held repeatedly in the 1870's.[36]

Winnemucca's use of the Indian Princess image was limited in its success. Enactment of the image enabled her recognition as a performer and her impassioned appeals informed and assisted many Native peoples. But as a Princess, embellished in buckskin and feathers, her creditability was diminished. Near the end of her career, her reputation was attacked by government officials and she found herself unable to serve the very people whose lives she strove to aid.[37] Finally, in 1891, after a trade school she had established was closed, she died diminished and discontented.[38]

At the height of Sarah Winnemucca's popularity there were still other women of Native North American decent who capitalized on characterizations of the Indian princess in order to promote their own careers. Canadian, E. Pauline Johnson, acquired the role with intent to dispel mythologies of race and gender, yet her act, like Winnemucca's, was fraught with mixed reaction from both the public she addressed and from her own psyche. Born in 1861 of a Mohawk father and English mother, Johnson made use of her ethnic and female distinctiveness to position herself as an artist and an activist in Canadian society. She is most recognized for writing, particularly the poem *The Song My Paddle Sings*. Known to perform this verse in a costume of bead-worked and fringed buckskin she presented herself under the pseudonym "Tekahionwake," a Mohawk name she adopted from her great-grandfather Jacob Johnson.[39]

Recognized by the Canadian press as the "Mohawk Princess," Johnson created an identity veiled in illusion suited to the popular fantasies of what Victorian society imagined Native women to be. [40] Nonetheless, she was successful in her endeavors to promote the rights of First Nations people and feminist equality. Canadian theorist Veronica Strong- Boag explains that Johnson created intimacy with her audiences by fluctuating her Indian and white personas within the periphery of her own mixed heritage, while emphasizing her femininity through melodrama and comedy.[41]

However, fluidity of her ancestry failed to provide an authentic identity. In her culturally hybrid act she utilized her claim to her Nativeness, but due to her

light skin she was thought of as a white female performing the characterization of an Indian. Moreover, Strong- Boag points out that there is little known about the reception of Johnson's views on prejudice, women, and nationalism by First Nation Canadians. Although she remained an avid defender of the rights of varied marginal voices, her struggles with racism and sexism left her with "unresolved contradictions" in "human relations." Her life's pursuit turned into a continuing struggle to find sense of self. [42]

**Molly Nelson as Princess Spotted Elk**

In a social climate that was often hostile toward women as well as Natives the Indian Princess served as a valuable ruse for indigenous women like Sarah Winnemucca and Pauline Johnson in their political endeavors, but would also prove a valuable device to promote their artistic desires. Penobscot Molly Nelson forged her own career in entertainment at this time. At the opening of the first decades of the twentieth century, she, along with other women performers of color such as Josephine Baker, created enactments that called out the racism bound to their heritage and utilized established stereotypes in order to enter into an occupation of their choosing in the United States and Europe.[43]

Nelson's ethnic performances began when she was a child living on the Penobscot reservation of Indian Island, Maine where she discovered that mimicry, through the form of dance, was popular entertainment for visiting tourists who would toss coins to her and her cousins in payment for their impromptu imitations. Determined to become a writer in order to record the oral traditions of

her ancestors, Nelson first attended university at Penn State. After two years, (due to lack of funds) she took a job as an Indian entertainer in the same 101 Ranch Wild West show in which Princess Wenona had achieved limited fame. Here, she acquired the stage name of Princess, or Molly Spotted Elk. This was a name she would hold throughout her professional career that ranged from enactments of traditional creation of Indian crafts to stage and movie characterizations, and vaudevillian entertainment. For each situation she drew not only upon her ethnicity, but gender and sexuality, as examined by Bunny McBride in her biography of the performer.[44] Dance remained her first and favored artistic mode of expression, for it connected her to her family customs and brought her modest celebratory status.

It was a woman, Texas Guinan, owner of several sophisticated night clubs in New York City, who assisted Nelson in perfecting her act. As stated by McBride, it was "'Tex' a former rodeo, vaudeville, and western film queen who soon featured Nelson in a head to toe eagle feather headdress – and little else."[45] Molly wrote in her diary of her frustration with the costume selection: "My costume made me embarrassed. Looked like a loin cloth affair of satin and beads instead of leather and fringe. Not natural for my Indian dance…"[46] Furthermore, she felt the scant attire diminished her as a serious dancer: "Something new once in a while…but mostly nude parades. I am an injun in the flesh parade. Feel terrible about being bare and walking around, but I must work…" [47]

In "Performing the Native Woman: Primitivism and Mimicry in Early Twentieth-Century Visual Culture," Ruth Phillips asserts that although Molly Nelson wore the contrived identifiers of Indianness, she negotiated her opportunity to perform as an artist.[48] Her complex erotic movements that referenced traditional dances triggered her popularity in New York clubs that catered to wealthy clientele and included a variety of show business people. Her notoriety in the City brought about her casting as the female lead in the 1929 movie *The Silent Enemy*. Not long after, she was invited to travel to Paris to perform with the Indian band and there she remained into World War II.

While in Paris Nelson was freed from much of the racism she had contended with in America and she was able to perfect a personal style of modern dance at the same time she completed two manuscripts on Penobscot traditions. But World War II took a heavy toll on Molly. Advance of Hitler's army intercepted publication of her writings and in her struggle to return to the States her mental health was compromised. She returned to America a broken woman and died on Indian Island in 1977, before realizing the impact she had made for all Native Americans.[49]

**Playing Princess**

While women like Pauline Johnson and Molly Nelson were making advancements in women's rights, many Americans still romanticized Indians as a symbol of their country's past. Antimodernist thinkers looked to the traditions of Native peoples not only as a claim to national identity, but also as part of a

formula that maintained colonial values. In part, this included maintaining women's positions as caregivers of family and home. In childhood education the Indian Princess would assist to perpetuate patriarchal ideals of power structures.

Luther and Charlotte Gulick established the institution Camp Fire Girls in 1910 with a mission to promote in the minds of girls the ideal of womanhood. As social reformers and educators the Gulicks believed it was their obligation to inform and conform children into what they believed were proper mature women. They promoted an organization that was to celebrate the distinct differences between the sexes and define what should be designated as "women's work." In 1911 Luther Gulick suggested in a speech at the Horace Mann Teachers College that "human individuality" was based on the work one performed, none of which he stressed was based upon gender. Yet, he also emphasized that there were "womanly" and "masculine" pursuits.[50] Furthermore, at a speech given in 1912 Gulick rationalized that the work naturally designated to women was being "readjusted" to disrupt their innate abilities. In regard to "women's work" he surmised that "…if the work is badly done the reason she has let go her age-long task, she has not yet followed it out of the home as she should."[51]

Charlotte Gulick was also a proponent of celebrating male/female binary differences, believing that American society depended on the perpetuation of individual roles. Furthermore, the Gulicks determined that continuance of the structure depended on when and how children received information. Adolescence was a time of rebirth and young minds could be shaped within the form what

theorist Philip Deloria has described as "playing Indian." Deloria asserts that through this seemingly simple enactment children unlocked meanings of "Indianness" to "…undergird a new notion of mimesis."[52]

If boys played the roles of chiefs and warriors then girls should enact the role of the Indian Princess as a symbol of the ideal woman, one who was considered closer to nature, accustomed to the duties expected of her gender and foremost, respectful of her position as mother and wife. Through the example of Charlotte Gulick, who dressed the part of "Hiitenii," Camp Fire girls procured pseudo Indian names, replicated costumes of fringed hide, and wore beaded headbands. [53] In mimicry they beat on drums while they chanted. Their ability to earn specific badges of honor revolved around their knowledge of Nativeness. [54] These practices utilized by the Camp Fire groups, Deloria asserts, insured ambiguity of the stereotype, while imitation through repetition reinforced the Indian Princess conceptually in order to ingrain the image into society's collective conscious.[55]

**The Good, the Bad, and the Savior: The Indian Princess in Movies**

By the twentieth century the Indian Princess was an established part of American history. Her image had been forever transformed in the romantic era into a virtuous and erotic hybrid that not until last decades has been questioned for its stereotypical relevance. She continued to evolve with each decade. She was pictured as a Gibson girl in the twenties, an emblem of liberty during two world

wars, and a glittering show girl in the Ziegfeld follies - but the movies made her into a star.

In *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of American Women in Film*, Elsie Marrubio outlines how the film industry distinctly made use of female indigene to again promote assimilation and define Indian women as stereotypes. Marrubio distinguishes the "Celluloid Princess" that developed in the silent film era as a creature of innocence and vulnerability that grew out of the Pocahontas narratives made popular a century earlier.[56] In movies such as *The Kentuckian* (1908), *The Indian Squaw's Sacrifice* (1910), and *Iola's Promise* (1912), she is the "helper figure" whose purpose is to assist the white hero, by sacrificing first her identity and then her life. Serving as a bridge between white men and Indians, the character, like Pocahontas, intercepts anticipated violence that was used to entice and excite audiences; however, her own life's existence was of little consequence to the plot of these films. Her purpose, as was established centuries before, was to satisfy the desires of the male colonizer. Thus, at the height of her fame the Princess continues to perpetuate ideals of manifest destiny, racism, and sexism embedded into the formation of America at as a nation.

Empathy towards the Princess in movies begins with her introduction as a mistreated child. Films such as *The Broken Doll* (1912), *Birth of a Nation* (1915), and *Broken Blossoms* (1919) all involved poor treatment of young Indian women by both whites and their own people.[57] These films depicted preadolescents who were abused throughout the narrative and therefore wished to assimilate into

white society, but ultimately died a tragic death. [58] Fears of miscegenation were reinforced with death as the solution. Promoted throughout were unsettling notions that Natives were childlike. Incapable of caring for themselves they were likened to animal on the verge of extinction. Cinema provided an avenue in which the Indian Princess was utilized to define gendered roles of power, while concurrently bringing to light the problematic issues of racism, sexism, and gender biases that would not be nationally acknowledged for at least another fifty years.

Nearer to the middle of the twentieth century an ignoble binary was introduced through a character know as the "Squaw." Although present in past decades she had never shared the popularity of the noble Princess. She is defined by Rayna Green as a "mere economic and sexual convenience" to the men she associates with. This creature will succumb to the vices of "drunkenness, stupidity, thievery, venality of every kind"–and she lived in a shack on the edge of town rather than in a woodland paradise. The males who shared her bed–the 'squaw men' or 'bucks' if they were Indian–shared her shame."[59] She became a prevalent entity in Westerns made in the 1950's. More often this role was given to women of color, while, as in dramas of the past century, the Princess was played by women of European decent. Part comical, the Squaw was as wild as the land from which she came and at times more masculine than feminine. Furthermore, she possessed, due to her heritage, the lascivious nature dictated by racist attitudes and was thought to be the immoral opposite of the Princess.

However, both were portrayed as sexual beings willing to surrender to white society and renounce their Indianness.

Still, there are films from the silent era and beyond that focused on traditional lifestyles of Native peoples and in these films the Indian Princess is a heroine. Edward Curtis's *Land of the Headhunters* (1914) and John Maple's *Before the White Man Cattle* (1920) featured American Indians and First Nations people in storylines that attempted to recreate indigenous lifestyles as they were before European contact. *The Silent Enemy* (1930), which starred Molly Nelson as the female lead, was a more culturally sensitive film of the period that recreated the lifestyle of the Ojibwa and their struggle against hunger throughout a brutal North American winter. The film, based on the written experiences of seventeenth century Jesuit missionaries, boasted authenticity due to its historical detail and all Native cast. Nevertheless, producers were mistaken in their assignment of Buffalo Child Long Lance to portray the lead male. Apparently Long Lance's claim to a Canadian Blackfoot lineage, as written in his autobiography, was a fabrication. In reality he was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, to heritage that possibly included African, European, and more likely Catawba or Cherokee.[60] While filming did take place in Ontario with members of the Ojibwa tribe serving as actors, cast leads such as Chauncy Yellow Robe (Sioux) and Molly Nelson (Penobscot) were varied in their Native origins. Nelson played the role of Neewa, daughter of the Chief, billed under her stage name Molly Spotted Elk. At the time *The Silent Enemy* was released it was determined

by those in the film industry that the American Indian was “too commonplace” for the general population and it failed at the box-office.[61]

In the twentieth century the Indian Princess continued as a fantasy. Her sexuality was brought into focus through live burlesque and vaudeville performances. In the 1920’s the Princess had shimmied to rhythmic parodies of traditional Native dances. Dressed in little more than feathers, beads, and fringe she ballyhooed into the 1930’s, kicking her way to the Broadway stage most notably in the Florenz Ziegfeld Follies. She reached her zenith as a showgirl in the stage show *Whoopee!* (1930). Starring Eddie Cantor, who performs at one point in black face and in another as an Indian Chief, the film’s finale featured a bevy of beautiful women posing as Native Princesses. One by one they appeared on the screen elaborately, but scantily clad, complete with large feathered headdresses, some on horseback, and, for the most part, Caucasian. [62] In *Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema* Lester Friedman argues that the scenes in *Whoopee!* were a copy of the Pocahontas narrative first seen in Barker’s play *La Belle Savage* (*The Indian Princess*) from 1808. In the film there was a juxtaposition with the newly feared Jewish immigrant seen in the “campy” dialog of characters dressed as Indians who engage Jewish stereotypes.[63] The message, once again dealing with fears of miscegenation toward Native and Jewish populations, projected in the lines sung by Cantor in the title song about the hazards of “makin’ whoopee” with the wrong woman.

The Princess figure peaked in the early decades of the century appearing throughout 1910 into the early 1940's as a pinup girl. Light of skin and skimpily dressed she was the highlight of calendars, cigar boxes, fruit crates, and playing cards. Primarily pictured against a wilderness backdrop, she languished in slight dresses of fringed buckskin or the neoclassical drapery worn by lady liberty.[64] R. Atkinson, Edward Mason Eggleston, and F.R. Harper were minor illustrators responsible for the popular figure, but did little in the way of research on indigenous Americans. Their intent, through clothing (or lack thereof) and landscapes, was to indicate the country's wildness.[65] The same methods that had been employed by engravers of the fifteenth century who wished to convey the treacheries and opulence of a new land. Early imagery comprised the "archive" of the Princess while her "repertoire" was immersed in enactment of the image.[66]

In the 1950's the Indian Princess figure was idealized into characters for children such as Peter Pan's Tiger Lily and Howdy Doody's Princess Summerfall Winterspring. Into the 1960's and 1970's, during the height of the civil rights and feminist's movements, she was configured into Barbie Dolls. In 1995 she returned in the cartoon ethnic amalgamation of Disney's *Pocahontas* and again in the 1998 *Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World*. Still, the most enduring representation of the Indian Princess from the twentieth century appears as the logo for the Land O' Lakes Dairy Company based in Minnesota. While the logo is often criticized, unlike her iconic counterparts Aunt Jemima and Uncle Ben, she remains unchanged from the day she appeared in 1939.

[1] Diane Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 2-3.

[2]Ibid., 19.

[3]Ibid., 20.

[4] Ihna Thayer Frary, *They Built the Capitol* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1940), 123.

[5] Julia Kristeva. *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 12.

[6] Ibid., 12-13,

[7] Michael J. Shapiro. *Methods and Nations: Cultural Governance and the Indigenous Subject* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 55. Shapiro suggests that in the nineteenth century Pocahontas dramas the Indian Princess's role as Other ties together European ideals of "nationhood" and "romantic domesticity."

[8] *The Companion to Southern Literature: Themes, Genres, Places, People, Movements, and Motifs*, eds. Joseph M. Flora and Lucinda H. MacKethan, associate ed. Todd Taylor (Baton Rouge : Louisiana State University Press: 2002), 572.

[9]Eliana Chrestani, "James Nelson Barker's Pocahontas: The Theatre and the Indian Question," *Nineteenth Century Theatre,* 23 nos. 1-2 (1995), 6.

[10] Robert Tilton, *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 60.

[11]Chrestani "James Nelson Barker's Pocahontas," 23.

[12]Arthur Hobson Quinn wrote in 1928 that there where nearly 40 plays about Indians performed on in American Theatre between 1830 and 1850. See Arthur Hobson Quinn, *Representative American Plays: From 1767 to the Present Day* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts 1953), 183.

[13] George Washington Parke Custis, *Pocahontas, or, The Settlers of Virginia: A National Drama in Three Acts* **(**Philadelphia: C. Alexander, 1830), 191.

[14] Along with the dance Smith describes an account of the young Pocahontas cart wheeling naked through the town square with English boys from Smith's crew, thus emphasizing the exotic uncivilized nature of the women in the tribe. See

John Smith, *The complete works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)* ed. Philip L. Barbour (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1986), 182-83.

[15] Custis, *Pocahontas, or, The Settlers of Virginia*, 193.

[16] Rebecca Bevins Faery asserts that the name of Rebecca given to Matoaka (Pocahontas) was logical due to the biblical story of Esau and Jacob in which one of the twin sons of Rebecca sells his birthright to his twin. Pocahontas gives up her Native birthright in order to maintain balance among the whites and indigenous people. See Rebecca Bevins Faery, *Cartographies of Desire: Captivity, Race in the Shaping of an American Nation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 84.

[17] Louis Owens discusses the complexities of what it means to be Indian. See Louis Owens, *Mixed Blood Messages: Literature, Film, Family, Place* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1998), 13.

[18] Rebecca Jaroff, "Opposing Forces: (Re) Playing Pocahontas and the Politics of Indian Removal on the Antebellum Stage," *Comparative Drama* 40, no. 4 (winter, 2006-07), 488.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Charlotte Barnes, "The Forest Princess" in *Plays by Early American Women, 1775-1850*, ed. Amelia Howe Kritzer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 367.

[21] Robert Tilton suggests that Pocahontas became the target of sectionalist propaganda and she was declared a princess by the Virginia elite. See Tilton, *Pocahontas*, 172.

[22] Playwright Robert Owen suggests in his version of *Pocahontas* that the name is used as a precaution against enemies who will gain power over you if they have knowledge of your actual name. See Robert Dale Owen, *Pocahontas: A Historical Drama, in Five Acts.* (New York: George Dearborn, 1837), 61-62.

[23] The covers of these small books depicted the Indian Princess as she is recognized in contemporary society. For examples see Albert Johannsen, *The House of Beadle and Adams and its Dime and Nickel Novels*; *The Story of a Vanished Literature 2.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962).

[24] Ronald P. Koch, *Dress Clothing of the Plains Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 3. See also Harold E. Driver and William C. Massey, "Comparative Studies of North American Indians," *Transactions*, 7 no. 2 (1957), 173.

[25] Sherry L. Smith, *The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press), 37.

[26] Ibid., 37-38. The idea of Plains Indians as savage and exotic, living at the fringes of society, references the wild people in European lore discussed in chapter one.

[27] Attitudinal changes among the American population was set in the belief that whitening of the Indian would allow them easily transfer into European societal norms. "Not until they were thought of as inherently inferior 'redmen' rather than unenlightened 'whites' did their separate and unequal status become firmly fixed in the American mind." Alden T. Vaughan, "From White Man to Redskin: Changing Anglo-American Perceptions of the American Indian." *American History Review* 8, no.4 (October 1982), 919.

[28] Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 252-264.

[29] Chris Eness, *Buffalo Gals: Women of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show* (Helena: TwoDot, 2006), 10-11.

[30] Morlacchi is said to be the first to have introduced the French can-can style of dance to American stages. University of Massachusetts, Lowell Center for Lowell History, Texas Jack and the Peerless Morlacchi, http://library.uml.edu/clh/Texas/T1.html. Last accessed January 15, 2010.

[31] Guiseppina Morlacchi married Texas Jack in 1873 and she left the show soon after. See Eness, *Buffalo Gals*, 10-11. See also Barbara Barker, *Ballet or Ballyhoo: The American Careers of Maria Bonfanti, Rita Sangalli and Giuseppina Morlacchi* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1984), 63.

[32] Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," in *Native American Voices: A Reader*, eds. Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1998), 185.

[33] Michael Wallis, *The Real Wild West: The 101 Ranch and Creation of the American West* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 314.

[34] Joanna Cohn Scherer, "The Public Faces of Sarah Winnemucca," *Cultural Anthropology,* 3 no. 2 (May 1988), 190.

[35] Reprinted in Gae Whitney Canfield, *Sarah Winnemucca of the Northern Paiutes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), 163-164.

[36] Joanna Cohn Scherer, "The Public Faces of Sarah Winnemucca," 193.

[37] In the attempt to restore her reputation Winnemucca wrote an open letter to the San Francisco *Morning Call*: “Under ordinary circumstances I do not notice the charges made against me by the Indian ring. They are very powerful, I know, but not powerful enough to stop me from exposing their rascality. This attack is no new thing…I am only an ‘old squaw’ and, of course, people will not believe me, but no matter: there is an ‘all seeing eye’ that keeps my account.” See Gae Whitney Canfield, *Sarah Winnemucca of the Northern Paiutes*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), 226.

[38] Canfield, *Sarah Winnemucca of the Northern Paiutes*, 227.

[39] See Emily Pauline Johnson, *The Moccasin Maker* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1987) 7. Johnson took over the name Tekahionwake when on a trip to London in 1894, but, as stated by Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson, there is no evidence to confirm that she followed Mohawk customs to legitimately make use of the name. See Veronica Jane Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson, *Paddling her Own Canoe: The Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 116.

[40] Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling her Own Canoe: The Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson*, 116.

[41] Veronica Strong-Boag, “A Red Girls Reasoning: E. Pauline Johnson Constructs the New Nation” in *Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender, and the Construction of Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 133.

[42]Ibid., 133. See also Louis Owens discussion of mixed racial identities in *Mixed Blood Messages: Literature, Film, Family, Place* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998).

[43] Josephine Baker was of both Native and African decent and performed a number of routines referencing primitiveness and slavery. See Bennetta Jules-Rosette, *Josephine Baker in Art and Life: The Icon and the Image* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 163.

[44] Bunny McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 74-89.

[45]Ibid., 92.

[46]Entry from Molly Nelson’s diary September 25,1930, in McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk*, 136.

[47]Entry from Molly Nelson’s diary May 26,1930, in McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk*, 136.

[48] Ruth Philips, "Performing the Native Woman: Primitivism and Mimicry in Early Twentieth-Century Visual Culture" in *Antimodernism and the Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 39-43.

[49] Surprisingly there are few references that address Molly Nelson's life accomplishments. Bunny McBride has carefully outlined her life and work in her book. See McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk*, 286.

[50] Luther Gulick, March 22, 1911 Horace Mann School Teachers College. Helen Buckler, Mary F. Fiedler and Martha F. Allen, *Wo-He-Lo: The Story of the Camp Fire Girls 1910-1960* (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), 22.

[51] Luther Gulick, "Recreation and Youth, Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York," *Organization for Social Work* 2, no. 4(July 1912), 121.

[52] Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 112-113. Only recently did the Y-Indian Guides, groups that revolve around interactions between fathers and daughters, deem that their faux Indian rituals and references might be considerably racist. See Lewis Kamb, "Y Programs Shed Indian Trappings now Deemed Racist" *Seattle Post-Intelligencer,* April 26, 2003.

[53] Helen Buckler, Mary F. Fieldler, and Martha Allen wrote of Charlotte Gulick: " She was not a handsome woman in the conventional sense …but every WoHeLo girl seeing her zestful face and feeling the love shining out form her warm brown eyes, swore she was beautiful." See Buckler, Fiedler and Allen, *Wo-He-Lo: The Story of the Camp Fire Girls,* 15.

[54] Rayna Green, "The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe," *Folklore,* 99 no. 1 (1988), 41.

[55] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 115.

[56] Elsie Marrubio, *Killing the Indian Maiden*: *Images of Native Women in Film* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky),14-15. The films *Pocahontas, Child of the forest* (1908) and *Pocahontas* (1910) adopt the Pocahontas/Rolfe love story in the silent film era. Although Marrubio purposefully chooses not to write about Pocahontas the similarities between her mythology and the Celluloid Princess are undeniable. See also Elsie Marrubio, 243.

[57]Ibid., 34.

[58] These movies depict the deplorable poverty stricken and abusive situations that Indians and children were subjected to in the early portion of the twentieth

century. Moreover, the movie *The Broken Doll* portrays an indigenous female child whose plight is ignored by the society in which she exists. See D.W. Griffith, *The Broken Doll*, (1912), See also Marrubio, *Killing the Indian Maiden*, 35.

[59]Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex," 188-89.

[60] Nancy Cook, "The Only Real Indians are Western Ones" in *True West: Authenticy and the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 2004), 140.

[61] Angela Aleiss, *Making the White Man's Indian: Native Americans and Hollywood Movies* (Westport: Praeger Publishers 2005), 42.

[62] Thornton Freeland, *Whoopee!*, Samuel Goldwin Production, 1930.

[63] Lester Friedman, *Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 63.

[64] See Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex," 184.

[65] Max Allen Collins, *Indian Maidens* (Portland: Collectors Press Inc, 2001), Introduction.

[66] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 2-3.

Chapter 4

# CONTEMPORARY RESPONSE: LAND O LAKES TO DRAG PERFORMANCE

Oklahoma Choctaw scholar Devon Mihesuah argues that the Indian Princess is the most damaging of all reductive images that symbolize indigenous people, yet, not until the later portion of the twentieth century was she recognized as a stereotype. Compared to her male counterparts, warriors and braves (there is no known American Indian Prince), reaction to her is sparse.[1] This chapter discusses how the image first becomes subversive and then looks at Native artist's varied counter responses to the established buckskin clad figure. Analysis will first concentrate on the success of the formulated racist and sexist icon perpetuated by the Land O' Lakes Corporation that will here be referred to as the "Butter Princess"– the persistent emblem that is possibly the most triumphant representation of the colonial stereotype.

## Provocative Princess Sells Butter

In 1921 in the city of Saint Paul Minnesota, intersection of the Dakota and Anishinabe peoples (referenced as Ojibwa in Canada and Chippewa in the United States), the Land O' Lakes Company began its mission to improve conditions within the dairy industry – primarily the marketing and manufacturing of butter. Its name was established through a contest held in 1926 and its logo, designed by illustrator Arthur C. Hanson, first appeared in 1928. This image depicted a young woman holding a basket and kneeling in tall grass. She peers across what is

presumably of one of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes toward a bucolic landscape dotted with grazing Holstein cows and lined with pine trees. Her Nativeness is indicated by a customary deer skin dress, long black braids, and headband. In 1939 Illustrator Jess Betlach was hired by the company to update the image. The resulting illustration removed the cows and focused on a more scantily clad Indian woman holding the favored product. Still left to question was what role this young woman played in the making of butter. Absurdly Land O' Lakes website answers that the stereotypic design was created "because the regions of Minnesota and Wisconsin were the legendary land of Hiawatha and Minnehaha."[2]

Although the Land O' Lakes trademark (Figure 10) is often referenced for its disparaging qualities, the rendering has never been completely analyzed. Betlach's revised icon, based on depictions from a decade prior, was the same image that has now held its rigid omnipresent position for the past seventy some years. Like her predecessors, she is based in historic mythology and marked by inaccuracies. For example, the authors of the corporate website note two fictional characters from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855). First, is the Indian Hiawatha, born of gods in the land of the "Ojibway," and the other, his love Minnehaha daughter of a "Dakotah Arrow Maker." These characters, although having little to do with the dairy industry, were correctly identified with tribes of Minnesota, but the epic poem may have been more closely related to Norse than Native American tradition.[3]

Longfellow loosely based his research on the ethnographic writings of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, who, in *The Myth of Hiawatha, and Other Oral Legends,* identified the saga, first told to him in 1822 by the Chippewa's of Lake Superior, as Iroquois rather than Ojibwa."[4] Evidently, the poet had misread his source, yet confusion of name and lore did not stop the narrative's popularity. In the state Minnesota there are still landmarks, towns, municipalities, and businesses named after the tragic lovers. In the end the heroine dies from famine, while the hero, after instructing his people to accept Christianity, leaves the land of his birth forever.[5] One might consider that this as hardly a fable to help sell butter, nonetheless, it supports more significant misconceptions presented by the corporation.

Today the Land O' Lakes logo appears as an advertising strategy of unprecedented success. Many other racial emblems have either been removed or redesigned in the wake of critical discourses. Popular trademarks such as Aunt Jemima, Uncle Ben, and the Sunmaid Raisin Girl are a few among many images that were transformed in the twentieth century. However, the Native woman on the ubiquitous dairy product continues as she was on the day of her creation. Thus this chapter questions the coincidence and calculation involved with the Butter Princess's creation.

It was near the beginning of World War II when idealizations of womanly beauty used in advertising focused on the Gibson girl and the flapper.[6] Not only were these superficial creatures striking, they were also sensual, romanticized

through a level of desire by women as well as men. Betlach incorporated not only the look of these women into his design, but to insure the product was all the more seductive, the illustrator added to the formula established notions of eroticism and ethnicity. [7] She is the romantic Indian Princess, perceived to be of the land, subservient, and waiting to be civilized. As a symbol of America she sits in her pan-indigenous attire of fringed buckskin and beads, topped by two red, white, and blue feathers.

The logo is also a deliberate fetishization of Indian women. Writer Steven Gould argues that there is a lack understanding of the presence as well as the persistence of the fetish in advertizing; furthermore, no consideration is given to whom it is based upon.[8] The Land O' Lakes image objectifies the body through distortion placing emphasis on feminine attributes. For example and most obvious is how the supple buckskin dress sensuously outlines the curves of her body. More subliminal is the butter box she holds to conceal her breasts would normally be much too small to serve its designated purpose; furthermore, her knees are not in alignment with her legs. Highlights and shadows do not coincide with the implied light source, thus her knees can be construed as naked breasts. This has led to the development of a curious adolescent prank often referred to as "the butter trick."

One need only go to the Internet and conduct a simple search using the phrase "Land O' Lakes butter," or "Land O' Lakes Indian," to reveal several websites that demonstrate a process of folding and cutting the butter box to look

as if the Indian maiden's breasts are exposed. The trick involves cutting the butter box on one side so that it will fold open, then the knees from the other side of the package are placed under the opening. When the box is lifted the knees appear as naked breasts. This innocent voyeuristic antic of youth has been passed down through generations and in 2007 was even featured on the prime time cartoon "The Simpsons."[9] Albeit in a humorous vein, this formulaic depiction places indigenous people, as well as all women, in the Freudian scopophilic gaze, but more absurd than the packaging joke is the fact that Land O' Lakes Corporation, which takes its trademark quite seriously, continue to promote a disparaging historic misappropriation.[10]

In addition, the image is recursive. This is an advertising technique based on a mathematical system and known as the "Droste effect," after a 1904 Dutch coco manufacturer's logo (of the same name) that depicts a nurse holding a tray with the identical box that logically repeats indefinitely.[11] Subconsciously, the brain registers the continuum that the eye fails to see. Psychologically, depictions like the Butter Princess become a part of cognition due to their consistent invasion of sensory stimulus. Repetition allows an object to proliferate and propagate through a number of distortions, which in the case of the Butter Princess, aid in her power as a stereotype.[12]

Lucy Ganje's 2003 essay "Native American Stereotypes" argues that in the twenty-first century indigenous peoples are still thought of as noble or ignoble savages and are cast as symbols, mascots, spirit guides, protesters, and

conglomerated peoples of a vanished race.[13] Throughout American history, defamation of ethnic groups has been constant and gender biases are also inflicted upon the Princess. Any image that objectifies has the potential to harm those who are represented and the Land O' Lakes butter container is an unwavering reminder of the many injustices instituted in our society. Furthermore, its continuing existence is perplexing considering the elimination of many other Native based product logos, controversies surrounding Indians as sports mascots (although Atlanta retains its "Braves" emblem), and the attention given to the alteration of pejorative Indian namesakes.[14]

Yet, these eradicating gestures are contradictory to perceptions that remain in place. Imagery created throughout the twentieth century perpetuated and disseminated ideas of Otherness that led to devastation. Writer Marsha Woodbury provides example from 1930's Germany, the same time the Butter Princess was created, when stereotypic characterizations of Jews as baby killing, hooked nosed, rapacious, lechers of Christian virgins, were widely circulated to adults and printed in children's school book lessons. Such grotesque fabrications promoting fear and hatred that had begun in the Middle Ages laid the groundwork for the mass extermination for not only millions of Jews, but also Gypsies, Slavs, blacks, gays, and others who did not fit into Hitler's master plan.[15] Moreover, these likenesses were not so far removed from images from the 1800's that depicted blood- thirsty savage Indians ravaging settlements and raping white women to foster justification for the genocide of innumerable innocent indigenous

American people. These extreme images are of course considered harmful, but they have a connection to the more innocent Princess. The remainder of this thesis explores contemporary condemnations of the figure and acknowledges theories by Homi Bhabha that suggest that only by our recognition of its function are we able to recognize the power of the colonial stereotype.[16]

**One Artist's Reaction: Trickster vs. Trickster**

> To be an artist from the Indian world carries with it certain responsibilities. We have an opportunity to promote Indian truths and at the same time help dispel the myths and stereotypes that are projected upon us. I consider myself an at-large representative and advocate of the Chippewa people and American Indians in general. It is a responsibility which I do not take lightly.[17]

Artist David Bradley, member of the Chippewa tribe, has appropriated the Land O' Lakes image in his commentaries about fraud in the Native art market, identity consumerism, and objectification of the female indigenous body.[18] In *Land O'Bucks, Land O'Fakes* (1990, Figure 11) Bradley reinvents the infamous logo as a means to address these distressing situations through layers of wry ironic humor. In this painting Bradley depicts a woman of color who is possibly Native and in order to "make a buck" has adopted the role of Butter Princess. Like others who drew upon Indianness and femininity to perform the character, this Princess wears the typical identifiers and sits in the same submissive pose as the original. Her sexuality is emphasized by ample breasts barely contained within the unnatural cling of supple leather that reveals the outline of her nipples and evident outlines shadowed on her knees, an obvious acknowledgment of the "butter trick." A mountainous backdrop dotted with pueblos and teepees indicate

that she is no longer in the land of 10,000 lakes, but in the American Southwest. Sitting on a Navajo patterned rug, she wears turquoise earrings, a squash blossom necklace, and a silver Concho belt. She performs the business of selling Native made objects. Undoubtedly this signifies that her location is Santa Fe, New Mexico, an area once inhabited by Pueblo peoples and first declared a possession of the Spanish in 1598 and since made famously prosperous though the production of indigenous art.[19]

Bradley's affinity for the Southwest appears within several acclaimed paintings. He has spent time studying and teaching at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, but most of his youth was spent in Minnesota, where he first encountered the Land O'Lakes Princess. She is an image that became permanently etched in his memory and that one he has been trying to understand and reinterpret throughout his career.[20] *Land O'Bucks, Land O'Fakes* debuted in the 1995 exhibit "Iconoclash" at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe. For Bradley, the two man show, which also featured artist Marcus Amerman, allowed him to examine the psychology behind corporate America's use of the romanticized Indian. This particular piece points out deceptions in marketing of Indian art objects. [21]

Much of Bradley's work questions varied forms of stereotyping and champions the rights of indigenous peoples using a mixture of mediums and techniques. In addition, he has worked as an activist for Native equality and is a staunch defender against fraud in the art market.[22] His passions are evident within

the insightful complexity of his narratives achieved through clever juxtapositions of historic and contemporary figures, classic works of art, and popular culture. This style of art and the artist who initiates it is now often referenced as "trickster," a popular terminology in contemporary discourse that will be examined here in relation to the stereotype.

In 1999 Allen J. Ryan published a discussion of contemporary Native art that focused primarily on First Nation artists from Canada. *The Trickster Shift: Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* was an examination of visual and written works by artists such as Shelly Niro, Jim Logan, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, and Rebecca Belmore, who share the same aesthetics as Bradley in their analysis of injustices that were instilled by power and political structures developed through colonization. To further explain, his methodology, termed "trickster discourse" by Anishinabe artist and curator Gerald McMaster, employs diverse sardonic strategies as a means to subvert what Ryan assesses as "outdated notions of 'Indianness.'"[23]

The idea of the "trickster" cited by these scholars is significant in North American cosmologies and also a presence found cross-culturally in societies throughout the world. Their complex adaptability allows for ambiguity, therefore, they, like the stereotype, can be altered when the situation necessitates. Fluctuating between malevolence and kindness, deceiver and fool, the trickster may break societal taboos, but alternatively is capable of great deeds and in certain sects is known as the creator. Because they possess powers beyond human

capabilities and comprehension these creatures are often able to change form. They may alternate from human to beast, whereas gender is of no significance and is also transformable, but in most stories they are alluded to as male. More often they are associated with nature and manifest in animal form, the Coyote and Spider from the Southwest and Plains regions and Raven from the Northwest Coast. Past through generations, allegoric stories surrounding tricksters provide lessons of morality and propagate system beliefs.

The commonality shared by stereotypes and tricksters is their pervasive oscillation between exaggeration and legitimacy in the intent to confirm mythology.[24] In agreement with Ryan and McMaster's discourse, David Bradley is confronting the colonial stereotype within its own arena, with the understanding that successful deconstruction can only be achieved through the same methodological replenishment of the image in alternate forms. By critiquing the Indian Princess at one of her most evocative and determined moments, the artist lends to recognition of her potential danger, thus opening an intermediate space where new modes of thinking are allowed to take place.[25]

Repeatedly the Princess of Land O' Lakes returns in Bradley's work, she was reformulated in the 2006 traveling exhibition "Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation 2," which opened in New York at the Museum of Arts & Design. Here the artist questions the theft of Indian identity in the second *Land O' Bucks, Land O' Fakes, Land O'Lakes* (2006, Figure 12) a massive recreation of the butter box as a sculpture of paint, paper, and wood.[26] On three visible sides sits

the familiar woman dressed recognizably in Indian garb. Returning to her Minnesota lakeside location with her ethnicity still in question, but lacking the overt sexuality of the earlier painting, she holds in alternation a bill of American currency and the butter product. Haloed by the corporate “O,” the figure appears as an ethereal vision of Indianness, surrounded by a glowing light against an almost unearthly blue sky.

**American Icons through Indigenous Eyes**

*Land O' Fakes Bitter* (2007, Figure 13) is unquestionably more poignant and personal than previous renditions. The complex narrative centers on a macabre grinning skeletal Princess whose spectral gaze is conveyed through her vacant sockets. The acceptance of colonization is evidenced in the bodice of her buckskin dress, now painted with stars and stripes of the American flag. In the familiar kneeling position, but in the style of “Lady Justice,” she holds a scale that in one pan balances a sword and in the other a pile of dollar bills.[27] Her right hand clutches an indisputably white face mask with black hollows where eyes should be. An Indian marionette costumed in feathered bonnet and fringed skin garments hangs in one corner, while the artist himself hangs from a noose directly opposite, his identity concealed by the black hood that is tied about his head. In the distant background billow the four mast sails of a large ship, perhaps belonging to Columbus or Vespucci and signifying European contact. The words Land O' Fakes are emblazoned in blood red across the blue and butter yellow sky, while the product is identified as “bitter.” Centered at the top of the painting the

words “Museum Currency,” hang over the chilling statement: “SMITHSONIAN 4MAS GENOCIDE.” Reverting to the symbolic syntax utilized in the past two works, here Bradley fires a blatant attack upon institutions that house Native artifacts.

In other works Bradley removes the Butter Princess from trademark position and lakeside home to place her within more satirical situations. In the painting *Pictures at an Exhibition #2* (2008, Figure 14) she is in attendance at a renowned opening of the now closed Elaine Horwitch Gallery in Santa Fe.[28] Named after the famous suite composed by Modest Mussorgsky, a memory of Bradley’s high school music appreciation class, the scene is crowded with artists, musicians, and pop culture icons, pictured in improbable but humorous scenarios.[29] Amidst the party atmosphere the Beatles perform with jazz saxophonist John Coltrane, while Oprah Winfrey dances with Georgia O’Keeffe. Geronimo is introduced to John Wayne and Custer discusses a treaty with Sitting Bull.

Stationed against the wall, near the customary beverage table, the woman of Land O’ Lakes fame grasps her box of butter while apprehensively watching a mariachi musician guzzle beer. To her left Horwitch, cigarette in one hand, is immersed in a phone conversation while Andy Warhol snaps her photo, standing nearby is Navajo artist R. C. Gorman. Displayed on the walls are much admired works of Diego Rivera, Picasso. Directly behind the Princess hangs Bradley’s painting of the Santa Fean icon Zozobra, or “old man gloom,” the embodiment of

despair. This enormous marionette is built every year to be burned during “Fiestas de Santa Fe,” the celebration that began in 1712 when Don Diego Vargas reclaimed the city from the Pueblo peoples, who had revolted against the Spanish in 1680.[30] However, the Zozobra tradition actually has little to do with the original ceremonies and became associated with the festival in 1924 when artist Will Shuster created the effigy to offer troubled souls the opportunity to relieve their depressions of the past year into flames.[31]

Picking up the revelry in another painting *Harvest Moon, Godzilla vs. Zozobra* (2010, Figure 15) Bradley positions the gigantic puppet at the center of what might be a rock concert, national celebration, or religious rite. Set upon a makeshift stage in the foothills of Santa Fe, Zozobra hangs with arms outstretched, awaiting his inevitable fate. Reminiscent of Christ’s crucifixion on Mount Calvary, he is joined by two other figures bound to crosses. One is the Land O’ Lakes Princess and the other an unidentified male Indian. Irony unfolds in the inconceivable cast of characters below, where Michael Jackson performs to reverent members of the Ku Klux Klan, as Spanish Conquistadors, La Virgin de Guadalupe, and La Calavera Catrina intermingle with the likes of Custer, Uncle Sam, and Mother Teresa. [32] As master of the chaotic spectacle Japanese movie monster Godzilla spits a laser beam that will ignite the ominous dummy and most likely his Native companions.[33] In layered scenarios the artist, methodologically trickster, creates humor out of absurdity, thereby shifting societal perceptions through manipulation of historical constructs.

Still, we are left to question the destiny of the Land O' Lakes Princess as she exists in Bradley's work, since this most recent appearance finds her facing certain demise. Undoubtedly, like the cast of characters that ruminate in his work, she will return. David Bradley's view of the stereotype stems from personal experience deeply imbedded within his psyche, as he states in the following:

> The alluring, sexualized, non-threatening, exotic Indian Princess takes that whole noble/bloodthirsty savage thing a step further. It is all complicated psychology and I do not claim to be able to explain the whole thing, but I like to explore it within my art. One more element to throw in the mix is that Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the Dakotas have been notorious anti-Indian racist hotbeds, probably the worst in the country. That is where the American Indian Movement was born, when I was growing up, before the Civil Rights Movement, we were called names like "Bush Niggers," "Juicers," etc… In the Southwestern United States Indians have always been more popular and romanticized.[34]

Therefore, appropriation of the colonial image by the artist allows for a restaging of her future, consequently opening reconsiderations of her past. Repetition produces credibility of the stereotype and only through its reverberation from an unfamiliar angle are we able to reassess its authority. [35]

The topic of the Native North American trickster has been added at this juncture due to its relevance and prevalence in the discourse on indigenous art. It is argued here that the stereotype, like the trickster, may appear in many forms that range from levels of admiration to contempt, while their ambiguity allows for the malleability to maintain their influence.[36] Ultimately the function of the trickster is to help us better understand ourselves, as do artists such as David Bradley in their reformulation of stereotypical images through trickster tactics. Deconstruction can only begin with persistence in confrontation. In continuation

this thesis examines how rebuttal against the Indian Princess through the work of Native artists sustains the discourse that is, like the development of her identity, inextricably tied to performance.[37]

**Reconsidering Pocahontas and the Butter Princess**

Perhaps the Princess's "non-threatening" mystique is why her identity was not refuted until the later part of the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century her persona was seized by indigenous women (and Europeans) as a role that gave agency to Native females. For women like Molly Nelson, Sarah Winnemucca, and Pauline Johnson, there were few alternatives for career and political advancement. Nonetheless, their enactments of the Indian Princess helped to establish the image in as much as they now assist in its disavowal. The Land O' Lake's logo was brought to the stage in 1990 when *Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots,* by playwright Monica Mojica, was first produced. In the contemporary works of art like David Bradley's incongruities are emphasized through humor and the stereotype is identified for its authority. With the intent to ridicule its position the imagery is disassembled precisely in the manner from which it began. [38]

Mojica's play transfers visual and literary representations of historic Native women into beings of flesh and blood. Notable is her lead character illustrated in the following composite:

> Princess Buttered on Both Sides: One of the many faces of the Trickster Coyote. She is a contestant in the Miss North American Indian Beauty Pageant and she is stuck in the talent segment. [39]

In a fantastical world based in familiar mythologies, emblematic female characters enter and exit the story line, each relating her individual legend to the audience. The play is interspersed with musicians who perform nonsensical tunes retrieved from varied time periods and cultural origins.[40] Absurdity begins in the opening scene of "The Miss North American Indian Beauty Pageant," where the only contestant is "Princess Buttered- On-Both-Sides." An embodiment of the stereotype, she wears the white buckskin of Miller's *Trapper's Bride*, carries an ear of corn referencing a 1970's Mazola advertisement, and takes from Land O' Lakes the ideal of her being "from the deep green forest on the other side of the mountain, by the shores of the silver sea."[41]

Pocahontas also appears in characterizations based upon her three historic names, allegories that established her as the "American origin myth."[42] The virginal "Story Book Pocahontas" is enthralled with Smith and prevents his murder. "Lady Rebecca," pulled from the image of Simon de Passe, wears the trappings of English nobility while telling of her kinship to Smith, her alleged kidnapping, and her conversion to Christianity. Then "Matoaka" imparts the playwright's perception of her youth, her connections to Powhatan traditions, encounters with colonizers, and resolutions made to fulfill tribal responsibility.[43] A conversation takes place between two of these characters as the audience is led to what is perceivably a ceremony of the final sacrifice - Pocahontas's passage into womanhood. In dialog Mojica questions realities surrounding this woman's life story and her relationships with men who shaped her history. One line

indicates: “If my father had loved me he would not value me less than old swords and guns or axes: therefore I shall still dwell with the Englishmen who love me.”[44]

Princess Buttered-On-Both-Sides succeeds in her dream to win the pageant and thus becomes a part of white society. Replacing her sexy short fringed leather dress, she dons a sequined evening gown and a headdress of corn that illuminates. She then accepts her trophy and departs. In the world created by Mojica, a true Indian Princess can only be identified by a blue spot located at the base of her spine. It indicates blood quantum of a Native, as stated by “Contemporary woman #1” early in the dialogue: “When my child was born, after counting fingers and toes, I turned it over to check for the blue spot…Even among the half-breeds, it is one of the last things to go.”[45] Hence, the ghosts of Indian women conclude the play in a poignant recollection of past horrors endured: “A nation is not conquered until the hearts of its women are on the ground. Then it is done, no matter how brave its warriors, nor how strong its weapons.”[46]

Through a veil of comedy Mojica, like Bradley, acknowledges historical events in a manner that reveals the misconceptions that surround them and by doing so questions the retention of myths conceived by imperial colonizers. As examined in the two previous chapters the success of the Princess figure was ensured not only though imagery supported by founding patriarchs, but also

through enactment.  Metamorphosis of graphic depictions into flesh implanted her in to societal norms. [47]

Historian Hayden White asserts that there is a story-telling aspect involved in history that he terms "Metahistory," meaning that there is more to history than fact and although it may be impossible to remove an object from its archaic entrenchment through reprisal, there is the possibility that new perceptions may be realized from confrontation. [48]  However, the original presentation of "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots" took place over twenty years ago, and since that time performances and discourse surrounding the piece have waned.  The following observations are those having developed since 1990.

**Alternative Resistance**

By all accounts embodiment gave women who took on the persona in the 19th and 20th centuries a voice in ethnic and gender suppressed environments. Presently in Native communities this process continues through pageants that acknowledge indigenous women under the guise of the Princess figure.  Although addressed in Mojica's play as farce, contests today that recognize the excellence of young women are venerated by tribal groups in many areas of the United States.   Community based, these pageants focus on retention of individual customs and are respected by the societies in which they take place.[49]

This phenomenon was brought to video through the acclaimed PBS documentary *Miss Navajo* (2007), directed and produced by Billy Luther. [50]  The film focuses on 2005-2006 competitor Crystal Frazier, a twenty-one year old

Navajo woman living on the Table Mesa reservation in New Mexico, who decides to compete in order to propel her future ambitions of college and a degree in mechanical engineering. We are introduced to her lifestyle, family, and inner apprehensions through interviews that are layered amidst the process of the pageant itself, as each contestant must demonstrate her knowledge of Navajo history and exhibit her ability to sustain Navajo traditions, including proficiency in traditional language, cooking fry-bread, butchering sheep, and rug weaving. Honor and responsibility are inherent in the title and illustrated through past Navajo Princesses who provide insight not only into their personal encounters within the competition, but also their life experiences as Navajo women.

Unlike the iconic personality, Princess Buttered-On-Both sides, these young women have no desire to become whiter, in fact the opposite. The winner of a Native pageant such as Miss Navajo will travel the world as a representative of her originating culture and a role model for all American Indian people. Although Luther's character does not see her dreams of winning come to fruition, and the audience is allowed to view what transpires when the desired performance is abruptly dismantled.

When in 1997-1998, Radmilla A. Cody took on the role it in turn garnered more than her share of attention. Some members of the community voiced their concern about the portion of Cody's lineage that was African, stating that because she was of a mixed race she did not qualify to represent the Navajo Nation.[51] Matters were further complicated when, soon after her reign began, she was

accused of conspiring with her ex- boyfriend and charged with drug trafficking, of which she was convicted and sentenced to twenty-one months in an Arizona prison.[52] During this same time she was beginning a singing career, rooted in a repertoire of songs written in the Navajo language. Cody emerged from the ordeal with more support than opposition and performs today as a "former Miss Navajo."

Following the example of women who began enacting the Indian Princess more than century ago, Cody has tailored the character to suit modern sensibilities in order to pursue a career that also benefits the community she came from. Much admired, she executes established and traditionally based music and wears the thee-tiered skirt and blouse with turquoise jewelry that became popular among Navajo women in the nineteenth century.[53] Stylistically her choice of costume is significant to the culture and is currently worn at ceremonies.

Although, through her adaptation Cody seemingly plays into ideologies that romanticize the stereotype, she preserves archival customs and is an activist against abuse. Still, controversies have arisen that concern her honor, ancestry, and agenda.[54] As seen through Monica Mojica's characters, discourse continues to challenge the function of the pageant in Native societies, not only critiquing how it serves as a model for the women it represents, but also its relation to spectacle competitions such as "Miss America," and "Miss Universe" that are rooted in power roles and objectification of women.

**An Indian Princess in Drag**

> It's about achieving balance. The thing that the European didn't understand about our culture is how adaptable and innovative we are. We've been borrowing from other cultures, since time immemorial. So it's not unusual for anyone in an Aboriginal culture to look outside their culture and incorporate those influences and make them his or her own.[55]

The final portion of this analysis is devoted to the artist Kent Monkman whose response to the Indian Princess is based in both the archival and embodiment. Monkman's introduction begins in 1973, when Cher, costumed in Bob Mackie's version of the Indian Princess, rode onto a television stage astride a Pinto pony and vociferously performed lyrics that describe a young woman's struggle with identity. The dilemma, expressed in the verses of *Half Breed,* tells us that the woman is half Cherokee and half European. She is unable to find her position in the world because she is rejected by both her Indian and white relatives. The song is the second most popular of the star's illustrious career. Its unabashed lines indicate that the woman will remain disconnected and discontented because she cannot run away from what she is.

Drawing inspiration from Cher's personification, Kent Monkman has created what he describes as his "alter ego," *Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle.* As a cross-dressed Indian Princess Monkman performs, photographs, and paints himself into scenarios that question the acceptance of what has become the most enduring formulated trope of the Native American woman. In his discussion of colonial mimicry Homi Bhabha asserts that appropriation of a discursive object is a *tricky* methodology which must both identify the "inappropriate" through

resemblance and at the same time provide "an intimate threat to both 'normalized' knowledges and disciplinary powers."[56]

Considered here is how Monkman sanctions theories of mimesis within his combined performance of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality to problematize the figure. Further acknowledged is the manner in which the artist recognizes his female predecessors, part of his inspiration, through the "performative," a social cultural process that theorist Judith Butler defines as the moment when enactment of perceived "reality" of identity is produced through the repetitive use of "*fabrications.*" Monkman's performance identifies both ethnicity and gender in outward acts that are authenticated through historic social constructions. [57] The Princess's "Indianness" is confirmed within the performance of bodily movements that are supported by the manipulation of predetermined costume and props. Drawing from these markers Monkman recognizes "manufactured" ethnicity and gender through his character. His drag enactment influenced by women from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including Molly Nelson and Cher, questions colonial strategies that made use of the female Indian body.[58]

Via trickster methods Monkman confronts his subject accomplished through his own transformation. Much of his work addresses *berdache* a North American French term, derived from the Arabic *bardaj* meaning slave, applied by anthropologists to what some American Indians and First Nations define as a gender transformation. Now referenced using the term "Two Spirit," anthropologists contend that theories surrounding the concept are varied. One

thought involves the notion of "reincarnation" in which an individual of one gender went through the process of becoming a sex that was not their previous one, while others determined that in some societies berdache was one gender of a multiple gendered system.[59] In the painting *Dance to the Berdache* (1835-37) George Catlin documented his confusion toward what struck him as a humorous and yet "degrading" celebration, in which a man dressed in "woman's clothes" was acknowledged for the "extraordinary privileges he possessed." [60] Monkman's adaptation of this painting provides another dimension to his performance of the Indian princess as part of the exhibit *Shapeshifters, Time Travelers and Storytellers* (2007). In this performance, *Miss Chief* holds a séance in which to channel Catlin, Paul Kane and Eugéne Delacroix, to question their methodologies of ethnographic recording. In the final act *Miss Chief* calls up her own berdache dancers to perform a modern version of Catlin's image.

More significant are Monkman's references to the feminine. In the collective *Emergence of a Legend* he demonstrates the incarnation of his Muse within five distressed sepia toned photographs. Here he positions *Miss Chief* against painted backdrops, introducing his character as a series of "Indian princesses" in "ethnicized" starlet costumes complete with feathered head bands. These photos allude both to the stylist manner of photographing vaudevillian and silent film actresses for publicity shots, but also to the manipulative practices of ethnographic photographers in the 19th and 20th centuries, whose imagery, devoid of any signs of contemporary society, placed their subjects in a bygone era. *Miss*

*Chief* posed glamorously displays props and costumes of her Indian identity that emphasize her iconic status. Her primary identifier the feathered Plains warrior headdress, so admired by nineteenth century military officers, had been appropriated by women who performed as Indian princess in vaudevillian and Wild West shows.[61] Among standardized symbols of feathers, fringed buckskin, tattoos, beads, and bones, there are hints of modernity and commodity. In Monkman's *Hunter* (2006, Figure 16), *Miss Chief's* six inch platformed sandals and Louis Vuitton arrow pith (slung over her shoulder) are removed from any turn of the century designs.

This group of images gives credit to the women who adopted and adapted their individual performances of the Indian princess in order to claim an identity of their own. In *Vaudeville Star* (2006, Figure 17) Monkman reenacts one of Molly Nelson's most infamous poses, what she called her "Indian dance," photographed in 1928. *Cindy Silver Screen* (2006, Figure 18) further references Molly Nelson's career as a performer, in particular her role in *Silent Enemy*. In his photographs Monkman addresses the creation of the "authentic" Indian emphasized in the movies, spurred by the desires of the greater American public. For example, in the cast list Nelson is identified as Molly Spotted Elk, the stage name she adopted while performing as a teenager, was one that brought her authenticity in the viewing public.[62] Like other cast members she was not necessarily chosen for her acting abilities, but for the legitimacy of her heritage.

Monkman's own lineage is a combination of Cree and Irish/English and in his photograph *The Trapper's Bride* (along with his more evocative painting similarly titled) (2006, Figure 19) he questions issues surrounding racial mixing. The altered image, derived from Alfred Jacob Miller's *The Trapper's Bride* (1850), is indicative of the manipulative tactics used by colonizers to promote domination and assimilation of conquered lands. Miller was one among several European painters, such as George Catlin and Paul Kane, who depicted North American Natives as the last survivors of vanishing peoples. These paintings, essentially rhetorical tools, were precursors to imagery of the twentieth century used in advertising, literature, and finally movies, in which, as Elsie Marubbio describes in *Killing the Indian Maiden*, the Indian princess marries the white man, sacrificing first her identity and then generally her life.[63]

In *Film Director* (2006, Figure 20) Monkman further provides homage to women who took on conflicted identities. Here, *Miss Chief* takes over the role of camera operator, reciprocating the viewers gaze. Not surprisingly, Monkman has chosen the vivacious Cher as his model. Apparently on Cher's mother's side there is some small Cherokee linage and in the 1970's, a time when civil rights were centered in societal politics, Cher promoted herself as a Native woman. Throughout her career she has morphed her public identity to suit changing social situations. Although her Indian ethnicity has never been confirmed, Cher continues to perform the song *Half Breed* in her Las Vegas night club act. For this song she wears a glistening garment comparable to the attire adopted by

Monkman in his drag enactment. The methodology of this over-the-top imagery employed by both artists falls within the category of "camp."

In *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* anthropologist Esther Newton suggests that the performance of camp is contingent upon "*incongruous juxtapositions*."[64] It identifies the "relationship between things" in dramatic and humorous form. As Susan Sontag argued some fifty years ago, camp is not "…a natural mode of sensibility…it is the love of the unnatural; of artifice and exaggeration."[65] We note the uncommon in *Miss Chief's* platformed beadworked shoes, in her Louis Vuitton arrow pith and overstated feathered headdress. But foremost, we perceive "incongruity" in Monkman's performance of gendered juxtaposed drag. *Miss Chief* a physically gendered a man portrays a woman, an Indian princess, who is situated as the dominant figure of scenarios that are in opposition to patriarchal Eurocentric paintings like Miller's *Trapper's Bride*.

Theorist Judith Butler argues that drag presents a "unified picture of woman," and therefore reveals, [through the performance] that genders "…are only produced as truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity" and "are falsely naturalized as a unity through the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence."[66] Many scholars have proposed that the work of women such as Molly Nelson and Pauline Johnson contributed to subversion of the Indian princess as stereotype. However, their performances also maintained the illusion, or idealized image of Indian women as dictated by colonial domination. In

support of this, Katrin Sieg in her book *Ethnic Drag* argues that regulations of gender and race relations are based in ideologies of the heterosexual colonizer.[67] The point being that Monkman's inflated performance of the Princess identifies the incongruous nature of the stereotype in order to destabilize it.

All of the artists addressed call us to question the position of Indian women in the colonized society that still exists in 21st century America. Through utilization of the stereotype they negotiate in what has been identified by Emma Pérez as the "interstitial gap" – the space where knowledge is learned and subaltern histories are created for those that have been long marginalized.[68] Yet, the figure is complicated by modern day perceptions in and outside of Native societies. We are then left to question if it is possible to dispel the mythologies that surround established colonial stereotypes, or whether it is more appropriate to dismiss them altogether in order to rid society of their disparaging identifications. The later seems an impossible proposition; therefore, we must continue the discourse until the danger of the submissive Indian Princess is recognized.

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[1] Devon Abbott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 59-60. See also Mihesuah's writing on American Indian Stereotypes in Devon A. Mihesuah, *American Indians: Stereotypes & Realities* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, Inc., 1996), 99-102.

[2] Land O'Lakes Website: *http://www.landolakes.com/OurStory/*. Last accessed 6/12/2010.

[3] Longfellow identified "The Song of Hiawatha" as an "Indian Edda," thereby indicating the poem was written in the style of Norse legend. See Longfellow's notes to the first publication *The Song of Hiawatha* (Boston: 1855), 299.The Poetic Edda is a collection of Norse poetry from the *Codex Regius*, a medieval manuscript published in Iceland. See John Lindow, "Norse Mythology and the

Lives of the Saints*," Scandinavian Studies* 73, no. 3 (Fall 2001), 439. In 1927 the Minnesota Historical Society published a letter to the editor which refuted much of the Indian lore in the poem and its suggestion that the Ojibwa, or Dakota peoples had named Minnehaha falls, located near Saint Paul Minnesota. See Alex Hesler "Minnehaha Falls and Longfellow's Hiawatha" *Minnesota History* 8, no. 4 (December 1927), 422-423.

[4] Henry R. Schoolcraft, *The Myth of Hiawatha, and Other Oral Legends*, *Mythic and Allegoric of the North American Indians* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856), 13.

[5] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Song of Hiawatha* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1855), 284.

[6] Danielle Delis Hill, *Advertising to the American Woman*, (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 2002), 92-94. Hill argues that at the turn of the twentieth century the Gibson girl followed by the flapper were paramount models of beauty for the United States.

[7] Michael K. Green, "Images of Native Americans in Advertising: Some Moral Issues," *Journal of Business Ethics*, 12 no. 4 (1993), 328.

[8] Stephen J Gould. "The Fetishization of People and Their Objects: Using Lovemaps to View "Style" From the New York Times Magazine," in *Sex in Consumer Culture: The Erotic Content of Media and Marketing*, eds. Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 263.

[9] In the episode "Little Big Girl," Lisa Simpson is inspired (through the trick) to fabricate her heritage by claiming her royal linage via the "Hitachee" tribe, a name procured from the family's microwave oven. The episode of the Simpsons is comparable to that of Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance and others who have procured an Indian identity in order to promote themselves. See "Little Big Girl," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Big_Girl*. Last accessed 3/10/ 2010.

[10] I contacted the company requesting information about their product logo and was provided much of the same information on their website; in addition I was informed that the sky is yellow to indicate butter. Personal email 10/19/2008.

[11]Max Nänny and Olga Fischer *The Motivated Sign: Iconicity in Language and Literature* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Pub. Co., 2000), 37.

[12] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 95.

[13] Lucy Ganje, “Native American Stereotypes” in *Images that Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 113.

[14] One example is the Phoenix landmark once known as “Squaw Peak” that was changed to “Piestewa Peak,” after Lori Piestewa, of Hopi decent and the first female American soldier to die in the Iraq war. See Billy House and Mark Shaffer, “Mom, Hopi, Hero: Piestewa an Icon,” *The Arizona Republic*, April 10, 2003.

[15] Marsha Woodbury, “Jewish Images that Injure,” in *Images that Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media 2nd edition* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 122.

[16] Homi K. Bhabha, “The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism,” in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Cornel West, eds. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992) ,71.

[17] David Bradley, from the Artists Bio: http://plainsart.orf/collections/david-p-bradley. Last accessed 4/28/2010.

[18] David Bradley is a registered member of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe. The Chippewa peoples are of the Anishinabe speaking groups from Northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, and First Nations members of Canada. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries those living in the United States were referred to as Chippewa while those in Canada were called Ojibwa; now many prefer to be acknowledged as Anishinabe.

[19] Don Juan Oñate established Santa Fe in 1598; however, Pueblo Indians revolted against the Spanish and occupied the city from 1680 until 1692 when Don Diego Vargas conquered the region. See Helen Haines, *History of New Mexico: From the Spanish Conquest to the Present Time, 1530-1890: With Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent People*. (New York: New Mexico Historical Pub. Co.; Reprint edition 1891), 84-95.

[20] Personal interview with David Bradley 6/10/2010.

[21]Ibid.

[22] From the mid-eighties into the nineties David Bradley was noted for his activity in the politics of in the American Indian Art Market. He helped to organize an Indian/Chicano coalition that demanded inclusion into contemporary exhibitions at the New Mexico Museum of Fine Arts. He also co-founded the Native American Artists Association (NAAA), organized to confront issues of fraudulent representation and profiteering in Native arts. The debate over ethnic qualification is a continuing dilemma and is far too complex to be addressed in

this thesis; nonetheless, is mentioned here because it is a relevant issue in the arts. Much of the controversy surrounding Bradley's work circulated during his years in Santa Fe. See Keith Easthouse, "Some Top Indian Artists Called Fake," *The Santa Fe Reporter*, August 19, 1987, 5-6; Julie Person, "Finding Spiritual Truth in Folk Art, *"Artists of the Sun*, August 15, 1984; Richard Hill, "Half Indian, Half Artist" in *The Alcove Show*, Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico: 1992; M.E. Sprengelmeyer, "Who's an Indian Artist and Who's Not" *Santa Fe Reporter*, April 14-20, 1993, 14-15.

[23] Allen J. Ryan, *The Trickster Shift: Humor and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 168.

[24] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 94.

[25]Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, 23.

[26] David Revere McFadden and Ellen Napiura Taubaman, *Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation 2* (New York: Museum of Arts and Design, 2006), 59.

[27] Lady Justice is depicted with a sword in her right hand and the scale in her left.

[28] In the 1970's Elaine Horwitch established herself as, what David Bradley, called "Grand Dame" of the southwest art scene and was known for having legendary opening galas. Horwitch died from a heart attack in 1991 and her children ran her galleries for a short time after her death. See obituary: "Elaine Horwitch, 58, Art Gallery Owner," *New York Times*, September 28, 1991).

[29] Personal Interview with David Bradley 6/9/2010.

[30] See Zozobra Web site. http://www.zozobra.com. Last accessed 5/20/2010.

[31] The Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe promotes the burning of Zozobra as another "Victory" for the people of Santa Fe. History section: http://www.zozobra.com/history.html. Last accessed 5/20/2010.

[32] Specific information of the characters was obtained from a personal conversation with the artist 5/29/2010. La Virgin and La Catrina are both popular symbols in Mexico. As referenced in Chapter Two, La Virgin is comparable to the Indian Princess in that both conceptions have been used as methodologies of colonization. The image of La Catrina was originally created by the artist Jos Guadalupe Posada as a part of his calavera series and became associated with the *Day of the Dead* celebration. See Chloë Sayer, *The Mexican Day of the Dead* (Boston: Shambhala Publications Inc, 1990), 26-31.

[33] Godzilla, created after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is referenced as a metaphor for nuclear warfare and the United States in general. See David Kalat, *A Critical History and Filmography of Toho's Godzilla Series* (London: McFarland and Company Inc., 1997), 33.

[34] Personal interview with the artist 02/05/2010.

[35] Bhabha asserts that the stereotype "vacillates between what is already known and what is always 'in place', already known and something that must be anxiously repeated…" Furthermore, stereotypes, like Native American trickster legends, are always in "excess" of logic and their legitimacy can never be proven. See Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994) 94-95.

[36] Bhabha argues that ambivalence is central to the stereotype. This is also true of the trickster as it moves through narratives and as a supernatural being it may change identities even within the same story. See Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 95. See also Franchot Ballinger, *Living Sideways: Tricksters in American Indian Oral Traditions* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).

[37] Ryan expounds on Gerald Vizenor's notion that the Trickster is "'a doing' not 'a being' "and therefore the trickster's identity is bound to its "behavior and defined by performance." See Allen J. Ryan, The *Trickster Shift: Contemporary Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 5.

[38] This will be discussed in depth through the topic of "camp" address later in this chapter.

[39] Staging *Coyote's Dream: An Anthology of First Nations Drama in English*, eds. Monica Mojica and Ric Knowles (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2003), 136.

[40] The first historic character introduced is La Malinche, a Nahua woman who became an interpreter for Cortez and is said to have been his mistress. She gave birth to his first child considered the first of Spanish/Native mix known as Mestizo. She was once seen as a traitor and was depicted as such in novels and movies; however, more recently her role in the conquest of Mexico has been viewed with more empathy. See Hugh Thomas, *Conquest: Montezuma, Cortes, and the Fall of Old Mexico* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993) 171-172. See also Ana Lanyon, *Malinche's Conquest* (St. Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1999). Marie/Margret/Madelaine enters later and represents Cree and Mètis women who helped to establish the Métis in Canada. Mojica asserts that they were then "systematically discarded." Monica Mojica, "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots" in *Staging Coyote's Dream: An Anthology of First Nations Drama in English* (Toronto : Playwrights Canada Press, 2009), 137.

[41] From the Character description.  See Mojica, "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots," 137.

[42]Addressed in chapter one, Christian Feest defines the legend of Pocahontas as an American Origin Myth.  Christian F. Feest, "Pride and Prejudice:  The Pocahontas Myth and the Pamunkey," in *The Invented Indian:  Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*, ed. James Clifton (New Brunswick, NJ:  Transaction Publishers, 1990), 50.

[43] Much of the dialog is based upon the writings of John Smith. For example, Mojica writes in the story of Pocahontas cart wheeling naked in the street as told by Smith in *The Generall Historie of Virginia* . See Mojica, "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots," 151.

[44] Mojica indicates that this is a quote attributed to Pocahontas. See Mojica, "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots," 149.

[45] Monica, "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots," 141.

[46] Lines are recited first in Spanish then in English.  See Mojica, "Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots," 169.

[47] See John Tilton, *Pocahontas: The Evolution of an American Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 32.

[48] White identifies Metahistory as the process of taking a historical event and creating a story from it.  White theorizes that the historians have arranged and stressed events to suit personal ideologies and he exemplifies this through the writing of nineteenth century historians.  Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). Pérez expounds on theories of White.  See also Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, 151.

[49] Barbara Hail, "Doris Bounds Role in Contemporary Native Pageantry," in *Native Arts of the Columbia Plateau: The Doris Swayze Bounds Collection,* ed. Susan Harless  (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 103-107.

[50] Female participants must abide by certain requirements; such as, being of a certain age, not having children, and possess a level of proficiency in the Navajo language.  Luther's mother was Miss Navajo in 1966. See Billy Luther, *Miss Navajo*, Documentary, directed by Billy Luther (Independent Television Services, 2007).

[51] Orlando Tom of Blue Gap, Arizona, stated the following: "Miss Cody's appearance and physical characteristics are clearly black, and are thus representative of another race of people…Miss Cody should focus on her African American heritage and stay out of Navajo affairs." *Albuquerque Journal* (March 1, 1998). See Tiya Miles, Sharon Patricia Holland, *Crossing Waters, Crossing Worlds: the African Diaspora in Indian Country* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006) 155. Christian Feest addresses the English fears to the mixing of Natives and Blacks, stating that "the Indian might ultimately hope to become White: but the slightest touch of 'Black blood' destined those so stigmatized to a perpetual Negro or Colored social category." In order to protect their tribal purity and identity many Indians accepted forms of White prejudice against their Black counterparts. See Christian F. Feest, "Pride and Prejudice: The Pocahontas Myth and the Pamunkey," in *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*, James a Clifton ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 51.

[52] Martha E. Ture, Cody's Blues, January 29, 2003: http://www.imdiversity.com/villages/native/arts_culture_media/ture_cody.asp. Last accessed 6/26/2010.

[53] Radmilla Cody's website: http://www.radmillacody.net. Last accessed 6/26/2010.

[54] Beyond many sentiments made soon after Cody's indictment, negative comments can found on YouTube and other Internet pages that feature her performance. Some are racist, some misogynistic, and some are obscene.

[55] Cathy Mattes and Kent Monkman, "An Interview with Miss Chief Eagle Testickle," in *The Triumph of Mischief: Kent Monkman* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Hamilton and the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, 2008), 108.

[56] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 122-123.

[57] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 173.

[58] Monkman states that he specifically looks to these two women because of their glamorous stage presence. He criticizes Cher's performance in his word play: "Miss Chief Share Eagle Testickle" or "Mischief Cher Egotistical." Conversation with Monkman at workshop featuring Kent Monkman and Gerald McMaster held at Arizona State University March 19, 2009.

[59] Jean-Guy Goulet, "'Berdache/Two Spirit': A Comparison of Anthropological and Native Constructions of Gendered Identities Among the Northern

Athapaskans" *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 2 no. 4 (December 1996) 683 -84. In Cree the word *ayekkwew* means "neither man nor woman" or "man and woman." See Walter Williams, *The Spirit and The Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 82.

[60] George Catlin*, Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indians in Two Volumes* (New York, Wiley and Putnam, 1841), 214-15.

[61] See Sherry L. Smith's discussion of the dialog of military officers about plains Indians. *The View from Officers Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press: 1990), 20-27.

[62] Bunny McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris* (Norman : University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 100.

[63] Elise Marubbio, *Killing the Indian Maiden*: *Images of Native American Women in Film* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006).

[64] Esther Newton, *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 106.

[65] Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp" *Partisan Review* (Fall 1964), 1.

[66] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 178.

[67] Katrin Sieg, *Ethnic Drag: Performing Race, Nation, Sexuality in West Germany* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), 187-189.

[68] Emma Pérez on Linda Hutcheon, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, 4.

Chapter 5

# CONCLUSION

> It doesn't take much insight into racial attitudes to understand the real meaning of the Indian-grandmother complex that plagues certain whites. A male ancestor has too much the aura of a savage warrior, the unknown primitive, the instinctive animal to make him a member of the family tree. But the young Indian princess? Ah there was royalty for the taking. Somehow the white was linked with a noble house of gentility and culture if his grandmother was an Indian princess who ran away with an intrepid pioneer.[1]

Despite efforts of artists, activists, and scholars, attitudes toward the Indian Princess have changed very little since her inception. Throughout more than two centuries she has been regarded as a sensual object of perfection, an "unthreatening" emblem of national identity, and even part of indigenous pride. However, in this thesis I suggest that the figure is a damaging stereotypic invention formed from Anglo-patriarchal ideals. The Indian Princess is a persistent entity and from the time this research began not a week has gone by in which I have not been made known of her presence. Professors, family, and friends have assisted in bringing my attention to a variety of images, films, and literature ranging from critical analysis, to more heavily weighted absurd depictions of young women draped in the identifiable feathers, and buckskin. Most recently, I encountered a newspaper advertisement that offered "Princess Winona" a porcelain doll wearing a fringed beaded dress with a headband and additional fiber optic wings. Images as such, along with historical and modern interpretations discussed in these chapters, have led me to conclude that the

Indian Princess developed as, and remains, a reproachful symbol of Indian women in the 21st century.

No individual portrayal, aside from Pocahontas, has been more enduring or ubiquitous than the Land O' Lakes icon that I closely evaluate in Chapter Four. She is the romanticized Native Princess and although this particular emblem began in 1939 her origins can be traced back to the Caribbean or Amazonian Queen. These Savage and Erotic women were first introduced to Europeans through illustrations based on the writings of Amerigo Vespucci and Christopher Columbus. They established an archetype of the indigenous woman as powerful, man-eating, sexual goddesses conjured from European mythologies with which colonizers at the time of contact were already quite familiar.

In my consideration of these past prevalent symbolic representations, especially the most critically analyzed *Vespucci Discovers America*, I have argued that the Spanish and then the English found methodology to promote national identity through the female Native body. However, Anglo decorum desired a more demure creature than the Queen, therefore a Princess evolved, primarily from legends surrounding the Powhatan woman Pocahontas. In fact, she proved more central to the Princess's origin than originally anticipated as it became clear that her envisioned likenesses formed the basis for the romanticized stereotype that was made so popular in the twentieth century. The two narratives of her life, the rescue and her marriage, have been played out in their various forms over and again since the seventeenth century. Discourse surrounding her brief life is still

prevalent, as scholars such as Reyna Green, Paula Allen Gunn, and Robert Tilton endeavor to reveal more truthful accounts of her life. Edward Gallagher, creator of the ever expanding Pocahontas Archive states: “In many ways, this woman, about whom so very little is actually known, and who has left not one word undeniably her own on the historical record, is a complete product of the American imagination.”[2]

Her legendary life continues today as a confused mythological point of American history and is continually revived to perpetuate and propagate colonization methodologies. For example, the 1995 cartoon *Pocahontas* by Disney is still popular among children and her sexualized character continues as a favorite to emulate on Halloween. The most large scale fictional production *The New World* (2005) focused again on the imagined love affair involving Smith. This film reinforced the ideologies of assimilation through marriage of white men to indigenous women identical to those that persisted in the nineteenth century and were illustrated in John Gadsby Chapman’s painting *Baptism of Pocahontas* created over one hundred and seventy years earlier.

I have also explored how the Indian Princess achieved much of her success through the accompaniment of her performance. In chapter two I cite the theories of Diane Taylor and apply her definitions of “archive” and “repertoire” in order to demonstrate how imagery and enactment enhanced conceptualization of the Princess in America during the 19th and 20$^{th}$ centuries. In addition, I have demonstrated that the figure was appropriated by a number of American Indian

women as a way for them to establish identities within a society fraught with gender and racial biases. Sarah Winnemucca and Pauline Johnson were able to self promote and defend their political positions under guise of the Princess while the stunning Penobscot, Molly Nelson, explored her own artistic pursuits, skimpily costumed in the feather and buckskin of the stereotype. But ultimately, the enactment, whether performed by "pure" Indians or those of mixed-blood, proved a detriment and more often than not resulted in tragic endings. The lives of the women who took on the persona were plagued by unresolved issues in social and personal relationships.[3]

In my final analysis I examined the Indian Princess as a stereotype and considered the reactions to her in the work of contemporary Native artists. David Bradley, Monica Mojica, and Kent Monkman have each exploded the stereotype to bring us face to face with the absurdity of her existence. Their stylistic choices have been identified as "trickster," a term developed by Allen J Ryan and Gerald McMaster that is all too commonly used in current art history discourse. In my observations I point out that there is a relationship between tricksters and stereotypes and indicate that artists' successes in their confrontation with it has been achieved by the use of corresponding tactics.

I call out what I see as continuing resistance to the subject through the combined efforts found in art and theory. However, there are indigenous and mixed-blood women who have made great contributions without assistance of the Indian Princess Edmonia Lewis (sculptor), Maria Tallchief (ballet dancer), and

Maria Martinez (Pueblo potter) and the list goes on. Yet, it is at this point I am left to question whether the pervasive Indian Princess will ever really be defeated, or like the young woman on the Land O'Lakes butter box, will she repeat indefinitely in a never-ending continuum? The answer is that she most certainly will.

Still, she is nonetheless a stereotype permitting the use of the female indigenous body that has proven much more a menace than Disney cartoons or Halloween costumes portray. Statistically Native woman are inflicted by an appallingly high rate of violence and are nearly three times more likely to be raped or sexually assaulted than any other group of women in the United States and Canada. They experience more intimate partner violence and their rates of murder are higher than the national average.[4] As a symbol of indigenous females the seemingly innocent, sexually alluring, noble figure continues to perpetuate an image that reduces and eroticizes Native women into objects of breasts, feathers, and buckskin. The Indian Princess was invented as a colonialist's tool to promote conquest, assimilation, and justification of violence against Native people. She has served her purpose and finally needs to be put to rest.

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[1]Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: an Indian Manifesto* (New York: Avon, 1969), 10-11.

[2] Edward Gallagher: http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/pocahontas. Last accessed 10/20/2010.

[3] Veronica Strong-Boag, "A Red Girls Reasoning: E. Pauline Johnson Constructs the New Nation" in *Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender, and the Construction of Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 133.

[4]Andrea Smith, *Conquest Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005), 142.

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# APPENDIX

# FIGURES

Fig. 1. Unidentified artist, Frontispiece to the first illustrated edition of Columbus's letter. Woodcut, 1494. Photo: © The British Library Board. G.6746; IA.37918.

Fig. 2. Unidentified artist, Illustration to Vespucci's letter to Soderini. Woodcut, 1509. Photo: © The British Library Board. C.32.f.2.

Fig. 3.  Johannes Stradnus (Jan Van de Straet), *Amerigo Vespucci Discovers America*. Engraving, ca.1575.  Photo: Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C. Published in: *Nova Reperta*, Antwerp ca. 1600.

Fig. 4. John White, *A Woman of Florida*. Watercolour, ca. 1585. Photo: © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 5. Simone Van de Passe, *Matoaks als Rebecka daughter to the mighty Prince Powhatan*, 1616. Photo: Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Created/Published in: John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles: Together with the True Travels, Adventures and Observations, and a Sea Grammar*. New York: Macmillan, 1907.

Fig. 6. William Blake, *Europe Supported by Africa and America*. Engraving, 1796. Photo: Courtesy of the University of Arizona Museum of Art & Archive of Visual Arts, Tucson, Arizona.

Fig. 7. John Gadsby Chapman, *The Baptism of Pocahontas*. Oil on Canvas, 1840. Photo: Courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol, United States Capitol Art Collection, Washington, D.C

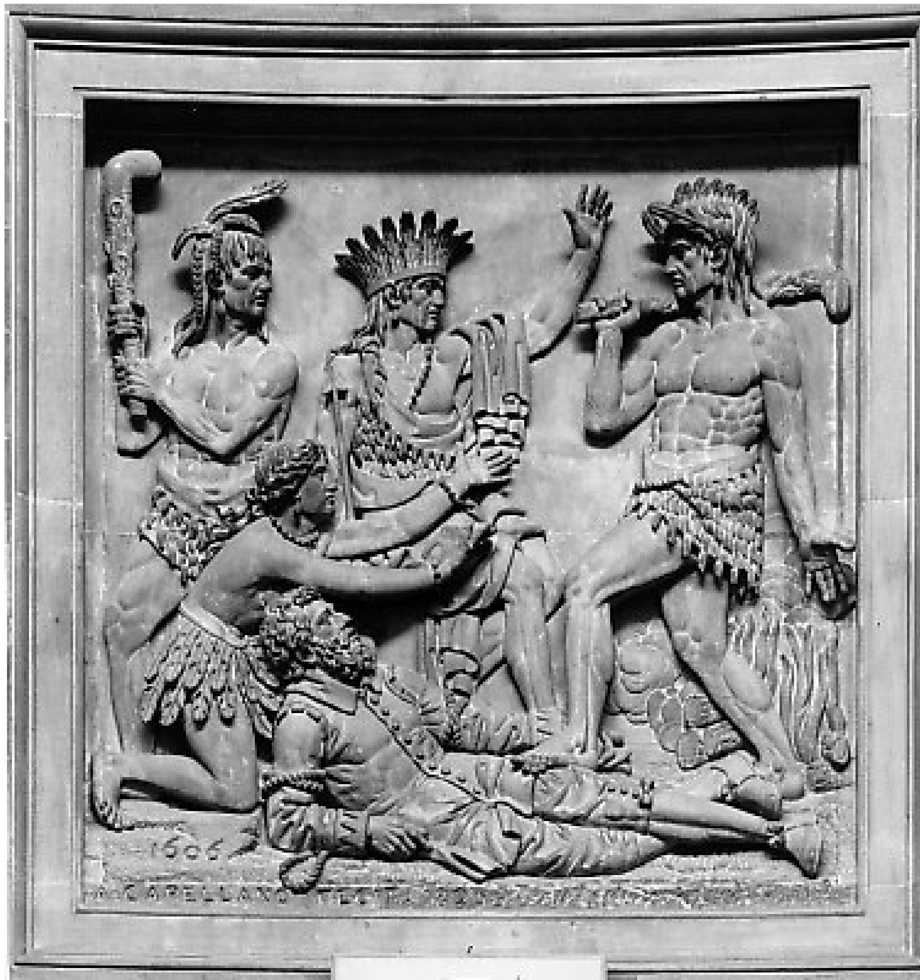


Fig. 8. Antonio Capellano, *Preservation of Captain Smith by Pocahontas*. Sandstone, 1825. Photo: Courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol, United States Capitol Art Collection, Washington D.C.

Fig. 9. Alfred Jacob Miller, *Bartering for a Bride (The Trappers Bride).* Oil on Canvas, 1845. Photo: Courtesy of Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Fig. 10. Jess Betlatch, Land O' Lakes Trademark, 1939. © 2010 LAND O LAKES, INC.

Fig.11. David Bradley, *Land O'Bucks, Land O'Fakes*, 1995. © 2011 DAVID BRADLEY All rights reserved.

Fig. 12. David Bradley, *Land O'Bucks, Land O'Fakes*, 2006. © 2011 DAVID BRADLEY All rights reserved.

Fig. 13. David Bradley, *Land O' Fakes Bitter*, 2007. © 2011 DAVID BRADLEY All rights reserved.

Fig.14. David Bradley, *Pictures at an Exhibition #2*, 2008. © 2011 DAVID BRADLEY All rights reserved.

Fig. 15. David Bradley, *Harvest Moon, Godzilla vs. Zozobra*, 2010. © 2011 DAVID BRADLEY All rights reserved.

Fig, 16.  Kent Monkman, *Hunter*, 2006. © 2011 KENT MONKMAN All rights reserved.

Fig. 17. Kent Monkman, *Vaudeville Star*, 2006. © 2011 KENT MONKMAN All rights reserved.

Fig. 18. Kent Monkman, *Cindy Silver Screen*, 2006. © 2011 KENT MONKMAN All rights reserved.

Fig. 19. Kent Monkman, *The Trapper's Bride,* 2006. © 2011 KENT MONKMAN All rights reserved.

Fig. 20. Kent Monkman, *Film Director*, 2006. © 2011 KENT MONKMAN All rights reserved.
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From: DAVID BRADLEY [sfjemez@msn.com] Sent: Mon 11/1/2010 10:36 AM

To: Tammi Hanawalt

Cc:

Subject: Re: Permission for thesis

Attachments:

View As Web Page

Hi Tammi,

Thanks for your interest in my art, I am honored that you are using it. And thanks for all the great perspectives.

How do I grant permission? I hereby give Tammi Hanawalt permission to use the images listed below in her college thesis project. Let me know if that suffices. Good luck.-David Bradley

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Tammi Hanawalt

**To:** DAVID BRADLEY

**Sent:** Monday, November 01, 2010 10:26 AM

**Subject:** Permission for thesis

Hi David,

Sorry it has been so long since I have contacted you. I see that *Land O' Lakes Bitter* is at Mesa and it looks great!! I am finally defending my proposal this month and will be filing it with the college. I will send you a copy as soon as it is approved.

I do need your permission to include in my thesis the four pieces I discussed with you *Land O' Bucks, Land O' Fakes* (1998) *Land O' Bucks, Land O' Fakes, Land O'Lakes* (2006), *Land O' Lakes Bitter* (2007) *Harvest Moon, Godzilla vs. Zozobra* (2010).

They will be printed in black and white and I think the University will only have electronic copies now. I really appreciate all of your help and I hope this works. I will be contacting you soon about where to send a copy and if there is a more formal permission form.

Thank you!

Tammi

Fig. 21. David Bradley loan agreement with Tammi Hanawalt.

From: kmonkman@sympatico.ca on behalf of Kent Monkman Sent: Wed 3/9/2011 10:30 AM

To: Tammi Hanawalt

Cc:

Subject: Re: Permission to use images emergence of a legend

Attachments:

View As Web Page

yes that's fine

On Mar 1, 2011, at 1:43 PM, Tammi Hanawalt wrote:

Hi Kent,
We met some time ago when you did a workshop at Arizona State University. I am filing my master's thesis and I have written a section that includes your work, specifically Emergence of a Legend. Is it possible for me to include the five images in my UNPUBLISHED thesis? I will not of course include them unless you give me your approval. Thank you for your time.
Best,
Tammi

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Fig. 22. Kent Monkman loan agreement with Tammi Hanawalt.