

REFORMERS REVEALED: AMERICAN INDIAN PROGRESSIVES AT
HASKELL INSTITUTE, LAWRENCE, KANSAS, 1884-1909

BY

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Submitted to the graduate program in History
and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas
in partial fulfillment for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Chairperson

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REFORMERS REVEALED: AMERICAN INDIAN PROGRESSIVES AT
HASKELL INSTITUTE, LAWRENCE, KANSAS, 1884-1909

Committee:

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For Masha, wfa, and DLM, Sr.,

Spirit Doctors all

ABSTRACT

Haskell Institute opened in 1884, an early example of federal off-reservation boarding schools for American Indian youth. The goal was assimilation: strip away traditional languages, spiritual beliefs, tribal customs, even family ties, and replace them with inculcation into the values of Western civilization upheld by white society. In reality, students, whose ages covered a wide range, often clung tenaciously to older, more familiar ideals. This study looks broadly at the effects of this conflict in the mindsets and behaviors of both students and administrators at the school (and similar institutions). Because Haskell's first quarter-century overlaps with much of the period scholars call "The Progressive Era" in U.S. history, the time frame investigated yields rich data regarding new thinking about educational and social reform. While recent literature on the boarding school system has blossomed, the link between its activities and the larger picture of American Progressivism has not been firmly established within the context of a specific school. By the dawn of the nineteenth century, Haskell Institute was becoming the largest of these federal education outlets, making its success of especial consequence, both because it affected great numbers of students (and their support networks) and served as a model for promoting policy goals. Understanding how Haskell grew and became an increasingly accepted part of the American Indian experience requires the realization that native peoples played an active role in shaping the contours of their own education. While their "partnership" with government functionaries was often limited, the input they provided, through a variety of means, had measurable consequences for the direction and overall influence of the school. In this way, Haskell students (as well as their families, tribal leadership, and a growing vanguard of American Indian elites, themselves often the product of similar educational experiences) may be viewed through the lens of Progressive reform. Precisely defining Progressivism is difficult, but Indians' active participation at Haskell did affect visible change in their education, and comprised another, overlooked example of Progressives in action. Through attendance records, administrative and curricular changes, personal letters and reminiscences, development of a more native-centered school newspaper, elimination (or tempering) of the most egregious aspects of boarding-school life, or other means, a tangible American Indian Progressivism emerges, with its ultimate aim retention of core elements of native cultures and traditions. Thus they were not simply victims of government or outside social engineering, but active participants in the education process. The intertwining of both federal directives and native hopes in the development of Haskell makes a fascinating case study of Progressive activism and reform, the ability to affect quiet change within an oppressive institutional atmosphere, the recognition of a strong native voice in this period, and the interdependence of the boarding-school system and American Indian peoples in establishing (often quite different) measures of "success" in this education. The survival of Native American peoples, customs, and Haskell itself, as a place today celebrating that persistence, is strong testimony to this Indian Progressivism and the works and lives of those who came before.

NOTE TO THE READER

I have used the following terms, essentially interchangeably, to refer to the aboriginal peoples of the Americas, especially those in areas that eventually came to be the United States: Indian, American Indian, Native American, native, indigenous, and traditional. This range of lexicon seemed, to me, more or less reflective of the wide standard among both scholars and tribal nations, and it allowed for some variety in the narrative. Hopefully it is not a source of confusion or consternation to my readers.

In a similar vein, I have, perhaps to the chagrin of some, chosen to somewhat loosely transpose the designations Office of Indian Affairs (OIA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Department, and Indian Service throughout the chapters. This was mostly a stylistic choice, made to assign substitute nomenclature so as to avoid repetition and monotony when referencing that arm of the U.S. government (usually falling under the Interior Department for our purposes here) dealing with Native American issues and policies. I recognize it could be argued that the different names are best left linked to certain periods or specific duties, but it is also amply clear many of these have often been bandied about, both by Indians and bureaucrats, with a basic understanding of their inter-twining nature and relationship (and monolithic status) long before I began writing.

Finally, the use of the word “Progressive” should also be addressed. This upper-case version is used, almost exclusively, to denote the time frame historians (and others) have now long employed to describe that era spanning the period from about 1890 to 1920 when a host of reform elements sought change in American politics, society, labor, race relations, and other areas. The lower-case “progressive,” by contrast, I have tried to attach only to the people, and their thinking, which were behind such efforts. On occasion, there are examples when this rule does not hold fast and true; in those instances I have endeavored to explain that deviation in the text.

This essay is, in many ways, a work still in progress and does not claim to offer complete synthesis of the history of Indian-white relations, the federal boarding-school system, or the Progressive Era. It means instead to propose some novel ways of examining or viewing these aspects of American history and to shed light on the activities or behavior of a group that has been overlooked in terms of both their agency and proper place in the past’s pageant. Any insights I am able to provide are, of course, encouraging, both personally and in terms of a continued debate over these topics. By the same token, I must take full responsibility for any oversights, errors, or glaring omissions found in the following pages.

--EPA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A friend of mine whose father had written a doctoral dissertation and several books during his academic career once compared such literary undertakings to the process of giving birth. While not a completely original metaphor, it is an apt one. In my case, the gestation and labor pains of this project have encompassed a period of many years, and the developing “child” has certainly been raised by a village. All authors necessarily incur a number of debts along the way that make their work possible and mine is no exception. The many midwives and surrogates who took a deep interest in this study deserve special mention and thanks for their assistance, suggestions, and invaluable insights.

Historians, of course, do not work in a vacuum. They must rely on the work of others who came before in the reviewing and parsing of both primary and secondary data. On this first front, the staffs of a variety of institutions I visited (and sometimes haunted) merit high praise for their ability to locate materials, provide alternate leads (and photocopies of key sources!), and for a general knowledge and thoroughness without which I would have been lost in a sea of paper and possible citations or directions. These include, but are not strictly limited to, employees at the Kansas City branch of the National Archives; the Kansas Collection in the Spencer Research Library and the Watson Library on the campus of the University of Kansas; the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka; the Haskell Indian Nations University Cultural Center and Tommaney Library; and the Douglas County Historical Society in the Watkins Community Museum, located in beautiful downtown Lawrence.

Several individual scholars also need to be singled out for their efforts. My advisor, mentor, and Committee Chair Rita G. Napier set a standard for professionalism and intellectual acumen I hope to echo and honor in this and future works. Her unflagging faith in my skills and the importance of this study, and her patience with my plodding pace, reflects a rare attribute in the world of academe, valuing the ends as well as the means of achieving results and furthering historical knowledge. Peter C. Mancall, of the University of Southern California, helped with suggesting sources and reading early drafts of materials

eventually incorporated into the body of the dissertation. Emily J. Salisbury, Assistant Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Portland State University, assisted greatly in guidance with ideas about inmate subculture. Luis Corteguera, Director of Graduate Studies in the History Department at the University of Kansas, provided yeoman advice in finishing my writing and navigating the Scylla and Charybdis of KU's bureaucratic machinations. Finally, my dissertation committee members, historians Paul Kelton, Kim Warren, and Norman E. Saul (who also served on my M.A. committee), and political science Professor Sharon O'Brien, all of KU, comprised a strong team of academic advisors on whom I could consistently rely for penetrating perspicacity and feedback in my journey.

In completing the trials and travails of this personal odyssey, I had a network of family and friends who supported me as surely as those of the students who attended Haskell Institute during its first quarter century of existence. While they are too numerous to fully list here, I wish to give thanks to a few of these people in blanket gratitude for the entire group, whose interest, love, and omnipresent belief in me made this a much less arduous path than it would have been without them. My family, particularly my mother and stepfather, Judy A. and Donald L. Moler, Jr., spurred me ever onward to finish what I'd started and gave me shelter from the storm of everyday distractions with financial assistance and the use of their "getaway" home in Council Grove, Kansas, in the final months of my cloistered writing. In all candor, I simply could not have done this work without them. My dear friend and confidante Chris Webber was a lifeline as well, supplying his time for key fact-checking missions and much-needed moral support. Last (though certainly not least), I cannot adequately express the deep thanks that must go to my partner, my heart, Aaron L. Needham, for his love, even-keeled attitude kept in response to my worst moments of frustrations and crises of self-doubt, and in his help with the minutiae of formatting and cataloguing of sources for the final draft of this dissertation. To these individuals and the many others who gave me the freedom and foundation I so needed in my life, I say: *meegwetch* to you all!

Eric Anderson
Lawrence and Council Grove, Kansas,
Summer-Fall 2009

PREFACE

This is a story about young Native American students who attended (primarily) Haskell Institute, an early government boarding school meant to remove them from and strip away their cultural heritage. They faced many obstacles in obtaining an education that would, ideally, help them to survive in a changing world and provide a future better than the one preceding centuries of Indian-white relations had promised. When viewed at a glance, these boarding institutions were cruel, cold places that made victims of their wards through a process of denying traditions, separation and loneliness, and constant pushing for assimilation to the dominant social norms. While it is certainly true that such schools were often a den of confusion and anxiety rife with all manner of abuse, a simple appraisal of complete victimization does not do justice to the whole story.

A deeper look, in fact, suggests that students came to Haskell with their own expectations and convictions about what education there could offer them and their people. Family and tribal ties, always central to American Indian communities, remained as paramount concerns and connections for the children in residence at Haskell, despite attempts by administrators and federal directives to distance pupils from them. Schools grew in size, scope, and popularity among native peoples over time, not just as a result of a renewed government focus on how to handle its “Indian problem,” but also, and more importantly, because Indians came to accept them as a means for changing themselves on their own terms, and from within their walls, over time. The meaning of “success” is one best defined on different levels when examining the issue of boarding-school education during its early years. As one of the first in an expanding network of federal outposts committed to an education for assimilation, Haskell affords an excellent case study for the malleability of this terminology for the various groups who had a vested interest in the continued work of these schools. For bureaucrats and employees devoted to this system, success might mean one thing; for Native Americans it could be something else entirely. Sometimes there was common ground in this evaluation of goals; many other times there was not.

Taken as a whole, however, both sets of criteria played an essential role in the development and direction of Haskell Institute. Indians and non-Indians alike had a hand in forming the core curriculum and overall focus of school life. Through quiet and effective means, Native Americans made their needs known in a process of give-and-take that shaped what the school would become. Traditional languages, religious beliefs and practices, and other cultural expressions, while overtly rejected as part of the program in place, still survived among the student body, and gained a solid foothold to be built upon over time as a broader acceptance about the role of Indians in American society slowly changed, eventually evolving to be more in line with the celebrations of native ancestry and customs apparent at Haskell Indian Nations University today. In the meantime, throughout the long decades of the school's existence, and especially in its formative period, this fundamental focus was always alive, if only found in limited (and sometimes covert) ways. After all, a school of this type could not thrive, or be "successful" by government lights, if Indian people did not, at least on a certain basic level, agree to accept it, which they did with the underlying understanding and assumption that they would have some hand in its formation.

That being said, it is crucial to understand that resources and reactions available to Native Americans in this were rather limited, and that it took a skillful set of politic responses to maintain their own aims and needs in a system set to deny them just that. Nevertheless, a quasi-partnership between Indians and government-sponsored education took hold, almost from the moment of Haskell's inception. It is the nature of this relationship my study seeks to explore in some detail, therefore adding to the base of historical knowledge about Indian-white interactions in general and the estimation of off-reservation boarding schools in particular. What it reveals is insightful in terms of Haskell's history, of course, but also in underscoring the active nature of Native Americans as historical agents in a period and setting many scholars have denied or dismissed as ones with few avenues of agency for American Indians.

Beyond this, I have chosen to investigate the developing relationship through the lens of the larger historical period that influenced it. Because much of Haskell's first twenty-five years coincide with the era that historians have dubbed an age of Progressivism, it would be remiss to ignore the contours of

reform efforts during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries that helped define the status quo. While others have clearly recognized that the work of those so-called “friends of the Indian” falls into this category of moral or social “uplift,” they have largely overlooked the ramifications of considering Native American youngsters (and their support networks growing out of family and tribal affiliations) *a part of* the strains of Progressive activities and change at work in this period. Given the wide application of the designation “progressive,” this is an oversight that needs attention and adjustment so that a fuller accounting of the Progressive past, and Haskell’s place within that framework, can be affected.

Several key authors and works have taken up the topic of Indian boarding schools and students in a variety of ways, and a few of these deserve some brief comparative discussion here. David Wallace Adams’s authoritative *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* traces the new directions in Indian education set forth in the reservation period following the Civil War and Reconstruction through the post-Progressive age and up through the criticisms of government policy in the Meriam Report. Adams clearly shows the novel aspects of schooling that grew out of the model established by Richard Henry Pratt and his Carlisle Institute but also grounds his study in a recognition of the older paradigms that gave rise to the more modernist approach, including the idea of imparting standards of “civilization” defined solely by the experience and accumulated knowledge of Western perspectives and the missionary zeal that remained at the heart of transforming Indians and their cultures. He also looks carefully at Native American rationales for attending these schools and the panoply of responses students and parents had to the actual work being done there and the end results of the educational process.¹

Similarly sweeping in scope is the engaging and insightful *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930*, by Michael C. Coleman.² Bookending a period slightly longer than Adams, the study’s particular genius lies in a weighty literary comparison of autobiographical accounts by former pupils of

¹ (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

² (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993).

their days in a host of educational outposts established for Native Americans (reservation day schools, religious and vocational training academies, and boarding institutions). While both Adams and Coleman merit high praise for the diligence and extent of their scholarly investigations, especially in terms of showing the agency of Indian students in their struggles to deal with the hardships of life away from home, the writ-large nature of these works cannot (nor do they claim to) give readers a more detailed or nuanced picture of what these children faced at an individual institute over time. Furthermore, these authors tend to focus more on a system of rules, prohibitions, and punishments that restricted or restrained pupils, shifting the emphasis of varied Indian responses into the realm of simple *reaction*, without always fully considering the *proactive* qualities of their behavior as indicative of larger cultural goals, needs, or assertions. Likewise the symbiosis at play in the exchange between Native American students and their support networks on the one hand, and school officials on the other, is not given the primacy it should have to bridge the understanding that a mutual reliance on one another existed among both parties.

Monographs, of course, can afford closer examination of such issues in a more singular environment, adding to the depth of knowledge found in broader surveys. Two integral studies of boarding schools that jibe with aspects my own work are Kimberly Tsianina Lomawaima's *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of the Chilocco Indian School* and Brenda J. Child's *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*.³ Lomawaima gives a view of Chilocco over nearly a century but concentrates foremost on the 1920s and 1930s through student recollections that show both positive and negative features of school life at an off-reservation school founded the same year as Haskell Institute and with close ties to its Kansas "sister" in the government system. Both this book and Child's are instructive in imparting a Native American perspective on the education offered at these schools vis-à-vis the personal connections each author has through their own family experiences at the respective institutions as well as the use of primary sources (especially home letters) that help give further credence to the findings of Adams and Coleman in their more exhaustive (but also more widely defined) approaches.

³ (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994) and (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

Notably, despite the fact that each of these smaller volumes are concerned with a time frame that encompasses much of the Progressive period, the effects of numerous reform efforts apparent then, or fitting Native American students into this mold, mostly escape their scrutiny. As a consequence, these authors essentially leave the issues surrounding that era (and its representatives) either to the imagination or else better (although, again, usually only nominally) explored in the confines of the general treatments of Indian educations by Adams, Coleman, and others.⁴ The most revealing feature of student life the shorter studies do bring to light is the camaraderie and kinship that developed among children of different tribal backgrounds, fostering a Pan-Indianism that helped strengthen Native American societies overall, at least in part as a function of shared experiences, including, ironically, boarding-school education itself. The genesis and effects of these inter-tribal cross-cultural currents, particularly in terms of their growth and impact during the Progressive Era is an area of scholarship most ably defined and delved into in Hazel W. Hertzberg's monumental (and too-often unsung) masterpiece, *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements*.⁵

Marrying much of the meritorious aspects already given brief compass found in the previous works is the recent scholarship of Myriam Vučković, whose *Voices from Haskell: Indian Students Between Two Worlds, 1884-1928*, seeks to give the fullest reading to date of the school and student life there from its founding to the waning days of the purely assimilationist agenda.⁶ In many ways it matches the scope and tenor, as well as the organizational tack, taken by Coleman and Adams but has the added virtue of being rooted in the history of a single school, although it, too, leaves much of the context of Progressivism unexplored beyond a surface recognition of its multiple machinations. In addition, Vučković sometimes presents her findings haphazardly and can be recklessly reliant on other, secondary

⁴ See, for e.g., Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004) and Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds., *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

⁵ (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971).

⁶ (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998)

material (including my own).⁷ That aside, she has given us a praiseworthy effort in tackling a huge chunk of Haskell's long history and presenting a wealth of new primary sources that illuminate the emotional content and characteristics what students were doing at the school on an everyday basis and the connections they formed, among themselves as well as with faculty and staff, while there.

To each of these authors I owe a deep debt of gratitude for paving the way I've found in my own work on Haskell Institute. Without their perspectives and perceptions I would have been less able to make critical decisions, assertions, and judgments (albeit sometimes quite different ones) the reader will find here. The recognition of scholarship that has come before cannot be overemphasized and this brief accounting of the handful of key studies I've mentioned is an exercise in underscoring the major starting (or jumping off) points and guideposts for my personal investigation into the Haskell past. (Each of these books, and the direct influence they had, as well as a number of others directly related to this research, was invaluable in my quest, as should be indicated by their repeated citations in the copious notes that follow.) Nor do I intend to denigrate them by the fact that the direction chosen by their authors; obviously, had they pursued the specific angles I include or said exactly what I find most compelling about the history of Haskell in this period then there would be no need for this writing at all. Doubtless I am guilty of important oversights or unrefined conclusions as well, which I expect will be brought to my attention as this piece gains wider circulation and exposure in the future. I am, of course, entirely responsible for these mistakes or any short-sightedness in my estimation of events and circumstances.

In the final analysis, however, it is also true that the writing of history is an act of both imagination and interpretation. While I bear the burden of presenting arguments that I believe are appropriate and well-founded, should they prove less than sustainable, I am still reasonably satisfied that,

⁷ Historians, of necessity, sometimes revisit sources uncovered by their predecessors; I am no exception to this reality. However, the employment of exact narrative usage of another author, without benefit of quotations, is poor form. For an example of this, see *ibid.*, p. 258, where a portion of Vučković's discussion of the Pawnee student artist William Pollock is lifted directly from p. 137 of Eric P. Anderson, "An Imperfect Education: Assimilation and American Indians at Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kansas, 1884-1894" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Kansas, 1997). In fairness, while Vučković does not present this small verbatim section as a direct quote, she does give proper attribution in the attached footnote (see her note 23, p. 305).

like the other authors I've noted above, I have helped to advance the knowledge, interest, and interpretive dynamics associated with this slice of the past, and proved that it is one intersecting with several major tropes of American history, including the legacy of colonialism, interactions between indigenous and outside peoples, the goals and meanings of reform among both natives and non-Indians, the scope and results of boarding-school education, and a contextual background for regional topicality and the larger Progressive movement. I believe this is an important story and that my telling of it adds original and untapped elements to the growing body of literature connected to the early years of Haskell Institute and similar schools.

I first became interested in Haskell because it offered a kaleidoscope of viewpoints, to which I have just alluded, through the discovery of its past. As a Citizen Band Potawatomi, I have a personal investment in knowing more about what went on there as Indians were exposed to new ideas or pushed to turn from their past; conversely, understanding what effect native peoples could have by working within this system was, for me, a fascinating trajectory of inquiry. When I first began to look closely at the internal workings of the school, one of the few extant examples of a now-withered (and often discredited) system of government outlets for Indian education that emerged in the late-nineteenth century, and one sitting practically in my own backyard, I fell under the spell of what the school could offer up toward a larger understanding of the past. This work, which resulted in my M.A. thesis, continues here, where I hope I have done justice to those students and their supporters who gave life, direction, and dignity to this small corner of the world, and in doing so, radiated each of those forces well beyond it.

Finally, a few notes on the organization of the dissertation. The next section, Chapter One, provides an introduction to the perceived "Indian problem" that policymakers (or those who wished to be) discerned and wished to address by the 1870s, including new ideas about Indian education and citizenship; it also speaks to the need for other changes *created by* these novel vehicles, given from the perspective of Native Americans themselves. Because reform, from all manner of vantage points, is a recurring theme during this period, and also due to my belief that American Indian students constitute an

overlooked aspect of the burgeoning Progressive strain in the life and society of the United States, Chapter Two shows the huge variety of reform efforts taking shape in the period contemporaneous to my examination of Haskell; I have especially focused on how historians have wrestled with the meaning and reckoning of what Progressivism was. As this research is primarily centered on Native Americans at school, Chapter Three discusses the emergence of Progressive leadership in American Indian circles, their number sometimes referred to as “The Red Progressives,” as well as stating the case for boarding-school students as yet another group of Progressive Reformers. While Haskell Institute is at the heart of all of this, Chapters Four and Five most specifically deal with the give-and-take process that defined a limited partnership for Indian students and their support networks during the first quarter century of the school’s existence; these chapters, therefore, make up the lion’s share of the dissertation’s length and breadth. Concluding remarks, aimed at tying these various threads together, comprise the summation.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

The following sources are given full citation the first time they appear in the footnotes, just as they are in the right-hand column here. Subsequent usage employs the shortened forms on the left-hand side below.

<i>AHR</i>	<i>The American Historical Review</i>
ARCIA	Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs
CSRC	“Charles and Sara T.D. Robinson Collection, 1834-1911” (in KSHS)
DCHS	Douglas County Historical Society and Watkins Museum (Lawrence, Kansas)
HISR	“Haskell Institute Student Records, 1884-1920” (in NACPR)
HIJC	“Haskell Indian Junior College, 1884-1899” (in DCHS)
<i>HOK</i>	<i>Heritage of Kansas: A Publication of the Kansas State Teacher’s College, Emporia</i>
KCSRL	Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas (Lawrence)
KSHS	Kansas State Historical Society (Topeka, Kansas)
<i>KH</i>	<i>Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains</i>
<i>LDG</i>	<i>Lawrence Daily Gazette</i>
<i>LDJ</i>	<i>Lawrence Daily Journal</i>
<i>MMWH</i>	<i>Montana: The Magazine of Western History</i>
NACPR	National Archives, Central Plains Region (Kansas City, Missouri)
RG	Record Group (e.g., RG 75), in NACPR
<i>rprt.</i>	Reprinted version of older published work
<i>TIL</i>	<i>The Indian Leader</i>
<i>WHQ</i>	<i>The Western Historical Quarterly</i>
<i>WMQ</i>	<i>The William and Mary Quarterly</i>

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CHAPTER ONE

An Introduction: The Context of Reform

In the early 1970s, the Oklahoma singer-songwriter Hoyt Axton lamented how his paternal grandmother had long kept her part-Cherokee ancestry a secret due to her ambivalence about the place of American Indians in society at large, and perhaps fearing how she would be viewed or treated were she to reveal this background.¹ Her response mirrors a larger pattern at work. For American Indian students attending government boarding schools in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their native heritage could be a source of varied emotions and actions. At least outwardly, federal educational outposts set up for them followed a strict curriculum meant to limit, even eliminate, ties to their backgrounds, supplanting these with new ideas and formulations aimed at instilling them with a newfound sense of “civilization” equated with dominant cultural mores and behaviors. Following on the model of Captain Richard Henry Pratt’s Carlisle School, opened in 1879 with a handful of Plains Indian children transplanted to Pennsylvania, the object was removal of native youths from what was deemed the harmful influences of a traditional upbringing. Pratt’s motto, “Kill the Indian and Save the Man,” became the watchwords of a whole fleet of new off-reservation schools created by the United States that had emerged by 1900, and his regimen of stripping away identity through forbidding the use of Indian languages, eliminating the practice of traditional customs and beliefs, and even changing the outward appearance of his charges, had by then become *de rigueur* in these institutions.²

Although the history of U.S. boarding school education for American Indians has become more well known, and certainly much more widely disseminated, in the last twenty years or more, the rationale

¹ Hoyt Axton, “Indian Song,” 1971. Such themes can also be found in the work of other Native-American singer-songwriters, including Peter La Farge and Buffy Sainte-Marie.

² *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1905 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1905), 41 (Annual Reports hereafter cited as ARCIA); Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), edited by Robert M. Utley, 228; Colin G. Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2008), 384; Ward Churchill, *Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2004), esp. 119-124; Coleman, *American Indian Children*, 48; Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 150.

for, and indeed character of, this attempted cultural revolution (some have said genocide), is not always so easily understood. This may be especially true for younger generations, both Indian and white, who have grown up in an era more obviously marked by sympathetic portrayals of Indians in popular culture, an increased awareness of the role and contributions of Native Americans in the national pageant (including its colonial roots), and a revitalized sense of pride in native ancestry.³ Perhaps the confusion or lack of familiarity with the motives of such training runs deepest for whites, who had little direct exposure to the practices implemented in this earlier age of assimilation for Indian students, but, perversely, this is also often true for native peoples themselves. While the latter definitely have had some acquaintance with this drift in the U.S. government's treatment of indigenous folk, whether through direct experience, family lore, or a larger cultural milieu, it was precisely the fact that acculturation did have a deep impact, if not an entirely "successful" one, that obscured its roots as the boarding school experience become a cultural normative and some movement toward the values upheld by the general public began to temper its overall impact.⁴ At any rate, while more information is becoming available for anyone seeking it, further explanation is yet needed if we are all to grasp what went on in these places and times.

³ Witness, for instance, the introduction of feature films, including *Dances with Wolves* (1990), *Black Robe* (1991), and those that have followed in their wake. For a broader discussion of the role of film and its influence on historical perceptions, see JoEllen Shively, "Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films Among American Indians and Anglos," *American Sociological Review* 57 (1992), 725-734 and Jane Tompkins, *West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). Regarding the proper place of Native Americans in the formation and history of the United States, one could begin as early William N. Fenton's *American Indian and White Relations to 1830: Needs and Opportunities for Study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), often cited as the rallying cry for an ethnohistorical interpretation of the American past. For more recent examples, see, for e.g., Sucheng Chan, et al., eds., *Peoples of Color in the American West* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath & Company, 1994); Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972); Peter C. Mancall and James H. Merrell, eds. *American Encounters: Natives and Newcomers from European Contact to Indian Removal, 1500-1850* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000); and Jack Weatherford, *Indian Givers: How the Indians of America Transformed the World* (New York: Crown Press, 1988). The body of work now available on boarding schools is rich, if not yet vast. To cite but a few major examples, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Coleman, *ibid.*; Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*; Reyhner and Eder, *ibid.*; Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974); and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*.

⁴ Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, esp. Chs. 1 & 2; Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*, SUNY Series in Transpersonal and Humanistic Psychology (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

In one of the standard, if not seminal, pillars of the Western canon, Plato's *Republic*, we find the haunting "Allegory of the Cave," which seems a suitable starting point for our investigation. Here, a group of young prisoners are exposed to a skewed view of reality wherein their only perspective for what is happening beyond their corporeal selves is the shadows cast by firelight onto the cave walls that surround them. This reckoning of events becomes their touchstone, comprising the way they see the world, although others in their midst (i.e., their wardens, visitors, even passersby, and, of course, the readers) are afforded a fuller accounting of what actually transpires. (Eventually the prisoners will be able to see more clearly, too.) For those outside the situation, the "students" (for that is how Plato paints them in their process of learning) in the cave, who face away from the fire and are confronted only by shadows, clearly receive a mode of instruction that leaves much to be desired, conveying, as it does, a rather narrow, even delusional, perspective of things. Yet this is not so far removed from the curricular vantage point offered at federal boarding schools for Indian youngsters beginning in the 1880s and lasting at least until the time of the New Deal in the 1930s. It was a type of reality being proffered there that asked them to unquestioningly accept a new way of "seeing," one that was too often clouded by vagaries and far removed from the light of outside sources. The control exerted by such institutions indeed resembled the experimental nature of Plato's analogy for a kind of education that was meant to mold and instruct these modern "cave-dwellers" for the rest of their lives. To take the analogy further, exposure to the light of the outside (i.e., what Indian students saw when released into the larger world beyond school walls) would, as with Plato's prisoners, substantially alter their perceptions of what they had learned in the cave.⁵

To be sure, proponents of Indian education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would have had a much different reading of the parable if they were so inclined to employ it. For them, the darkness of the cave, representing the realm of belief (rather than knowledge), would have been the perspective a traditional cultural upbringing afforded their students. Immersion in the school system they

⁵ Plato, *The Republic*, Book VII.

supported, by contrast, would replace superstition and barbarism with the “light” of Western values. Still, our former reading of the allegory is useful in seeing the process that actually occurred, through the prism of time and with the luxury of hindsight.

Of course, Indian students, or at least the vast majority of them, would one day take leave of their schools and move on to other places, some casting their lot in the world of white-dominated society, where their education might be serviceable but would not always prepare them for the new realities that did, inevitably, intrude and introduce nuances these cloisters had never conceived. A good many, probably most in fact, would return to live among their own people, only to find themselves alienated, or at least ill-informed as to certain cultural perspectives that had been siphoned out of them in the intervening years away from home. Questions of whether or not Indian students could easily adjust to either future possibility (or anything in between), that is, what happened to them *after* exposure to their education are interesting and have been the subject of some examination and debate among historians and social scientists in recent years, but they largely exceed the purposes of this study.⁶ Instead, the focus here is on what happened in the “cave,” particularly in terms of how students reacted, often generally speaking, to the conditions they found there, and, especially, how much flexibility and maneuverability they had within its confines. For, while the environment there often appears, particularly at a cursory glance, to be stifling, there was, in fact, more room to breathe than it may seem. The hothouse of Haskell Institute, the major outpost surveyed here, did not always bear the fruit intended: not all the flowers of youth therein cultivated either blossomed fully or wilted on the vine. Moreover, the “inmates” (quotations mine), or “dusky wards,” as one superintendent of the school referred to his pupils, exerted a much wider influence than he (and his ilk) likely ever knew, or certainly would have admitted, actually

⁶ See, esp., Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, Chs. 2 & 5; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, Ch. 9; Coleman, *American Indian Children*, Ch. 10; Szasz, ed., *Between Indian and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).

helping to steer their own course, albeit quietly, in a way that makes it possible to conclude that Native Americans had a much more active role, although a limited one, than other scholars have noted.⁷

Although Indian students at Haskell were not usually referred to or designated as prisoners, at least according to the parlance of the day, for native families, and the children away at school themselves, the difference might seem negligible. Certainly some felt as if they had been taken hostage by the government system and it is true that the federal bureaucracy, especially in the earliest years of both the reservation and educational experiments, exerted an enormous amount of control over their lives. Although Pratt's first official students at Carlisle were Sioux volunteers (the term may be somewhat fluid, as most left much to the chagrin of their parents, many of whom felt they had little choice in current circumstances but to let them go), he had developed many of his original ideas about Indian education while serving as an Army officer whose job it was to deliver and guard over Native American prisoners taken during the Red River War and who served their terms at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida. From there Pratt deposited them at Colonel Samuel Armstrong's manual labor school for blacks at Hampton, Virginia, in 1878, before opening his own institute, with government assistance, the following year. In subsequent years, both at Carlisle and Haskell, as well as the growing number of other federal outposts, procurement of children was often achieved through more dubious and devious means (playing on proposed routes out of reservation poverty, youthful exuberance to see a wider world, as well as coercive tactics of withholding rations, and other such ploys) than was true of his initial young Sioux enlistees.⁸

⁷ Haskell Supt. Charles Meserve, in *ARCIA*, 1890 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), 293. Meserve employed the language of the time, most notably used by former Indian Commissioner George W. Manypenny (served 1853-1857); see his *Our Indian Wards* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Company, 1880).

⁸ Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 220, 228; and Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995);. On coercion, see *ARCIA* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), Vol. II, 639; Arrell Morgan Gibson, *The American Indian: Prehistory to the Present* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1980), 432-433; Francis Paul Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian," 1880-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 255; Ruth Spack, "English, Pedagogy, and Ideology: A Case Study of the Hampton Institute, 1878-1900," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, vol. 24, no. 1 (2000), 1-24, but esp. 4; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 51. Hampton continued to operate a small program for Indians even after the founding of Carlisle. See H.B. Peairs to Mary

Just as the prisoner metaphor found in Plato may be extended to Pratt's experiences with his wards, so too can we take it further in thinking about the situations Indian children faced at federal off-reservation boarding schools in the time period examined here. Though, again, while not exactly a prison, Haskell (and similar schools) did subject students to a strict, and usually quite foreign regimen, where one followed a proscribed daily routine of "living by the bell," which sounded out times for specific tasks and duties, including classes, work details, prayers, meals, and other coordinated activities.⁹ In such controlled environments, usually institutional ones in which certain groups appear to be largely acted upon by a hierarchy of rules and authority figures, it is vital to realize that the institutionalized are never simply passive players in the equation and instead have means for retaining command of their own lives, although, admittedly, to a sometimes only small degree; that their willingness to submit to the regime is itself an act of freewill and a social contract of sorts (even if they are essentially compelled to it) that allows for smooth operation of the institution; and that such actors find ways of subverting rules, flexing collective muscle for small concessions, and engaging in a host of covert activities that are sometimes recognized by the authorities but also contribute to a better functioning atmosphere overall and constitute some freedom in otherwise stifling atmospheres. This is clearly the case in prisons, asylums, and other places of incarceration and may be observed also in what appears, at a first or cursory glance, to be the immensely controlling surroundings of government reservations or non-reservation boarding schools for American Indians.¹⁰

Burnett, 6 August 1909, in "Haskell Institute Student Records, 1884-1920" (hereafter HISR), Box 18, Record Group (hereafter RG) 75, in National Archives, Central Plains Region (hereafter NACPR) for more on how the school was moving away from enrollment of children under age twelve; and also Vučković, 40 and 44-45. Coercive tactics for procuring children ran afoul of government policy by 1908.

⁹ Vučković, *ibid.*, Ch. 3.

¹⁰ On the culture of the jailed, see, for e.g., Donald Clemmer, *The Prison Community* (Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1940); John Irwin and Donald R. Cressey, "Thieves, Convicts, and the Inmate Culture," *Social Problems*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Autumn 1962), 142-155; and Gresham M. Sykes, *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958). For other types of controlled environments, see Gordon MacGregor with the collaboration of Royal B. Hassrick and William E. Henry, *Warriors Without Weapons: A Study of the Society and Personality Development of the Pine Ridge Sioux* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946); and Steven L. Hoch, *Serfdom and Social Control in Russia: Petrovskoe, a Village in Tambov* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

It is the aim of this investigation, then, to underscore that limited role and realm of control exhibited by students at Haskell, and to reveal an aspect of Native American agency in the boarding school medium that has been largely overlooked. Interestingly, a multitude of perspectives flourished at Haskell Institute, at least partly owing to the size and tribal diversity of the student body, allowing a much freer exchange of information than our analogy of the cave might indicate. Again, though, this metaphor is a useful one because it does get at the heart of what administrators and policymakers sought or believed they were accomplishing by removing Indian youth from their reservation homes to a “controlled” setting, and also because, I believe, that is what Indian students built on, preserving the artifice of that proscription while simultaneously and subtly advocating for change from within the established system. It may not be entirely surprising or unexpected that the school was a ground for exchange in this way while professing to affect “top-down” change. After all, it had to absorb an enormous variety of students as it grew to become the largest federal off-reservation campus by the early twentieth century and depended, from the beginning, on a certain amount of Indian goodwill to function at all.¹¹ In addition, given its early inception (1884), it soon grew in reputation and began accepting (maybe partially as a hallmark of its own “success,” from either—or both—native or government perspectives) increasing numbers of students from the same tribes, and even families, very quickly becoming a multi-generational experience as its longevity increased while other, similar schools fell into disfavor, stagnated, or closed entirely. (This, too, is something to consider: did Haskell’s growth come, at least in part, as a result of the ability of natives themselves to exert some influence, which, accordingly, became exponentially greater with an increased population?)

While Haskell’s early years are attended by much tragedy, chaos, and the frustration, for the modern researcher, of many unknowns, they also reveal a story of at least as much triumph as adversity. The school’s first decade is marked by uneven and ever-changing leadership styles, a (sometimes harsh)

¹¹ Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 150; Theodore Fischbacher, “A Study of the Role of the Federal Government in the Education of the American Indian” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Arizona State University, 1967), 125-132; Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” esp. Chs. 3 & 4.

military regimen, a curriculum focused as much on physical labor as classroom studies, students whose ages ranged anywhere from five to twenty-five, an uneven and unprofessional staff given to haphazard application of governing rules, fires, homesickness, desertion, disease, and death. The unpredictable Kansas weather, poor pre-existing medical conditions of some incoming pupils, close quarters, and the paltry federal funds allotted toward rations and health care conspired to make the school an often dangerous place. Early annual reports from the institution are largely given over to descriptions of student casualty rates and attrition figures. Some never left the school, becoming permanent residents of the still-existing campus cemetery that remains a reminder of the institute's darkest days. For those attending Haskell, as well as their parents, guardians, and peers, the experience might well be regarded as a dreadful one in these regards, to say nothing of the culture shock students faced in an environment dedicated to eradication of so much that was familiar.¹² It is small wonder, then, that songwriter Hoyt Axton, nearly a century after Carlisle's founding, could still bear witness to a time when being part Indian was a source of inner turmoil and angst, a quiet burden endured by many.

Yet the school grew. And grew. Moreover, it flourished. By the early twentieth century, despite the fact that there was much that remained egregious about it, the boarding-school experience, of which Haskell was increasingly a common symbol, had become, somewhat paradoxically, an intimate part of Native American life and identity, to some extent fostering a new sense of what it meant to be Indian.¹³ For the several thousand students who attended Haskell during its first quarter-century, time spent there deeply influenced their outlook ever after; although, surprisingly perhaps, the memories and effects of a boarding-school education were not always viewed as negative ones. Due to scant government records of

¹² Anderson, *ibid.*, 2, 10; ARCIA, 1884-1893 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884-1893); Theresa Milk, *Haskell Institute: 19th Century Stories of Sacrifice and Survival with a Haskell Cemetery Walking Tour* (Lawrence, KS: Mammoth Publications, 2007); n.a., "The Haskell Cemetery," *The Pioneer*, vol. III, no. 2 (Fall 1979), 48-50; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 28, 46. Another fire, in 1907, caused considerable damage; see Vučković, 224.

¹³ Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 18-19; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 263. See also Linda Hogan, *Mean Spirit* (New York: Ivy Books, 1991). Although marginal to her treatment of the oil-rich Oklahoma Osages in the 1920s, several characters in her novel are products of boarding institutions, including Haskell, an experience she adjudges as largely negative and culturally destructive.

individual students' everyday lives, it is impossible to ever fully tell all of their stories, or even, sometimes, very complete ones, and the tendency (or temptation) to generalize among these (or extrapolate from those where fuller accounts are available) does not always do justice to what impact their school days had. Still, taken together, it is possible to discern some basic trends and themes that tell us what effect the school may have had in their lives, and, just as importantly, the converse: how they were able to have a hand in their own education and the process at large.¹⁴

So just what kind of impact did the schools have? Naturally a whole range of possibilities emerge from the records. For some there was a decidedly troublesome and negative legacy instilled by the process that reverberated through time and bloodlines, as the death toll and runaway rates attest. Of course, most students survived their time at school, and even many of the so-called “deserters” returned eventually (although sometimes by force rather than voluntarily) for another course of study. On a quite basic level, however, the assault on Indian cultures that was a *raison d'être* of the assimilationist educational agenda cannot be underestimated. Forced haircuts, changes in dress and comportment, and immersion in often unfamiliar modes of thinking (exclusive use of English, Christianity, Western values, etc.), exacted under threat of punishment for backsliding, can hardly be viewed in a positive light. Still, students found ways to subvert and overcome these hurdles, at least partially or temporarily, which could act to soften the blow of these strictures. Again, running away is an obvious rejection of what was, surely for many, a threatening or terrifying ordeal, but most who did rebel responded with quieter forms of protest, in ways that either escaped prying administrative eyes altogether or fit within the confines of the system easily enough to raise few hackles or objections. Even more simply resigned themselves to their fate and found a way to navigate what school life offered, often cobbling together an approach that took some knowledge deemed of value found there and appropriated it into a larger worldview that they retained from earlier times and managed to cling to, at least partly, after having left boarding school. A rare few may have completely rejected their former lives and indigenous traditions, opting to live out their

¹⁴ Coleman, *American Indian Children*, Ch. 7; Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, Ch. 7; Child, *Boarding School Seasons*.

lives largely as “non-Indians,” although the true measure of that, given societal pressures of racial thinking and other factors, as well as the ultimate impenetrability of one’s innermost psychological outlook, is probably incalculable.¹⁵

Most, then, lived through their days at Haskell (and other schools), doing what they felt was necessary to survive, to change, and to endure. After completing their education, they entered the Indian Service, mainstream American life, or, for the majority, returned to the reservations to take up residence with families and friends there. Needless to say, this adjustment was not always easy, and what they had learned at school left an imprint, just as administrators hoped it would, although not always in the way that teachers and staff may have foreseen. For some, Haskell had opened doors to new dreams and possibilities they had never imagined; for others, education away from home had wrought heartache and misery that followed them throughout their lives as they struggled to walk between two worlds, Indian and white. Certain boarding-school alumni would recall their educational experiences fondly, while a good many looked back with bitterness or regret at what they felt had been lost in the shuffle.¹⁶

What was the impact, then, of Indian students (and their extended family networks) on the schools themselves? The brief discussion in the preceding two paragraphs hints at some of the possibilities. In those most extreme circumstances of death and desertion, student responses had a deleterious effect on the reputation and smooth operating order of Haskell. Large numbers of runaways reflected poorly on the administration of the school, as these rates increased during times of crisis or

¹⁵ Coleman, *ibid.*, Chs. 8-10; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, Chs. 7-9; Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” Ch. 6; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 38-42.

¹⁶ See, for e.g., Charles Eastman (Ohiyesa), *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* (1916; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), with an introduction by Raymond Wilson; John (Fire) Lane Deer and Richard Erdoes, *Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions* (New York: Pocket Books, 1972); L.G. Moses and Raymond Wilson, eds., *Indian Lives: Essays on Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Native American Leaders* (1985; rpt., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), Chs. 3 & 6; Polingaysi Qoyawayma (Elizabeth Q. White), as told to Vada F. Carlson, *No Turning Back: A Hopi Woman’s Struggle to Live in Two Worlds* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1964); John Stands in Timber and Margot Liberty, with the assistance of Robert M. Utley, *Cheyenne Memories* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967); Irene Stewart, *A Voice in Her Tribe: A Navajo Woman’s Own Story* (Socorro, NM: Ballena Press, 1980), edited by Dorris Ostrander Dawdy and Mary Shepardson; Szasz, ed., *Between Indian and White Worlds*; and Lucille (Jerry) Winnie, *Sah-Gan-De-Oh: The Chief’s Daughter* (New York: Vantage Press, 1969).

perceived oppression, subsequently ebbing when more positive (or at least acceptable, on Indian terms) changes followed. The loss of Indian children was inestimable to their parents and relatives, but also cause for improved health care and concern for student welfare. The “grapevine” discussions these conditions doubtless engendered on the reservations further harmed the effectiveness of the schools to procure and recruit potential replacements. Less dramatic manipulations were afoot as well, as Native American schoolchildren learned to game the system by outwardly observing rules while quietly maintaining ties to home through preservation of traditions like dancing, gambling, and seeking (though not always receiving) visitations with parents. In subtle maneuverings, sometimes with tacit approval, even full cooperation of administrators (after all, what better proof of an American education’s effects than to stir feelings of belonging to a participatory body politic?), students gained small concessions that made life at Haskell less onerous and more palatable.¹⁷

That being said, it is paramount to bear in mind that Haskell during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was far from a democratic paragon. Superintendents and faculty wielded the ultimate reins of power, sometimes ruling with an iron fist. Yet those staff members with the best record of reaching Indian students (as well as their parents and families, on whose good will they relied for the continued success of the school in terms of providing children and testimonials encouraging others to do so) were the ones who realized they must temper leadership with compassion, just treatment, and fair play. Those who did not take heed of that lesson usually didn’t last long at the helm or the lectern, or else risked alienation of the pupils so that they would never get through to their charges. In inspiring such flexibility, native children were, in fact, having a profound impact on their own education, even if it was incremental or not fully realized by them in the moment. Furthermore, as Haskell made shifts to open up new opportunities for students (themselves at least partly in response to Indian needs), including Normal and Commercial departments (in 1894 and 1895, respectively, to provide training in teaching, secretarial, and business skills), a cumulative effect can be observed. With more Indians entering the ranks of the

¹⁷ Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” Chs. 3 & 4; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 315-321; and Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 100.

Office of Indian Affairs (OIA; now known more commonly as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or BIA) as teachers and, increasingly over time, bureaucrats, it was Native Americans who began to push for even greater changes and a voice in their own education and future. Thus, by the time of Indian Commissioner John Collier's "Indian New Deal" under the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early 1930s, itself prompted in response to the critiques laid out in the government-sponsored Meriam Report of 1928, a dismantling of the old assimilation model was well underway and a new focus on Indian cultures as *a part of school curricula* had begun.¹⁸

The sacrifices, survival, and strength of will of students in Haskell's formative decades played a decided role in this eventual remaking of the school, one that continued from the era of the Great Depression and is still at work today. In my own experience teaching at what is now today Haskell Indian Nations University, it is clear the spirit of those early students lives on in the shaping of policy at the school and in their concern for maintaining a voice in the system. Incremental change is still the watchword as Haskell struggles with the legacies of government bureaucracy, red tape, and the once-endemic corruption of the Indian Department. So too does the process of finding what is the best response or course of action to educate and answer the needs of a new generation of American Indian youth. Yet the ongoing mission to persevere and take pride in their heritage one finds everywhere on campus among current students is testimony to the young people who first attended school there,

¹⁸ Anderson, *ibid.*, 10.; Child, *ibid.*, 96-99; ARCIA, 1894-1896 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894-1896); Coleman, *American Indian Children*, 153; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 18-20; Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 203-204; Spack, "English, Pedagogy, and Ideology," 19-20; Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, esp. Chs. 3-5; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 28, 244-245. See also Lewis Meriam et al., *The Problem of Indian Administration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928). Additional treatments of the Meriam Report, which was especially critical of Indian Schools, and of John Collier, can be found in many general histories of Native Americans, among them Calloway, *First Peoples*, 438-446; and Clifford E. Trafzer, *As Long as the Grass Shall Grow and the Rivers Flow: A History of Native Americans* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2000), 345-369. Sioux writer and anthropological researcher Ella Deloria taught in the burgeoning art department of Haskell during the mid-1920s a decade prior to the formal introduction of native arts into Indian school curricula under Collier's Reorganization Act of 1934; yet even a brief perusal of her beautiful *Waterlily* (1988; rpt., Lincoln: Bison Books, 1990), written in the 1940s, makes clear her appreciation of traditional native culture and the attempt to preserve it for future generations. Although Indian "arts" were a part of training courses prior to the New Deal, they often reflected the values of non-Indian instructors and the general public, which provided a market for some goods produced there. See, for e.g., Hertzberg, 65-66. For more on Deloria's Haskell days, see Vučković, 243. Note: The acronyms OIA and BIA, as well as the designations Indian Office, Indian Bureau, Indian Department, and Indian Service I have employed rather interchangeably throughout the text.

beginning in the fall of 1884, and through the past 125 years as Haskell has developed into a high-school, then junior-college, format on to the accredited institution it is today, offering degrees in business and Indian Studies for most of its enrollees.¹⁹

Because Haskell Institute opened its doors nearly in tandem with what is now viewed as the advent of the Progressive Era in American history, it is insightful to view the early stages of its growth through the lens of what this period offered in terms of quantifiable change in policy directions. My use of the term “policy” here is perhaps misleading, as it is not meant to solely signify what emanated from government leaders, functionaries, or institutions. On some level that may be the case, but these are hardly exhaustive means for understanding how Progressive principles may be gauged, especially given the role Indian students and their families doubtless played in fomenting real change at a grass-roots level. Indeed, because the Progressive Era was one of increasing democratization, and further, given the ongoing (and sometimes fractious) debate and definitions about just who or what ought to be included in a discussion of “Progressivism,” my nomenclature should be taken as a widely inclusive way of indicating or viewing an evolution of ideas contributing to some tangible directional shift, in this case reflecting the needs and activities of Native Americans in the boarding-school milieu. In addition, other factors, notably the proliferation of the “Red Progressive” movement among American Indian leaders in the late nineteenth century, make this time frame and lens a valuable and informative scope of inquiry. These latter types, certainly more celebrated than the average student at a place like Haskell, include some of the more recognizable and familiar names of the American Indian elite who walked that thin line between two cultural worlds. For those scholars of Progressivism more comfortable with the idea of a vanguard movement at the forefront of progressive change, such leaders would fit the bill, although we

¹⁹ For a survey of some of the pressing issues prevalent in American Indian education today, see, for e.g., Vine Deloria, Jr., *Indian Education in America: Eight Essays* (Boulder, CO: American Indian Science & Engineering Society, 1991); Deloria and Daniel R. Wildcat, *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (Golden, CO: American Indian Graduate Center and Fulcrum Resources, 2001); Hap Gilliland with Reyhner, *Teaching the Native American* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1988); and Reyhner and Eder, *ibid.*, 323-330.

would do well to remember that a good many of them emerged from similar cultural and educational backgrounds as those average students.²⁰

While this study does not examine Haskell Institute during the entirety of the generally accepted confines of the Progressive Era (i.e., 1890-1920), it does focus on this period as an informative one for the school. Therefore, in the next section, the roots of Progressivism are dissected further, as, clearly, new challenges emerging in the post-Civil War age (among them industrialization, mass immigration, and urbanization) helped create and drive an impetus for reform. Thus the changes afoot at Haskell cannot be divorced from a larger American scene that influenced and shaped what was happening in a seemingly remote and experimental school for Indians nestled amongst the chalky bluffs of eastern Kansas hundreds of miles from the corridors of power in Washington or the bustling cities of the East. At the same time, Indian peoples themselves, most located in the West, were having their own “say” in this process, helping to slowly, steadily, and surely secure a future on their own terms, and Haskell would be a focal point for their quiet struggle. Although their voices are more difficult to discern at times than those of the more renowned reformers of the age, they had a profound effect that yet echoes and is equally important for our understanding of this difficult period, if only we take the time to listen.

²⁰ Good introductory discussions of the Red Progressives may be found in Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, esp. Ch. 2; Frederick E. Hoxie, ed., *Talking Back to Civilization: Indian Voices from the Progressive Era* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), introductory chapter; and Trafzer, *As Long as the Grass Shall Grow*, Ch. 15. A deeper reading, especially as is related to the changes of this period, is contained in Daniele Fiorentino, “Acculturation/Assimilation: American Indian Policy in the Progressive Years” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Kansas, 1999).

CHAPTER TWO

Food for Thought: Understanding the Progressive Impulse and the Limits of Reform

just as soon as the
uplifters get
a country reformed it
slips into a nose dive
--Don Marquis, "certain maxims of archy"¹

Once in a while, I have students approach me and confess to leaving my class feeling depressed or upset due to the nature of the material we have been covering. *This* is especially true of Native American history, most particularly in the area of Indian-white relations. Of course, the past is full of stories both tragic and triumphant, but revisiting it makes no guarantee of a balance in these as we examine the human condition or specific struggles growing out of it. In fact, as my students' dilemma suggests, if history is a veritable feast of interesting and insightful delicacies for mental consumption and consideration, you sometimes have to be a glutton for punishment. Confronted with the "pot-luck" variety of history's buffet, we often uncover items that are painful to digest or difficult to get through, in addition to more sumptuous or appealing fare.

Yet, it seems to me, a healthy acquaintance with the past's ingredients is the only sure path to greater understanding of how a certain historical "dish" was concocted or what exactly went into bringing it to the table in the first place and, possibly, to find a means for improving future endeavors. The historian, like a gourmand, must have a finely-tuned palate, one able to discern the spices and flavors surrounding the "meat" of an issue, event, or era, as well as an appreciation for the cultural background and milieu from which our metaphorical meal emerges.

Indeed, one of the great challenges for those studying history is to carefully parse the past, imbibing as much as possible, exerting care not to avoid what may seem off-putting or

¹ *the lives and times of archy and mehitabel* (1916; rpt., Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1935), 51. Lower-case punctuation is in the original.

dyspeptic. In doing so, we often reveal to ourselves and others nuances and newfound tastes that round out an otherwise staid or staple diet. Hopefully this task further allows the historian to strike a kind of balance in discovering the confluence of triumph and tragedy that composes what went before. We may not like the saltiness of human toil or tears, the bitterness of acrimony, or the heat of battle and conquest, but we must recognize their place in the *mélange* flavoring the past and can acquire the ability to find positive results or insights amidst largely negative circumstances (or vice versa). Such is the advice I offer to students who might otherwise go through life intent upon staying clear of exposure to ideas or incidents they think are strictly depressing. While I agree that the history of Indian-white contacts is chock full of sour relationships and foul deeds, having shared and ingested this past carefully we can still leave the table confident we haven't been poisoned (even if a bad taste in the mouth may remain for a time).

Consider the Progressive Era in American history, in which Native Americans played a pivotal, if often overlooked, role. Before taking up their place in the period, however, first think about that time as a whole. Generally considered by historians to have lasted from the very late nineteenth century to about the conclusion of World War One (say, 1890-1920), at first glance this era might be considered, on its merits, to be a positive one. After all, during this roughly thirty-year span, amazing advances took place in areas as diverse as workers' and women's rights, race relations, improvements to city life, and new models for the practices of law, medicine, business, and historical inquiry (among many others). Yet we would be remiss to overlook the fact that so much of what took place arose in response to the dire circumstances and conditions surrounding these facets of daily life and the real need to address the terrible consequences wrought by decades of mechanization, *laissez-faire* capitalism, Victorian morality, machine and Gilded Age politics, lynchings and racial violence, and general social stagnation that preceded the advent of Progressivism.

Furthermore, did new protections and practices immediately wipe the slate clean or completely change the direction of the country, suddenly sweeping away old prejudices and predilections? The answer must be a resounding “no.” Racial segregation and abuse of workers continued at an alarming pace, as did wage disparity between men and women; the desolation and desperation of city slums were not entirely overcome, nor was the often rampant materialism and greed of the ownership class wholly checked; in addition, nativism and anti-ethnic biases persisted, as did a whole host of other ugly realities. (In complete fairness and candor, we continue to wrestle with most of these problems, in some form or another, even today.) Similarly, the inauguration and grip of Prohibition, arguably an extension of Progressive reform that lasted much longer than the era itself, did little to halt the production, sale, or consumption of spirits in this country.² Still some laudable changes did come, in most of these areas, if only slowly, and the Progressive Era represents the beginning of that attempt to extend a measure of equality and equability to the entire nation’s huddled masses.

Thus it should be abundantly clear that a time frame many would argue represented a positive direction in American history grew out of darker days and was not always attended by beneficial results, whether immediate or long term. To again rely on the example of Prohibition, policy goals overshot the mark and, in fact, created a panoply of consequences perhaps worse than the original problem; for in trying to eliminate the troubling “scourge” of alcohol and its effects on health, families, and society generally, the nation ended up with an underground economy funneling millions to racketeers and enterprising black-market entrepreneurs, spawning a wave of mayhem and violence in Chicago and other cities, and fostering a widespread flouting

² Richard F. Hamm, *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment: Temperance Reform, Legal Culture, and the Polity, 1880-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (1955; rpt., New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1963); K. Austin Kerr, *Organized for Prohibition: A New History of the Anti-Saloon League* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); James Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

of the rule of law.³ The Progressive Era, therefore, is precisely that mixture of both good and bad that one may find in nearly any historical period. What perhaps makes it notably different is the widespread nature of reform efforts, usually (but not always) working independently of one another, but with a concerted eye towards forming a better future for a whole host of peoples. Though some we now label “Progressives” worked only in a narrow or singular area, their work, especially when taken in tandem with that of others, aimed for a general improvement of the human condition.

Yet what do we know of these “Progressives” and their work? Whose interests did they presume to represent and for what reason(s)? These questions open a virtual Pandora’s Box of possibilities, for Progressives are not always so easily cornered or understood. They operated in dozens of places and times (although we’ll remain largely confined here to the time frame already enumerated), pursuing a whole host of stated reforms predicated upon scores of motives. They emerged from across the spectrum of classes, sometimes working at cross-cultural currents and among varied socio-economic strata in attempts to impose what they supposed best for other groups to whom they did not themselves belong. We can count among them members of nearly every racial, ethnic, and religious group residing in the country during these years, as well as those swearing allegiance to each major political party of the time (Democrat, Republican, and Socialist, and others), as well as smaller factions, sub-groups, and splinter organizations emblematic of nearly every political stripe imaginable. (To further complicate and convolute our inquiry, there was even a Progressive Party, probably most famous for their nomination of Theodore Roosevelt in his famous “Bull Moose” run for the presidency in the great four-way race of 1912.)⁴

³ Stephen P. Halbrook, “Guns and Prohibition in Al Capone’s Day and Now,” *Wall Street Journal*, 11 April 1989; Paul Sann, *The Lawless Decade: A Pictorial History of a Great American Transition, from the World War One Armistice and Prohibition to the Repeal and the New Deal* (New York: Crown Publishing, 1957); Leon H. Tashjian, *Al Capone—The Hawk—Prohibition* (New York: Vantage Press, 1989).

⁴ Brett Flehinger, *The 1912 Election and the Power of Progressivism: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2002) provides a short but excellent analysis of this pivotal cycle. A fuller

In the title of her brief volume on these elusive reformers, Yale University history professor Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore brings together numerous writings and asks the deceptively simple question central to our scrutiny: “Who were the Progressives?” After delving into the selected essays contained therein, the shortest, simplest answer is that they encompassed a broad cross-section of American lives and characters, running the gamut from immigrant urbanites and big-city Brahmins to rural rabble rousers and small-town tradesmen and socially-conscious women seeking “uplift” for themselves, their peers, or those they deemed less fortunate. Thus Progressives might be Chicago businessmen (and their wives) or African-American women’s clubbers interested in municipal beautification, greater economic efficiency and opportunities, or waste removal. They could just as easily be Cleveland workers and labor unionists heavily represented by the city’s Bohemian, Polish, Russian, or Italian émigré contingents concerned with streetcar safety and the special problems facing their various communities. In Boston, Irish and Italian ethnic politicians sought greater voice and representation in the traditionally WASP-ish strongholds of urban power and patronage. Midwestern and Southern farmers, still alit from the fiery promises of Populism, continued to agitate for relief from the crushing capitalist feeding-trough they felt they supported with their toil but whose run-off was barely enough to keep them alive.⁵

accounting may be found in James Chace, *1912: Wilson, Roosevelt, Taft, and Debs—The Election that Changed the Country* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).

⁵ *Who Were the Progressives?:* Readings selected and introduced by Gilmore (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2002). The selections included are: Richard Hofstadter, “The Status Revolution and Progressive Leaders,” from *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Knopf, 1955), 131-148; Elizabeth Sanders, “Agrarian Politics and Parties after 1896,” from *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 148-172; Robert H. Wiebe, “Progressivism Arrives,” from *The Search for Order: 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 164-195; Richard L. McCormick, “The Discovery That Business Corrupts Politics: A Reappraisal of the Origins of Progressivism,” *The American Historical Review* (hereafter, *AHR*), 86, no. 2 (April 1981), 247-274; Shelton Stromquist, “The Crucible of Class: Cleveland Politics and the Origins of Municipal Reform in the Progressive Era,” *Journal of Urban History*, 23 (January 1997), 192-220; James J. Connolly, “The Dimensions of Progressivism,” from *The Triumph of Ethnic Progressivism: Urban Political Culture in Boston, 1900-1925* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 55-76; Maureen A. Flanagan, “Gender and Urban Political Reform: The City Club and the Woman’s City Club of Chicago in the Progressive Era,” *AHR*, 95, no. 4 (October 1990), 1032-1050; and Gilmore, “Diplomatic Women,” from *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill:

So Progressives were a varied lot, encapsulating a huge body of interests, sometimes apt as not to include people and interests at certain odds with one another, or at least it is possible to say not all who fall under the Progressive rubric were supportive of the needs or struggles of others who we may say are equally deserving of that mantle. Former Populists-turned-Progressives might well uphold women's suffrage but not full rights of citizenship for African Americans or other racial minorities. City-dwellers may well have seen the wisdom and utility of agitating for improved municipal services (better sewage and drinking water, trash disposal, law enforcement, and the like), the building of parks and slum improvement for both aesthetic and practical reasons (i.e., providing children and adults alike with a respite from the harried pace and filthy, overcrowded conditions of city life), and the election of professionals and crusaders to carry their interests forward and break the corrosive, corrupting hold of hacks in the political machines who had so long controlled city politics. By the same token, however, not all of them were in agreement as to what "improvement" or "progress" meant, nor did they necessarily feel they had any common cause with the needs or agendas of those in outlying areas or rural communities. The multitude of voices clamoring to be heard, both within cities and outside of them, especially in the wake of the increasing American population due to the "new immigration," composed of successive waves of peoples emanating predominantly from Southern and Eastern Europe, which began in earnest by the early 1870s and added as many as 25 million new citizens by the end of World War One, created a cacophony, a Babel even, of diffuse desires and dissenting opinions about what was best for the country and how to institute it.⁶

University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 147-175. Of related interest, see Lynda F. Dickson, "Lifting as We Climb: African American Women's Clubs of Denver, 1880-1925," in Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, eds., *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 372-392 (a slightly different version of the article appears in Chan et al., eds., *Peoples of Color*, 224-234); and Lewis L. Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973). Another good, short piece evincing the variety of reform efforts is Eric F. Goldman's *Rendezvous with Destiny: A History of Modern American Reform*, revised ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1955).

⁶ Thomas J. Archdeacon, *Becoming American: An Ethnic History* (New York: The Free Press, 1983); Robert Beatty and Mark A. Peterson, "Covert Discrimination: Topeka—Before and After *Brown*," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* (hereafter, *KH*), vol. 27, no. 3 (Autumn 2004), 146-163; John

What was clear, however, was the need for reform, and on numerous levels. While post-Civil War America was a time offering great promise and opportunity for many, it was likewise an era of terrible and crushing realities, one marred by greed, human-rights abuses, racism, violence, incendiary politics, and unchecked capitalism. I am again reminded of my students in reviewing this list, as my United States survey history course beginning in 1865 examines many examples of these awful truths and their tragic consequences; and, although these are not the sole focus of my classes, perhaps the fact I present a good bit of unvarnished American stories is one reason some walk away from certain meetings feeling a bit despondent. One area of our concentration is the plight of workers in the age of mechanization. The earlier industrial rumblings of the nineteenth century had, surely by 1860, reached a deafening roar, pulling laborers away from the countryside to toil in the mines and factories where (often quite dangerous) machinery had begun to change the very nature of work and greatly reduced the bargaining power of workers. The sharp rise in demand for laborers to fill these jobs also hastened the pace of immigration, especially from places where poverty, political oppression, and

Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1985); David Brody, "Slavic Immigrants in the Steel Mills," in Thomas R. Frazier, ed., *The Private Side of American History: Readings in Everyday Life, Vol. II, Since 1865* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975), 126-139; William A. Dobak, "One of the Nastiest Rivers That I Know Of": Municipal and Rural Sanitation in Nineteenth-Century Kansas," *KH*, vol. 19, no. 1 (Spring 1996), 52-63; Barbara Finkelstein, "Uncle Sam and the Children: History of Government Involvement in Child Rearing," in N. Ray Hiner and Joseph M. Hawkes, eds., *Growing Up in America: Children in Historical Perspective* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); Lawrence M. Friedman, *Crime and Punishment in American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), Ch. 16; Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914* (Harlow, England: Longman/Pearson Education Limited, 2001); Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, esp. Chs. 3-5; Hofstadter, ed., *The Progressive Movement, 1900-1915* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963) provides a treasure trove of primary documents related to the period, covering topics ranging from child labor and food purity to muckraking, women's rights, criminal justice, trust-busting, and other national political reforms; Glen Jeansonne with David Luhrssen, *A Time of Paradox: America Since 1890* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2006), esp. Part One; Emory Lindquist, "The Swedes of Kansas," *Heritage of Kansas: A Publication of the Department of English, The Kansas State Teachers College—Emporia* (hereafter *HOK*), vol. VII, no. 4 (November 1963), 7-32; James Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare in the Progressive Era: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin's, 2005); Isaac Metzker, ed., *A Bintel Brief: Sixty Years of Letters from the Lower East Side to the Jewish Daily Forward* (New York: Schocken, 1990); John Radzitowski, "Polish Immigrant Life in Rural Minnesota," in Frederick M. Binder and David M. Reimers, eds., *The Way We Lived: Essays and Documents in American Social History, Vol. II: 1865-Present*, 6th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008), 77-84; David W. Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race: Reaction and Reform, 1900-1917* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2005); Eleanor L. Turk, "Germans in Kansas: A Review Essay," *KH*, vol. 28, no. 1 (Spring 2005), 44-71.

ethnic enmity offered little hope or chance for mobility, or even economic survival. For them, and indeed, for many inhabitants of rural America, these new positions as paid employees proffered a tangible means of improvement, at least ideally.

During class-time, the facial and verbal reactions of my students often register real shock and dismay when the underbelly of this picture is exposed. For some workers in the mines, mills, and factories of industrial America life might be better than what they'd left behind, but for many of them, conditions there left much to be desired. Long hours, low pay (sometimes in the form of scrip, rather than coin, cash, or check), and a dearth of benefits kept a lot of them mired in the lowest economic class, often tied to back-breaking and monotonous jobs with no opportunity for advancement or escape. Furthermore, industrial accidents, coupled with the lack of health care or pensions, meant injuries were simply a risk of doing business with employers, where what was actually being commodified was workers' bodies and the ability of some to produce labor until it could no longer do so. Thus, if, in the course of working, one sustained harm so great as to prevent returning to the job, or, worse, died, the accompanying burden of this loss usually fell to a laborer's family, unless they were fortunate enough to have an employer who offered some recompense.⁷ For those who have grown up in and always known a United States with a standard eight-hour workday, forty-hour work-week, the presence of OSHA, Social Security, more employer-provided or -matched health care, and other regulatory safety nets in place (most of these the outcome of real struggles and products of the Progressive Era and New Deal), such revelations can be shocking indeed.

⁷ Edward L. Ayers, "Mill and Mine," and Jaqueline Jones, "Bent Backs in the Rural South," both in Leon Fink, ed., *Major Problems in the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company), 98-114; Jeansonne with Lührssen, *ibid.*, 40-42; Walter LaFeber, et al., *The American Century: A History of the United States Since the 1890s*, 6th ed., (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2008), 12-13; Richard White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": *A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 280-288. See also Pauline Newman, et al., "Conditions at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company," and William Gunn Shepherd, "A Fire Trap," both in Robert Marcus, et al., *America Firsthand, Volume Two: Readings from Reconstruction to the Present*, 6th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004), 104-115. Director and writer John Sayles' film *Matewan* (1987) is also useful in visualizing the types of lives workers, in this case West Virginia coal miners, endured.

In addition to these impediments and dangers, workers in the age of industrial-ization faced great difficulty in organization and empowerment due to the changed nature of labor and the intransigence of their bosses, who sometimes went to great lengths to keep employees downtrodden. Most industrial workers were unskilled and therefore easily replaceable and manipulated, themselves functioning as cogs in the capitalist machinery, unlike their craft and guild brethren of an earlier age who had some modicum of control over their lives and wages. Intimidation of workers (or their families) who spoke out in favor of unions (threats might include loss of jobs, company-owned homes, or demotion into more dangerous positions), playing on ethnic or racial biases and divisions among workers, and the use of violence were common tactics used by management to prevent laborers from rising up against or overthrowing their lot in hopes of a brighter day. When strike conditions turned bloody, as they did, for example, in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892, and Ludlow, Colorado, in 1914, workers and sympathizers (including women and children at the Ludlow camp) usually took the worst of the carnage, their injuries and deaths testimony to the power of the bosses and their hired thugs. What is more, the murders of labor organizers Joe Hill, Frank Little, and Wesley Everest, in separate incidents that occurred in the western United States between 1915 and 1919, is clear evidence that Progressive reform, at least on this front, still had a long way to go; Hill's execution by firing squad in Utah, after a widely-believed frame-up for murder of a local law enforcement officer, further points up the collusion of business interests and regional government that sometimes stacked the odds even higher against labor.⁸

⁸ Testimony of machinist John Morrison before the Committee of the Senate Upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital, 1883, reprinted in Kathryn A. Abbot, ed., *Documents Set for Out of Many: A History of the American People, Volume II* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 254-256; White, *ibid.*, 293-296 and 346-352; Randall E. Rohe, "Chinese Miners in the Far West" and Kenneth W. Porter, "The Labor of Negro Cowboys," both in Fink, ed., *ibid.*, 328-357; Richard Maxwell Brown, "Violence," in Clyde A. Milner II, et al., eds., *The Oxford History of the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 393-425, but see, esp., 411-415 and also 428. See also Alan Derickson, *Workers' Health, Workers' Democracy: The Western Miners' Struggle, 1891-1925* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); Ann Schofield, "An 'Army of Amazons': The Language of Protest in a Kansas Mining Community, 1921-1922," in Rita Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West: New Perspectives* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2003), 299-317; and Mark Wyman, *Hard Rock Epic: Western Miners and the Industrial*

Of course, this was only one area in need of change. As previously mentioned, cities, where the vast majority of immigrants (and, indeed, Americans overall by the close of World War One) had settled, were the cauldron of much industrial ingenuity, and soon showed the signs of it. Overcrowding, disease, poverty, crime, squalid streets and tenements, drunkenness, drug addiction, and desperation went hand-in-hand with the onslaught of people who filled the grimy slums and filth-ridden factories cropping up everywhere across the nation. City children, often left unattended by parents who both worked full-time jobs to make ends meet, played in trash-strewn thoroughfares and alley-ways where they might be prey to accidents, criminal activity or delinquency. Such “street Arabs,” made infamous in Jacob Riis’s photography of the urban landscape in New York City, first published in 1890, elicited much sympathy and underscored the need for better child care alternatives and recreational space.⁹

Chicago’s slaughterhouses and meat-packing facilities became notorious for a range of abuses, from the pollutants they spewed into surrounding air and water to the dangerous on-site conditions faced by wage laborers who earned pennies a day but were held in thrall by the lack of better opportunities. The most scandalous aspect of the stockyards, at least in the public mind, was the fetid products they sent out for human consumption, although all of these grave problems had been the subject of Upton Sinclair’s socialist opus, *The Jungle* (1906). Intending to inflame American sensibilities with descriptions of the fate of his immigrant worker characters, Sinclair had, however, by his own admission, aimed for readers’ hearts but hit instead their stomachs,

Revolution, 1860-1910 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979). The killings of Hill, Frank, and Everest took place, it should be noted (though it can never be justified) in the context of extreme anti-communist (and after 1917, anti-Bolshevik) hysteria, with which the Industrial Workers of the World, the labor union with which all three men were affiliated, had long been associated in the public mind, and whose power was largely broken, at times with federal assistance, during the period of the First World War, yet another example of the limits of reform and the tensions between divergent struggles in the Progressive Era. Robert L. Tyler, *Rebels of the Woods: The I.W.W. in the Pacific Northwest* (Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 1967) makes a useful contribution to the literature on this important and influential organization. See also Friedman, *Crime and Punishment*, 365-370.

⁹ Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin’s, 1996), edited and with an introduction by David Leviatin. See also Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, esp. 10-19.

helping in part to inspire pure food and drug laws after President Roosevelt's reading of the novel.¹⁰

Not far from the Packingtown district where Sinclair had worked and researched his book, another type of reform effort had already begun nearly twenty years prior. At Hull House, on Halsted Street, in an Italian-dominated Chicago neighborhood, Jane Addams and her friend Ellen Gates Starr had established among the first of the nation's "settlement houses," built upon a British model, Toynbee Hall, she had observed in her travels abroad. In America's inner cities, immigrants, rather naturally, clustered together, finding strength and support in increased numbers, solace in the continued use of native tongues, and comfort in the cultivation of cultural customs brought over from their mother countries. The poverty and other wretched conditions of city life already enumerated above bothered Addams and her fellow Progressives, and they sought to bring succor to the starving, indigent, and exploited, particularly women and children, living, or "settling," among them to carry out their work.¹¹

Although none of this sounds remotely objectionable, we may now question some of the motives of such reformers, themselves outsiders, not only ethnically but usually of a more advantaged economic status as well, who sought besides practical methods of decreasing destitution to instill some of their own cultural values and mores amongst the populations they had chosen to "uplift." Thus while their dedication and sincerity of heart are beyond reproach, in offering training courses with alternate views of child-rearing, hygiene, and nutrition, they were, in effect, and not always unwittingly, attempting to break cultural ties and traditions, perhaps not truly for the betterment of those they meant to serve. This, again, raises the specter of what

¹⁰ (rprt., New York: Viking Penguin, 1946, 5th ed); Marcus et al., *America Firsthand*, 123; Jeansonne with Lührssen, *A Time of Paradox*, 19; Eric Rauchway, *Murdering McKinley: The Making of Theodore Roosevelt's America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003) 186-187. See also: Carolyn Bailey Berneking, "Pure Food and Water for Kansans: E.H.S. Bailey, the State Food Laboratory, and the State Board of Health During the Progressive Era," *KH*, vol. 20, no. 1 (Spring 1997), 38-49.

¹¹ Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, edited and with an introduction by Victoria Bissell Brown (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999). The book was originally published in 1910. See also Steven L. Piott, *American Reformers, 1870-1920: Progressives in Word and Deed* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), Ch. 6.

reform means, and on whose terms. Incidentally, settlement house work, in this regard, bears a striking resemblance to the missionary zeal and ethnocentrism (later transplanted, on a somewhat more secular level, to federal boarding schools such as Haskell) that also contemporaneously affected Native Americans and foreign peoples increasingly in the sphere of the United States and its emissaries.¹²

Finally, cities were the primary sites of crusades against political corruption, especially the “bossism” of political machinery such as New York’s Tammany Hall and Kansas City’s Pendergast organization; early battles for birth-control rights and women’s suffrage; and sharp divisions and hostility along ethnic, class, and racial lines, including violent riots, that called for redress. Each of these, to varying degrees, had some reach into and consequences for outlying and rural settings as well, it ought to be noted, especially since the question of whether Progressivism has urban or agrarian roots is a critical one for consideration.¹³

¹² Addams, *ibid.*; Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, Part Two, Section 1. Of related interest, see Laurie Mercier, “‘We Are Women Irish’: Gender, Class, Religious, and Ethnic Identity in Anaconda, Montana,” in *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* (hereafter *MMWH*), vol. 44, no. 1 (Winter 1994), 28-41. See also: Sarah Deutsch, “Women Missionaries and Cultural Conquest, 1900-1914,” in Chan et al., eds., *Peoples of Color*, 91-107; Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Ronald G. Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), Ch. 1.

¹³ See Sanders, “Agrarian Politics,” in Gilmore, *Who Were the Progressives?*, esp. 43-50; Worth Robert Miller, ed., “*The Populist Vision: A Roundtable Discussion*,” *KH*, vol. 32, no. 1 (Spring 2009), 18-45; and Thomas Frank, “The Leviathan with Tentacles of Steel: Railroads in the Minds of Kansas Populists,” in Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West*, 228-248. Other reform-minded writers of the era, including Henry George, Ida Tarbell, and Lincoln Steffens, addressed, often in quite spirited language, the inherent problems of capitalism and city corruption, and their works are still widely read. See George, *Progress and Poverty* (1879; rpt., New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1971); and Steffens, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, 2 vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1931). An interesting contrast to Steffen’s point of view may be found in William L. Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* (New York: McClure, Phillips, 1905). Much of Tarbell’s work exposing the divide-and-conquer tactics of the Standard Oil trust appeared in *McClure’s Magazine* between 1902-1903, but her *All in a Day’s Work* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1939) is useful in understanding her journalistic style and line of attack. See also, Gould, *America in the Progressive Era*, 28-29; LaFeber et al., *The American Century*, 38-39; Piott, *American Reformers*, Chs. 9 & 12; Norman K. Risjord, *Representative Americans: Populists and Progressives* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 24-25, 175; and Harvey Swados, ed., *Years of Conscience: The Muckrakers* (1962; rpt., Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1966). Although “Boss Tom” Pendergast did not rise to the height of his power until the 1930s, after Progressivism had waned, he began a shadowy career in Kansas City politics by 1911 and had consolidated much of his base by the early 1920s; see Lawrence H. Larsen, *Pendergast!* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997). On the development of Progressive politics away from the larger cities and into rural areas, Wisconsin makes an interesting case study; see David P. Thelen, *The New*

Arguably the most familiar and overt problem dogging America in the Progressive Era (with a long history stretching out both before and after that time) was the ugliness of racism. The legacy of African-American slavery and the failures of Reconstruction (itself a series of progressive reforms) to change attitudes had done little to diminish its effects and it persisted with regard to other groups as well, severely limiting black social mobility as well as that of other groups, most notably Asians, particularly the Chinese, who were denied entry to the country by law, beginning in 1882, in an era of almost boundless immigration; other non-whites, or those perceived as such, including peoples of Mexican descent and Native American ancestry, also suffered greatly due to steeped prejudices. For those living today, while the realities of past centuries may be startling to confront, black-white race relations represent a story both better known and less surprising than some of the other areas of Progressive reform efforts, at least partly because racism still exists but also due to the immense changes that have taken place on this front in just the last several generations.¹⁴

Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900 (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972) and *Robert M. La Follette and the Insurgent Spirit* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1976). On Margaret Sanger and the birth control movement of the early twentieth century, see Risjord, Ch. 12; Madeline Gray, *Margaret Sanger: A Biography of the Champion of Birth Control* (New York: Putnam Publishing Group, 1979); and David M. Kennedy, *Birth Control in America: The Career of Margaret Sanger* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970). Sanger's own story is told in *My Fight for Birth Control* (New York: Farrar-Rinehart, 1931); of some related interest, see G.J. Barker-Benfield, *Horrors of the Half-Known Life: Male Attitudes Toward Women and Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century America* (1974; rpt., New York and London: Routledge, 1999) and Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West*, 24-25, on the "Sex Radicals." The literature on women's suffrage is far too extensive to be given full treatment here, but, again, Risjord, in Ch. 9, provides some nice coverage. See also: Linda G. Ford, *Iron-Jawed Angels: The Suffrage Militancy of the National Woman's Party, 1912-1920* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1991); Sara Hunter Graham, *Woman Suffrage and the New Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Susan M. Hartmann, *Transforming Women, Transforming Politics: The U.S. Woman Suffrage Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); and Suzanne M. Marilley, *Woman Suffrage and the Origins of Liberal Feminism in the United States, 1820-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). In many parts of the western United States, women could vote in local or state-wide elections well before the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, the achievement marking not only a key Progressive reform but the culmination of a battle fought for nearly a century. For some good background material, see Walters, *ibid.*, Ch. 5.

¹⁴ Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race*, Ch. 1. Probably the best work on the Reconstruction period is to be found in Eric Foner's *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2002). On Chinese immigration patterns and restrictions, and poor work and social conditions faced by Mexicans, see Shih-shan Henry Tsai, "Chinese Immigration, 1848-1882," Mario T. Garcia, "Mexican Women Workers in Texas, 1880-1920," and Michael M. Smith, "Mexican Labor in Oklahoma, 1900-1945," all in Chan, et al., eds., *Peoples of Color*, 110-116 and 168-

In examining the Progressive age, one can easily observe that it was a time of both great promise and heart-wrenching setbacks in this realm as well. It was, after all, a period when such remarkable African-American leaders as W.E.B. DuBois and Ida B. Wells emerged to help create the Niagara Movement and the NAACP, changing the core nature of how black citizens viewed themselves and the possibilities that might lie ahead for their race. Of course, DuBois found an eager audience for his vision and talk of a “Talented Tenth” precisely because conditions were so abysmal and many had grown weary of the old accommodationist style endorsed by Booker T. Washington and the preceding generation. Wells created a successful platform for her writing and activities, standing resolute against the dual discrimination she faced as a black woman, but the major substance of her work was a campaign against the nauseating public spectacle of lynching and extra-legal mob violence so prevalent in dealing with blacks suspected of any infraction that threatened the established pyramid of color privilege in the United States at that time. Indeed, her outspokenness also forced her to fend off numerous death threats that at times compelled her to flee both home and office.¹⁵

Nor did Wells, DuBois, and other black leaders always see eye-to-eye or necessarily represent the needs of all their supposed constituents, again pointing up the cross-currents of Progressivism, particularly among elites and more average Americans.¹⁶ In addition, for every

178; also see Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), esp. Ch. 2. A thoughtful overview of the deep-rooted biases against Native Americans and legacies stemming from these is provided by Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (1980; rpt., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

¹⁵ Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 1892-1900*, edited and with an introduction by Jaqueline Jones Royster (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 196); Beverly Guy-Sheftall, *Daughters of Sorrow: Attitudes Toward Black Women, 1880-1920* (New York: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1990); David L. Lewis, *W.E.B. DuBois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919* (New York: Owl Books, 1993); Linda McMurry, *To Keep the Waters Troubled: The Life of Ida B. Wells* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915: Racial Ideologies in the Age of Booker T. Washington* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963); B. Joyce Ross, *J.E. Spingarn and the Rise of the NAACP, 1911-1939* (New York: Atheneum, 1972); Patricia A. Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980). Also see Piott, *American Reformers*, Ch. 4.

¹⁶ Lynne B. Feldman, *A Sense of Place: Birmingham's Black Middle-Class Community, 1890-1930* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); Willard B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: The Black*

article or treatise published extolling the virtues or versatility of African Americans, there were publications touting the new “scientific racialism” and an interest in eugenics to contend with, most notably the hugely popular *Passing of the Great Race*, which was widely enough read to merit a brief appearance in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel of American life adrift in the 1920s, *The Great Gatsby*.¹⁷ Moreover, while blacks were making some slow strides in breaking political, economic, and educational barriers, the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision of 1896 had ushered in a new era of legal segregation and the next two and a half decades would see the rise of a more monolithic Ku Klux Klan than ever before, as well as some of the nation’s bloodiest race riots.¹⁸ Finally, African Americans, too, were subject to a good bit of outside “uplift” in the form of training academies and programs meant to cultivate their moral, civil and work ethics via sponsorship and oversight by whites who supposedly knew what was best for them. In Kansas, for instance, a place where divided Civil War loyalties left a mixed legacy of attitudes about race,

Elite, 1880-1920 (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2000); Raymond Wolters, *DuBois and His Rivals* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002). Also see Dickson, “African-American Women’s Clubs in Denver, 1890s-1920s,” and Elmer R. Rusco, “African Americans in Nevada, 1860s-1920s,” both in Chan, et al., eds., *Peoples of Color*, 224-234 and 323-328. On the sometimes uneasy tensions between blacks and immigrants, see Arnold M. Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982).

¹⁷ Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race, or, The Racial Basis of European History* (1916; rpt., Manchester, NH: Ayer Company Publishers, 1970). Despite the title, the work concerned questions of race in a larger setting. See also Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race*, 47-56; and Risjord, *Representative Americans*, 69-71.

¹⁸ C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 3rd revised ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Patrick G. O’Brien, “‘I Want Everyone to Know the Shame of the State’: Henry J. Allen Confronts the Ku Klux Klan, 1921-1923,” *KH*, vol. 19, no. 2 (Summer 1996), 98-111; Mark Bauerlein, *Negrophobia: A Race Riot in Atlanta, 1906* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2001); David S. Cecelski and Timothy B. Tyson, *Democracy Betrayed: The Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 and its Legacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); William Ivy Hair, *Carnival of Fury: Robert Charles and the New Orleans Race Riot of 1900*, updated ed., with a new forward by W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 2008); William M. Tuttle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Summer of 1919* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Scott Ellsworth, *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992); Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), esp. Chs. 3-5. Notably, the Klan’s widespread appeal by the 1920s rested largely on fears and insecurities about immigration and the scores of new Americans who had arrived in the previous 50 years.

educational reform results were haphazard, offering some forward-thinking (if often paternalistic) experiments along with signs of both subtle and overt prejudice.¹⁹

As this brief examination of the Progressive Era ought to indicate, the period from 1890 to 1920 was fraught with challenges, bringing forth heady possibilities, some amazing advancements, and a number of sobering setbacks. Nor does this survey do complete justice to the broad scope of changes underway in these difficult decades. The practices of science, medicine, law, anthropology, and history all experienced rather extraordinary leaps forward in terms of professionalization and new avenues of inquiry, to name but a few more examples of the huge overhauling of American society taking place at the time. While, again, not all change was positive or instantly guaranteed improvement, on balance, we can qualify much of the innovation in these areas as movement in a “progressive” direction.²⁰

Given the dizzying, and sometimes dazzling, array of interests and institutional reform efforts evident, we may be well served echoing the question put forth by Gilmore: just who were the Progressives? Were they merely the cityscape custodians, residents both native and new, who made up the great majority of the population by 1920, or should they also include the habitués of the heartland, whose plucky paeans to Populism who put Progressives so much in their debt? Is it

¹⁹ Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 71; Beatty and Peterson, “Covert Discrimination”; Philip R. Beard, “The Kansas Colored Literary Academy: A White Effort at African-American Education in Late Nineteenth-Century Kansas,” *KH*, vol. 24, no. 3 (Autumn 2001), 200-217; James C. Carper, “The Popular Ideology of Segregated Schooling: Attitudes Toward the Education of Blacks in Kansas, 1854-1900,” in Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West*, 181-199; Gordon Parks, *The Learning Tree* (New York: Fawcett Books, 1963). See also Robert Engs, *Freedom’s First Generation: Black Hampton, Virginia, 1861-1890* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004); Donald Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Africa World Press, 2007); and Stephen Grant Meyers, *As Long as They Don’t Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), esp. Chs. 1-2.

²⁰ Claudia Roth Pierpont, “The Measure of America,” *The New Yorker*, 8 March 2004, 48-63; Piott, *American Reformers*, Chs. 8 & 10; Risjord, *Representative Americans*, Ch. 8; Vernon J. Williams, Jr., *Rethinking Race: Franz Boas and His Contemporaries* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996); Gordon S. Wood, “A Century of Writing Early American History: Then and Now Compared; or How Henry Adams Got it Wrong,” *AHR*, vol. 100, no. 3 (June 1995), 678-696. On the more ominous side of things, see, for e.g., Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), esp. Chs. 3-5; Donald K. Pickens, *Eugenics and the Progressives* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1968); and Luisah Teish, “That Nigger’s Crazy,” in Norman Klein, ed., *Culture, Curers, and Contagion* (1979, rpt.; Novato, CA: Chandler & Sharp Publishers, Inc., 1987), 185-187.

only whites, blacks, or some other racial or ethnic group, whether elite or common, who should rightly hold the mantle of reform? Can we say it instead most surely belongs with great national political leaders of the day, such as Teddy Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson, Senator “Battlin’ Bob” La Follette of Wisconsin, or perennial presidential candidate, labor leader and grandfather of American socialism, Eugene V. Debs, themselves all of quite different philosophical orientations and various party affiliations? Does it rest simply with scholars, including legal giant Louis Brandeis, ethnographer Franz Boas, DuBois, or historians Charles and Mary Beard, for instance; or rather among the so-called “muckrakers,” those dedicated journalists who exposed the underside of American life, such as Riis, Sinclair, Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell, and Wells? Did Progressivism rise up from the Victorian womanhood cult to provide a nurturing and maternal hand for society at large, or instead from suffragettes striving from enfranchisement, or was it mainly the work and actions of men? Should we look to workers as the primary catalysts of change? How to do this, though, without recognizing the role of business as an agent of efficiency and philanthropy so central also to the modern conception of Progressivism?²¹

The shortest, though perhaps not entirely satisfying, answer is that *all* of these types (and probably more) must make up our definition of Progressivism. From regulation to rapid production, education to eugenics, access to better wages or the ballot box, purifying food or moral turpitude, the impulse and impetus for reform rested in each of these vessels and a hundred others. In one respect, it has been a matter of historical interpretation and its convenience that allows us to place these varied efforts into a single paradigm of Progressive reform, as they were

²¹ Most of these roads have been well traveled at this point, but see, esp., Daniel Aaron, *Men of Good Hope: The Story of American Progressives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); Carl R. Burghardt, *Robert M. La Follette, Sr.: The Voice of Conscience* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992); John M. Cooper, Jr., *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1983); Gould, *Reform and Regulation: American Politics from Roosevelt to Wilson* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1986); Jeansonne with Lührssen, *A Time of Paradox*, Ch. 1; LaFeber et al., *The American Century*, 30-38; Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1900-1917* (1954; rpt. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963); Rauchway, *Murdering McKinley*, esp. Ch. 7; Nick Salvatore, *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007); Swados, *Years of Conscience*; and Melvin I. Urofsky, *Louis D. Brandeis and the Progressive Tradition* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1981).

not necessarily unified or working towards common goals, which should be clear at this point; sometimes, in fact, even those of similar backgrounds or outlook found themselves at odds with one another in their pursuit of achieving some happier end. The same may be said for the tendency to bookend the era as historians traditionally have, when such diverse campaigns as these often began prior to 1890 and continued well into the 1920s, in some cases far beyond.²²

(Indeed, as this essay will argue, Progressive strains were most assuredly at work among Indian students at Haskell almost from the start, as evidenced by the quiet cautions, measurable behaviors, and noticeable needs and demands vocalized or otherwise intimated by them and their support networks. By the same token, although this investigation does not significantly explore the latter Progressive Era or the period which followed its traditionally defined ending, there can be little question that the changes, while often rather miniscule, inspired during the first quarter century of Haskell's existence continued to reverberate after that date; and, viewed on the whole and in concert with other evolutions, can be said to inform the general drift of federal Indian educational policy not only into the 1920s but even up to the present day.)

Of course, there are compelling reasons for these accepted conventions: certainly by the last decade of the nineteenth century social and economic conditions, on numerous fronts, had reached a boiling point, and the sheer number of individuals, groups, and political parties seeking redress or amelioration of atrocities began to match the crisis with their fever pitch of activities. By the dawn of the 1920s, with some remarkable reforms achieved (most notably, on the national stage, passage of the Sixteenth through Twentieth Amendments to the Constitution), a plethora of new work standards and business regulations in place (though not across the board), a greater middle class secured, and in response to the shock and awe of the World War One experience,

²² George E. Mowry, "The Progressive Profile," and Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920s?", both in Nicholas Cords and Patrick Gerster, eds., *Myth and the American Experience, Volume Two* (Beverly Hills, CA: Glencoe Press, 1973), 162-179, and 231-245. See also David Pietrusza, *1920: The Year of Six Presidents* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2007), esp. Ch. 26.

many Americans did retreat into racial antipode, a decreased engagement with participatory democracy, and a more general apathy about society's ills or their ability to change them.

In the final analysis, though, the Progressive Era, that period which sometimes shook the nation and took it to that next plateau, albeit with all the apparent ups and downs it encapsulated, was an incredibly vibrant part of the American past. Taken as a whole, it represents both the best and worst of our potential as a nation, offering equally exciting and awful possibilities for what it would have meant to live in such a time. At its most basic level, however, it seems clear the Progressive impulse was a positive force, for, even as it brought into the light many of the ugliest and vicious trends then existing in the United States, the ultimate goal was to find a means of improving these; although, to be sure, there was much less agreement on what that would mean exactly. Still, amidst all the confusion and nuance of pinning down who the Progressives were and what they achieved (or didn't), it can be said that Progressives saw need, want, and injustice and strove to respond in a variety of manners. When no model existed for attaining their ends, they created them; whether they were always successful is secondary to that realization. Because the United States was then, as now, a hodgepodge of communities offering a wealth of cultural diversity, traditions, and beliefs, it is probably unrealistic to expect that the Progressives, any more than those who affix themselves with the moniker of being a "progressive" today, could find all the answers or even fashion some cookie-cutter solutions to the wealth of problems they, and America, faced (try as some might).

Instead, Progressives were informed by what they knew best, which meant they could be quite effective in articulating or addressing the desires of their specialized group, and even in this there was often much disagreement or factionalism; it also opened the door to pitfalls, at least as we would judge them today, when certain reformers, sincere as they were, deigned to speak for the needs of those whom they didn't fully understand or appreciate on their own terms, particularly given the often ethnocentric points of view so prevalent during the period (and to which we are still not completely immune today). They worked, struggled, and lived dedicated to

the propositions that formed their characters and perspectives, flawed as those might be, and we can hardly fault them for being products of their own time, as repellant as some ideologies emerging in the Progressive Era were. At their best, Progressives exhibited genuine idealism, sometimes rather raw or rudimentary, but also grappled with how to apply their ideals, whether lofty or mundane, pragmatically into the situations in which they found themselves. This, too, we should find admirable at its base, as it reflects a good bit of the root human condition of how best to navigate life's obstacles with an eye toward making the world, either immediate or otherwise, a better place to be. As historians (and their students, too) dig into the veritable feast the past offers for contemplation and absorption, this, after all, is one of its tastiest treats: to find the common humanity that connects us through time, place, and space.

What then of Native Americans? How do they fit into our formulation and conception of Progressivism? Careful readers have doubtless noted a conspicuous absence of material devoted to their role and place in these decades that have received coverage in the preceding pages. Because this work is, at its core, about them, I have elected to examine the conditions and circumstances surrounding their struggles leading up to and during the formative Progressive years in the next chapter, in order to accord both a fuller treatment of these and to allow readers the ability to layer this section's discussion of Progressivism with what they will find there.

CHAPTER THREE

Progressivism's Reach and Meaning for Native Americans

You have children; we have children.
You want to raise your children and
make them happy and prosperous;
we want to raise [ours] and make
them happy and prosperous.
We ask you to help us do it.

--Red Cloud, speech at Cooper Union, 16 July 1870¹

When the great Sioux leader Red Cloud spoke these words during a trip to the East that summer, many in the audience must have been surprised by the tenor of his address. After all, not so very long before, he had been at war with the United States and, indeed, peace between his people and the citizens of the young nation he was now visiting was a far from settled matter. The tenuous relationship between American Indians and the United States government had a long and bitter history of hostilities, bloodshed, and dispossession that had left many unsettled issues and feelings in its wake. As Americans approached their national centennial, however, most felt confident that the long Indian wars were finally drawing to a close, but many still pondered the fate of indigenous peoples in what they perceived as the march of progress as the country expanded its reach ever westward to meet its “manifest destiny.” Would the natives retreat into the ether of time, eventually vanishing before the steady stream of newcomers, be permanently contained on the growing number of reservations set aside for them, or somehow be transformed and amalgamated into the American mainstream? In the East, where reform-minded men and women who styled themselves “friends of the Indian” were greatest in number, and who were well

¹ *New York Times*, 17 July 1870, reprinted in Abbot, ed., *Documents Set Vol. II.*, 240-241. See also Richard A. Elk, “Red Cloud’s Cooper Union Address,” *Communication Studies*, vol. 17, no. 4 (November 1966), 257-262; Dee Brown, *The American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), Ch. 4 and 132-134; James C. Olson, *Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965); and R. Eli Paul, “Recovering Red Cloud’s Autobiography,” *MMWH*, vol. 44, no. 3 (Summer 1994), 2-17.

represented in the assembled crowd listening to Red Cloud's speech, this last idea, that of assimilation, had begun to take hold and sway to action those sympathetic to the long plight of Native Americans.²

For Native Americans, even a cursory examination of their status in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries suggests this was for them, as for numerous other groups previously discussed, a time of both great promise and terrible realities. In their case, however, the situation had been far grimmer before brightening somewhat by the time Red Cloud delivered his address in New York City, with nearly all of the possibilities tied to certain conditions and complications facing First Nations still grappling with what historian Patty Limerick calls 'the legacy of conquest.'³ Consider that, by the close of the Civil War, Indian peoples had already endured centuries of prejudice, warfare, land-grabs, broken treaties, disease and population decline, and educational reform attempts by outsiders, followed by the more recent, and often harsh, realities of reservation life, poverty, high alcoholism rates, renewed cultural assaults, and despair. Therefore when Indian children left (voluntarily or otherwise, as it sometimes turned out) their parents' sides soon after to attend federal boarding schools, one key outgrowth of both reformers' and Red Cloud's suggestion, there to soon be immersed in a foreign wilderness of English speakers, white faces, and Western modes of dress and decorum, it could, on the one hand, be construed as a form of "uplift" from the often desperate conditions of the reservations. On the other hand, such a journey (a physical one, but, ultimately, emotional and spiritual in nature as well) also represented a stripping away, if not always successful, of older traditions, familial bonds, and cultural markers resulting in further alienation, confusion, disruption, and turmoil, on both tribal and individual levels.⁴

² Arguably the best remembered example of these "friends" is Helen Hunt Jackson, whose *A Century of Dishonor*, first published in 1881, has been widely reprinted ever since; for a broader examination of this movement, see Robert Winston Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971). The term "manifest destiny" was the coinage of journalist John L. O'Sullivan; it originally appeared in the *Democratic Review* of July 1845 and gained increasing use and credence thereafter.

³ Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987).

⁴ See, for e.g., Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 15-19; Ralph K. Andrist, *The Long Death: The Last Days of the Plains Indian* (1964; rpt., New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1994); Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., "Model Zions for the American Indians," *American Quarterly*, XV (Summer 1963), 176-190, and *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862* (Lexington: University of Kentucky

Although Red Cloud spoke in a time before the dawn of the Progressive Era, his hopes for subsequent generations of American Indians certainly were progressive for the time and represent a departure, not only from his own previous stance but for Indian leadership in general. Yet when his wishes bore fruit in the form of native children increasingly attending boarding schools in coming years, the results of such education were, at best, mixed, whether in the minds of those who received such training or others; in other words, the “help” he sought was not always of the variety he likely had in mind. A brief survey of some of the so-called Red Progressives who emerged from the new wave of boarding institutions is instructive in this regard, for they serve as key examples of the next generation of Indian leadership and give an indication of both what these industrial labor institutions had to offer and the effects of outside schooling.

Take, for instance, the case of Charles Eastman, among the most celebrated and still renowned of this group. A Santee (Eastern) Sioux born in 1858 in Minnesota, Eastman spent the first fifteen years of his life enjoying a traditional upbringing there, and later in Canada after the Great Sioux Uprising against reservation policies in 1862. By age sixteen he had enrolled, at the behest of his father (who had lived among whites) in the Presbyterian Santee Training School in South Dakota and would, from there, go on to attend Dartmouth College and the Boston University Medical School, taking degrees at both by 1890. After his school days, Eastman worked in the Indian Department, most notably as a physician on the Pine Ridge Agency. In the aftermath of the Wounded Knee massacre there, he resigned from the Indian Service (he would return, briefly, later) and became increasingly disillusioned with government policy toward Indians. Although he remained quite comfortable in both native and white circles, organizing

Press, 1965); Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1974), Chs. 1 & 5-7; Alice B. Kehoe, *North American Indians: A Comprehensive Account*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1992); Paula Mitchell Marks, *In a Barren Land: The American Indian Quest for Cultural Survival, 1607 to the Present* (1998; rpt., New York: Perennial/Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 2002); Reyner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, esp. Chs. 1-3; Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988); Robert M. Utley and Wilcomb E. Washburn, *Indian Wars* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987); William E. Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1996); and White, “*It's Your Misfortune*”, esp. Chs. 2-4.

reservation chapters of the YMCA as well as helping to found the Society of American Indians (SAI), a reform group chartered in 1911 with Indian needs in mind, he would eventually leave his wife, the white missionary Elaine Goodale Eastman, and retreat to a remote cabin in the Canadian woods where he spent much of his later life before his death in 1939.⁵

That Eastman, who proudly reclaimed his Sioux name, Ohiyesa (“the Winner”) revisited his youth, both physically and literarily, producing several well-received memoirs focusing on his upbringing, is telling. While he never completely abandoned the principles or benefits of his Western education and belief in Christianity, or totally dissolved his ties to white society, it is clear he struggled with these ideals and his place in the world.⁶ In addition, the very fact he saw the need to create alternatives to organizations and policies meant to help Indians (and, importantly, mostly overseen by whites) points up the troubling state of affairs existing at the time. Others of similar background likewise rejoiced in their heritage and authored books recounting the riches of Indian life before the changes wrought by widespread resettlement and dispossession of native lands by newcomers. Certainly such remembrances struck a chord with a wider audience eager for stories about “vanishing” Indian peoples and their ways after the supposed “closing” of the frontier in 1890, but these works represented, on another level, a desire by their writers to preserve past connections and, in some cases, were a rejection of the newer ideas and perspectives to which they had been exposed, usually in schools set up for them.⁷

⁵ Eastman, *From the Deep Woods*, esp. v-ix, 27-32, 47-50, 58-91; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 31, 38-42, 180; Hoxie, ed., *Talking Back to Civilization*, 1-5, 73-75; Kay Graber, ed., *Sister to the Sioux: The Memoirs of Elaine Goodale Eastman, 1885-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978). Goodale also wrote an early biography of Pratt and his activities in Indian education; see *Pratt: The Red Man's Moses* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935). Eastman also worked with the fledgling Boy Scouts to instill Indian values regarding nature in young whites, in an interesting reversal of cultural role modeling, given his own educational experience.

⁶ Eastman, *ibid.*; *Indian Boyhood* (1902, rpt.; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971); and *The Soul of an Indian: An Interpretation* (1911; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980). Eastman was particularly concerned with the disconnect he saw between Christian morality as preached versus its practice; see Hoxie, *ibid.*, 76-79.

⁷ There are several good examples of such writing, including Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa, or “Red Bird”), *American Indian Stories* (1921; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); Edward Goodbird, *Goodbird the Indian: His Story*, Gilbert L. Wilson, ed. (1914; rpt.; St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985); Francis La Flesche, *The Middle Five: Indian Schoolboys of the Omaha Tribe* (1900; rpt., (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963); Maxidiwiac, *Waheenee: An Indian Girl's Story, Told by Herself to Gilbert L. Wilson, Ph.D.* (1927, rpt.; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981); and Luther Standing Bear's *My Indian Boyhood*

Moreover, the appearance, in the early twentieth century, of numerous books detailing “unspoiled” Native American life, and the academic interest it generated, is an indication of Progressive trends as well, among both Indians and scholars alike who found something of value in them to be shared.

Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, 1876-1938) makes an excellent case in point. Educated at Quaker schools in the Midwest, she later taught at Carlisle Institute between 1900 and 1902 before changing tack abruptly, soon devoting herself to writings celebrating the traditional life of the Yankton Sioux and to the reform of Indian policy as secretary of the SAI after 1916; she also worked with the Indian Defense Association, an advocacy group spearheaded by John Collier in 1923. In articles that originally appeared in *Harper's Bazaar* and *The Atlantic Monthly* early in the century, she decried the

(1931; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), and *My People the Sioux*, E.A. Brininstool, ed. (1928; rpt., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975); and Howard Whitewolf, “A Short Story of My Life,” *The American Indian Magazine*, 5 (January-March 1917), 29-31. Whitewolf's story appeared in the SAI's publication; founded in 1913 as the *Quarterly Journal*, it received the new name three years later, before folding, along with the organization, by 1920. Each of the authors exhibits a varying degree of influence by Christianity, with some embracing its tenets, others finding a middle path inclusive of some Indian beliefs, and still others abandoning this aspect of their education entirely. Maxidiwiac Waheenee (or Buffalo Bird Woman, 1832?-1939) helped preserve traditional Hidatsa culture, being a particularly credible informant regarding gardening, farming, and women's work; although she was not the product of a boarding school education, the translation of her story for Wilson came through her son, Good Bird (Goodbird, above), who was. See also Coleman, *American Indian Children*, 8-9, 116, 121, and 184-185; and Hoxie, *Talking Back to Civilization*, 12-13 and 16-18. The trend of natives offering “as told to” reminiscences of an earlier era to ethnographers (increasingly known as anthropologists in the twentieth century) only gathered steam in following decades, but these early examples are noteworthy for the absence of less outside oversight, by comparison, making them not only invaluable resources but also more in line with the push for indigenous peoples to tell their own stories seen in the wake of “new social history” ideals that began to take hold by the early 1960s.

Perceptions of an end to the frontier emanated not just from the experience of an increased national population (and other developments) but also from the writings of historian Frederick Jackson Turner and countless others who built upon his influential ideas about the frontier's meaning, especially in reference to questions of an American character. Turner's initial investigation into the topic, building on the 1890 census report, came in an address to the American Historical Society in tandem with the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago, but he offered an expanded version the following year, furthering building upon it for much of his life. See “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” *Proceedings of the Forty-First Annual Meeting of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* (Madison, 1894), 79-112. While many historians since have wrestled with Turner's thesis (affirming, reshaping, rejecting, or restating his case), its reverberations continue to resound. For some of the better recent writing in the field, see William Cronon, “Revisiting the Vanishing Frontier: The Legacy of Frederick Jackson Turner,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (hereafter *WMQ*), 3rd Series, 18 (April 1987); Richard W. Etulain, ed., *Does the Frontier Experience Make America Exceptional?* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999); Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest*, 20-23, 71, 83; Limerick, Clyde A. Milner II, and Charles E. Rankin, eds., *Trails: Toward a New Western History* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991); Martin Ridge, “The Life of an Idea: The Significance of Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis,” *MMWH*, 41 (1991); and Elliot West, “American Frontier,” in Milner, ed., *Oxford History of the American West*, 115-149. Notably, Turner's treatment of the frontier has received ample criticism for its short-sighted treatment of American Indians and their role in this history.

adverse cultural effects of assimilation efforts, in particular singling out the twin assaults of boarding-school education and Christianization, pledging her support instead for other options that took Indian traditionalism seriously. Her *American Indian Stories*, published in 1921, brought together much of her early work; still widely read today, it focused attention on the harsh strictures of Indian industrial schools and her embrace of “paganism” over Christian dogma. The public attention she garnered at the time was largely positive, her talent hailed critically and her championship of native values seen by many Progressives (both white and Indian) as a tonic for the problems associated with schooling and the OIA.⁸

Bonnin’s biting indictments invited greater scrutiny of the special struggles Native Americans faced and left sympathetic readers, held tight in the grip of her dramatic prose, searching for answers to these. When she described the cutting of her long hair upon arrival at White’s Indian Labor School as a young girl, she made its impact clear: among her people, to shorn their long locks was reserved for mourners and miscreants. It was “Then I lost my spirit,” she wrote, as “my long hair was shingled like a coward’s!” and “for now I was only one of many little animals driven by a herder.”⁹ In the interim, however, she had, apparently, regained much of her former confidence and composure, as the strength and passion of her writing about the “old ways” of Native Americans bore testament. Still, in the words of Polingaysi Qoyawayma (Elizabeth Q. White), a Hopi graduate of boarding schools, there was “no turning back,” not completely at least. For all Bonnin’s reliance on traditionalism, she was much more complex: an accomplished violinist, and internationally acclaimed for her writing and activism, she moved with ease in the cosmopolitan circles of Washington, D.C., as SAI secretary and lived an existence quite remote from the experience of most former Indian students. While she remained committed to the situations and circumstances of various tribes and reservations, her sense of loss and detachment from the past also instilled a bitterness that is obvious in her written work and private life (she felt alienated from her parents and family; even the appellation Red Bird was an invention, a solace she sought in attempting

⁸ Bonnin, *ibid.*; Hoxie, *ibid.*, 69-71; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 153, 170, 201. Bonnin also worked closely with Progressive women’s organizations of the day.

⁹ Zitkala-Sa (Bonnin), “The School Days of an Indian Girl,” originally from *Atlantic Monthly* 89 (January-March 1900), reprinted in Marcus et al., eds., *America Firsthand*, 41; also in Bonnin, *ibid.*, 56.

to reconstruct the traditional naming deprived her by having left for school at so young an age). The difficulties of trying to walk both paths weighed on her as well; perhaps this is why some have judged her (and Eastman, too) as “marginal,” in an anthropological sense, meaning she could not totally fit into either the modern world or the one she had left behind.¹⁰ In this regard, then, she shared something fundamental with others who had undergone similar trials.

This course, as “neither a wild Indian nor a tame one,” to use Bonnin’s phrase, presented a thorny challenge for both the Indian elite and their lesser-known brethren.¹¹ On the surface, many at the forefront of the Red Progressive movement exhibited just the kind of accomplishments and adjustment upheld by white “friends of the Indian” that proved Indians were educable and capable of assimilation. Yet beneath that veneer laid a lot of inner conflict. Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai, 1866?-1923) had endured a horrible childhood, being captured and then sold by rival Pimas, before rising up to become the first Indian graduate of the University of Illinois in 1889; he later received a medical degree, like Eastman, with whom he would become close. In another parallel, after having served in the last decade of the nineteenth century as a doctor to Indians, in his case at Pratt’s Carlisle school, Montezuma had an awakening, resigned his post, and sought out his roots in Arizona. As a founder of the SAI, he was a vociferous critic of both the Indian educational system and the Office of Indian Affairs, eventually calling for its dissolution.¹²

Laura Cornelius Kellogg (Oneida, 1880-1949), another SAI founder, attended some of the most prestigious colleges in the nation (Barnard, Columbia, Stanford, Cornell, and the University of Wisconsin). Both she and Henry Roe Cloud (Winnebago, 1884-1950), a graduate from federal boarding institutions at Genoa, Nebraska, and the Santee Normal Training School who later attended Yale, were

¹⁰ Bonnin, *American Indian Stories*, viii-x, xii; Qoyawayma, *No Turning Back*; Coleman, *American Indian Children*, 188; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 58, 138-139, 174.

¹¹ Bonnin, *ibid.*, xi, 69;

¹² John Franch, “Torn Between Two Worlds,” *Illinois Alumni*, vol. 19, iss. 2 (Sept.-Oct. 2006), 22-26; Hoxie, *Talking Back to Civilization*, 90-95; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 43-44, 94-95, 183. Montezuma eventually broke with the SAI as well, finding even its approach too moderate.

outspoken in their defense of Indian children's promise and the need for alternatives to the education they received under the auspices of the Indian Department, as well as being generally critical of the reservation system. Francis La Flesche (Omaha, 1862?-1932), author of a poignant early account of mission school life, and Arthur C. Parker (Seneca, 1881-1955, yet another charter member of SAI) would become highly regarded for their anthropological and museum work, working to change how other Americans viewed Indians in the stirring shift to cultural relativism initiated by Franz Boas of Columbia University.¹³

Despite these achievements, a quest for greater Indian self-determination spurred these individuals, and sometimes drove them into despair; in light of their struggles, we can see the burning issues of the day for Indians smoldering in the works and lives of the Red Progressive leadership. Of course, as with the Progressive movement writ large, different rationales and purposes motivated their goals. Yet they had much in common even if their methods or reactions varied. All sought a greater connection with their past, historically, culturally, or physically, and most felt some sense of personal loss due to the paths they had walked. They also hoped to ease the burden they had carried for subsequent generations of schoolchildren, reservation residents, and the increasingly acculturated Indian. When Eastman and Montezuma retreated to their boyhood homelands, they paid homage to an unfinished quest in their own lives, but also spoke to the pull of familiarity and family central to Native American (and other) peoples. Bonnin and La Flesche looked for this in their writing, although the former remained a more solitary figure, isolated as she was from the peer and familial bonds of her youth.¹⁴

In addition, each looked for ties with the past, recognizing and entertaining new ways of retaining them, while yet looking towards the future. Though cognizant of and admitting to (in varying degrees) the values of speaking English, having exposure to Christianity morality, and acquaintance with Western

¹³ Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 192-196; Hoxie, *ibid.*, 36-65; Hertzberg, *ibid.*, 24, 39-40, 52-53, 60-61, 65, 88-90; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 149-151; La Flesche, *Middle Five*; also see Williams, Jr., *Rethinking Race*.

¹⁴ Of some interest in this regard, see Amelia V. Katanski, *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), Ch. 3.

knowledge (particularly mathematics and the sciences), they edged toward learning these *on Indian terms* and spoke of acceptance of themselves and their values *for what they were*. At the inaugural meeting of the Society of American Indians, held at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, on October 12, 1911 (Columbus Day, to further underscore their intent of charting new discoveries and reshaping the image of Native Americans in a mold more acceptable to them), Laura Kellogg delivered one of many papers presented at the conference. In it, she stated, “I am not the new Indian, I am the old Indian adjusted to new conditions,” and pounced on the opportunity to dress down an education system that eliminates “the traditions of the youth on which all other nations build their hopes.”¹⁵ La Flesche had written of his school days in such a way as to show the humanity of native people and the many biases arrayed against them and their traditions. When he later embraced the peyote cult that mixed indigenous religious beliefs with Christianity, he was savaged by Pratt, who maintained that “He is not lifting up his race,” and that “the ethnologists always lead the Indian’s mind back to the past,”¹⁶ revealing Pratt’s own prejudices, so endemic as to pollute even such an esteemed “friend of the Indian,” and the general perception among whites that Native Americans ought to be divorced from and done with their traditions.

Henry Roe Cloud, who outlived Pratt and most of the rest of his contemporaries discussed here, was a tireless reformer in the field of education and helped provide alternatives there for Indians in the vein he (and others) had always envisioned. In 1915, with funds secured through philanthropic donations, he opened the Roe Institute (later renamed the American Indian Institute) in Wichita, Kansas, to provide college preparatory training for native boys, one of the only options for such courses, as most federally-operated schools continued to offer only vocational class work. While some of his more radical fellow Indian Progressives might have frowned on this as a concession to the assimilation agenda, they could not deny the power of a school for native youth organized and conducted by one of their own. After the closing of his academy owing to financial woes and with the reordering of the Indian Department that began under the Roosevelt Administration, Roe Cloud became the superintendent of Haskell Institute in

¹⁵ Cited in Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 65; see also 59 & 63.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 261-262; see also Hoxie, *Talking Back to Civilization*, 79-84.

1933, the first American Indian to rise to that position, indicating a major shift emblematic of the influence of the Red Progressives, and one that would have doubtless made Red Cloud proud.¹⁷

Whatever their approach, the Red Progressives, like similar reformers of the age, were asking critical questions about how to stake out the surest future for their people. The best and brightest of their generation, they pondered aloud what was on the minds of thousands more who shared their experiences, as well as scores of others sympathetic to some remaking of United States Indian policy and the nation's longstanding "Indian problem" (that, too, had been reworked with time; at its heart, however, remained the central, needling issue of how to deal with this group that wasn't going away, whether literally or culturally). Among the most prominent of their queries were the following: How to stay true to one's self and a collective past while confronting the changed nature of life in America? ; If only white reformers were responsible for the education and future of native peoples, wasn't that too high a price to pay for progress (if, indeed, it could be called that), or at least the ability to compete and survive? (this is especially relevant in hindsight given the discontent symbolized by the "success stories" of Eastman, Bonnin, and others.) ; Hadn't Native American parents and children endured the whims and paternalism of the Indian Office (and other "friends") for too long at the expense of their heritage and own needs? These kinds of questions being asked (even if the answers were more contentious than the consensus of the inquiries), on the part of all Indians, by the Red Progressives, reflects their key role in helping give form to policy issues that would impact Indian students, especially, long after their own demise.

Owing to factionalism and other internal crises, the SAI, the earliest and chief vehicle of the Red Progressives, dissolved by 1920, nicely in keeping, for the historian anyway, with the end of the standard time frame given over to the Progressive Era. Their influence, however, lived on far longer and they were supplanted by an array of other groups devoted to the causes they brought to the fore. In addition to

¹⁷ Hertzberg, *ibid.*, 47-48; Hoxie, *ibid.*, 58. See also: Joel Pfister, *The Yale Indian: The Education of Henry Roe Cloud* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009); and Jason M. Tetzloff, "To Do Some Good Among the Indians: Henry Roe Cloud and Twentieth Century Native American Advocacy" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Purdue University, 1996). One of the buildings on the Haskell campus is named in Roe Cloud's honor.

those already mentioned, they helped foster a growing sense of Pan-Indian identity among Native Americans, whose experiences, including boarding school education, were becoming closer and more similar to one another, in a way that could transcend tribal affiliation. Old rivalries and animosities among tribes did not completely disappear (nor did internal factionalism that, as with the SAI, had kept traditional group politics robust and sometimes splintered), but the meaning of what it was to be Indian had, by the twentieth century, reached beyond the boundaries of an earlier age and into an awareness of a common cause as the surviving First Americans affected new modes of thinking about problems both past and present. On a basic level, this meant finding connections among tribal histories, cultures, and circumstances. Despite their multitude of disagreements and sometimes divergent voices, Red Progressives had all seen an intrinsic value in Native America, its customs, beliefs, rituals, families, and stories; and they had desired to preserve these, to be carried forth by native peoples themselves into whatever situations the future held.¹⁸ Hopefully this would translate into improvement over the government policies enacted and utilized throughout previous decades, and which had, in many ways, their promises notwithstanding, been built on centuries of prejudices and ethnocentrism. In this respect, the Red Progressives promoted their loftiest common goal.

Yet, as discussed in the previous chapter, we cannot view all Progressive change through the lens of elites, even if, as in this case, many of them happen to share similar traits and experiences with the group for which they sought “uplift.” In addition, the Red Progressives are not the primary focus of this investigation, although they make a wonderful case study for helping us think about what the meanings of Indian education in the period were (and are from the vantage point of the present) and what kinds of situations Native Americans, particularly students in the federal boarding regime, faced, before, during, and after their schooling. In a major regard, students (including some of those later-to-be leaders among the Red Progressives), as well as their families, had been helping to shape and influence policy, albeit

¹⁸ Hertzberg, *ibid.*, 118, but also see Chs. 1 & 6; Hoxie, *ibid.*, 25-27; Fiorentino, “Acculturation/Assimilation”; Calloway, ed., *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground: Plains Indian Views of How the West was Lost* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1996), 205; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 215-216. Also see Lucy Maddox, *Citizen Indians: Native American Intellectuals, Race, and Reform* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

usually very incrementally and in only specific times and places (although this would have a cumulative effect), all along, even if they were not fully aware of it in the moment or of the larger repercussions. Progressivism, after all, just as often emanated from the grassroots level as much as it did from the “top down,” and reform nearly always started out small, snowballing as others joined in the effort, eventually resulting in more visible, large-scale changes. Additionally, Progressives were, at the core, seeking alleviation of misery, whether their own or for some disadvantaged group they perceived needed help, championing improvement of the human condition in localized situations but often with an eye towards more general uplift.

So what were the conditions in which Native Americans found themselves in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? What type of reform was needed to ameliorate their lot and who was responsible for moving things in new directions? Some of this, of course, has already been hinted at, but we need a broader context for the period in order to more fully understand and appreciate what Indians suffered and how they began to respond; we should also consider the actions of outside reformers who helped to foment change, although sometimes without recognizing the true needs of the people they aimed to serve. In this way we can come to know just what Indians students at Haskell faced, both in general and the school setting, and how they may be seen as a mirror reflecting back upon the activism of the Red Progressives and others.

To properly fix our sights on what was happening in the United States during this time, especially with respect to Indian policy, we must return to colonial history to help get a sense of how relationships developed. In the early contact period relations between natives and newcomers could be cordial and marked by a mutual desire for exchange; Indians far outnumbered Europeans at the time, and for two centuries or more thereafter, so strong-arm tactics on the part of the new arrivals was not always an immediate option in the quest for land claims or natural resources. Native Americans usually didn't resort to outright warfare or attempt to drive out the Europeans either, for several reasons. First, they could sometimes simply flee the areas newcomers settled into if they felt threatened by exploration parties

or could not come to terms with colonists. Second, they might be satisfied with leaving the intruders alone; if left to their own devices in unfamiliar surroundings, they might soon forgo their missions and return home. More often, however, contact remained sustained, if rather limited in certain places, because both groups could provide goods or services the other wanted. Europeans at first sought gold and other precious metals, but soon realized the value of territorial conquest, Indian labor and military alliances, and access to timber, furs, fish, and agricultural resources; Indians quickly coveted a range of commercial products the newcomers could proffer, especially metal goods (pots and pans, knives, axes, and guns) and found mutual protection pacts beneficial as well. Due to the devastating effects of disease, however, Europeans soon gained an upper hand in subduing native populations and the latter's continued reliance on trade goods in part undermined traditional economies and paved the way for further incursion by whites. Thus, the triumvirate of "guns, germs, and steel," mixed with the introduction of alcohol, created a tumult, and the chaos that reigned in the wake of epidemics, with its attendant loss of specialists, leaders, and hundreds of thousands more, shifted internal political and social structures and the balance of power generally, which now tipped in favor of the European invaders.¹⁹

Coupled with this onslaught was the extant internecine rivalry and warfare that further hastened the decline of once-mighty empires and tribes throughout North America, allowing the Spanish to topple

¹⁹ Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*, and *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), esp. Ch. 3; Henry F. Dobyns, "Estimating Aboriginal American Population: An Appraisal of Techniques with a New Hemisphere Estimate," *Current Anthropology*, 7 (1966), and "Native American Population Collapse and Recovery," in William R. Swagerty, ed., *Scholars and the Indian Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 17-35; David Henige, *Numbers from Nowhere: The American Indian Contact Population Debate* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975); Hans Koning, *The Conquest of America: How the Indian Nations Lost Their Continent* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1993); S. Lyman Tyler, *Two Worlds: The Indian Encounter with the European, 1492-1509* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988); Seth Mallios, *The Deadly Politics of Giving: Exchange and Violence at Ajacan, Roanoke, and Jamestown* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006); Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), and Mancall and Merrell, eds., *American Encounters*; Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Conquest of Paradise* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990); Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); and White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

the Aztecs and impose their *encomienda* system of tribute and slavery throughout Mexico, disrupting trade routes and agriculture as native opportunists and raiders stepped into the new power vacuums created when tribal numbers near epicenters of illness throughout the continent thinned, and further carrying disease into the hinterlands to renew the vicious cycle. The process repeated itself again and again across the land and over time. European rivalries increased the pace and scope of looting, land cessions, violence, and warfare as France, Spain, and England, and other countries competed for hegemony in the “New World.” For Indians, of course, it was already an old one wherein some 500 nations had established a plethora of languages, customs, beliefs, and histories now being assaulted by new goods, ideas, and power struggles. Natives wrestled with the changes, adapting culturally, adopting certain elements of outside influence they found useful or novel, sometimes successfully playing off the invading forces against one another to their own advantages, but the writing was on the wall: clearly there would be no going back to the world as it had been before.²⁰

²⁰ See James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); José António Brândao, “Your Fyre Shall Burn No More”: *Iroquois Policy Toward New France and its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Calloway, *First Peoples*, Ch. 2; Alfred A. Cave, *The Pequot War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996); Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983); Denys Delâge, *Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993); Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), with the assistance of William R. Swagerty; James D. Drake, *King Philip’s War: Civil War in New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999); Patricia K. Galloway, *Choctaw Genesis, 1500-1700* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Brian J. Given, *A Most Pernicious Thing: Gun Trading and Native Warfare in the Early Contact Period* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994); Frederic W. Gleach, *Powhatan’s World and Colonial Virginia: A Conflict of Cultures* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Hoxie, *Parading Through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Elizabeth A.H. John, *Storms Brewed in Other Men’s Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975); Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); Miguel León-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico*, expanded and updated edition (Boston: Beacon Books, 1992), transl. by Lysander Kemp; Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998); Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Merrell, *The Indians’ New World: The Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact Through the Era of Removal* (New York: W.W. Norton &

Europeans added something else profound with the propagation of Christianity among native peoples. The conquering of souls in a widespread conversion agenda soon joined the host of other pursuits bringing newcomers over from the mother countries across the Atlantic, with missionary presence and fervor increasing apace. The Old World dichotomy of Catholicism versus Protestantism, the subject of intense theological and actual battles, became transplanted in the Americas along with the sectarian strife it engendered. The divisions between the Catholic Spaniards and French, on the one hand, and the Protestant English on the other, manifested themselves in competition for territorial acquisitions, resources, and religious converts, layered, of course, within the intense nationalism each group promoted in winning these prizes for the greater glory of their respective homelands as well as God. The split was further mirrored, to some extent, in the types of empires being created here by Europeans. Despite the often wretched mistreatment of Native Americans within the purview of all the imperial powers and their colonists, the French and Spanish (as well as the Orthodox Russians) were inclusive of indigenous peoples, living among and interacting with them on a daily basis. The English, by contrast, generally held Indians at arm's length, all amidst their increasing contact to secure food, protection, trade, and other necessities. Even their missionary efforts would remain largely outposts, with converted Indians kept at bay, such villages being mere islands in the steady stream of English arrivals and settlements.²¹

Company, 1991); Harald E.L. Prins, *The Mi'kmaq: Resistance, Accommodation, and Cultural Survival* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1996); Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Subjects Unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Daniel T. Reff, *Disease, Depopulation, and Culture Change in Northwestern New Spain, 1518-1764* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991); Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Neil Salisbury, "The Indians' Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans," *WMQ* 53 (July 1996), 435-458; and White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of American History*, vol. 65, no. 2 (1978), 319-343, and *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Upper Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

²¹ See Bernard Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction* (1986; rpt., New York: Vintage Books, 1988); Rupert Costo and Jeanette Henry Costo, eds., *The Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1987); James R. Gibson, ed., *Imperial Russia in Frontier America: The Changing Geography of Supply of Russian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991); Jean M. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and*

For missionaries of whatever stripe, it was a key article of faith that acquaintance with the word and works of Christianity was the primary path not only to native salvation but also their way from darkness into the light of greater civilization. Thus conversion at any cost (self-sacrifice, deprivation, even martyrdom) guided the work of those ministering to the Indians and represents the earliest attempts at reform by outsiders focused on Native Americans. Because the United States emerged from the original thirteen British mainland colonies, much of the developing relationship and policies of the young nation derived from and relied on the English colonial model. This led to a tradition of reservations, dividing lines between whites and natives, and the proliferation of schools and training programs with a heavy reliance on Protestantism proselytizing set apart from the general population which would continue to be the norm even after the federal government stepped in to take up much of the educational work in the late nineteenth century. Among the conversions that did occur, whether or not (or just how many of) these were authentic, either in the colonial period or after, has been a matter of much scholarly debate: were these simply coping mechanisms for the chaos wrought by invasion; a way of pleasing and further connecting with whites in an exchange economy, or, later, a more socially controlled environment; an outgrowth of native familial relationships, or, in fact, genuine? ²²

Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); W. Stitt Robinson, "Conflicting Views on Landholding: Lord Baltimore and the Experiences of Colonial Maryland with Native Americans," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 83 (Summer 1988), 85-97; James P. Ronda, "Generations of Faith: The Christian Indians of Martha's Vineyard," *WMQ*, 38 (July 1981), 369-394; Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), "The Colonizing of Indian New England," *Massachusetts Review*, vol. 26, nos. 2-3 (1985), 447-460, and "Embracing Ambiguity: Native Peoples and Christianity in Seventeenth-Century New England," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 50, no. 2 (Spring 2003), 247-259; David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds., *So Dreadfull a Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip's War, 1676-1677* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978); S. Frederick Star, ed., *Russia's American Colony* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987); Silvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980); Trafzer, *As Long as Grass Shall Grow*, Ch. 5; Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979); and Sarah Vowell, *The Wordy Shipmates* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2008).

²²Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society: Needs and Opportunities for Study* (1960; rpt., New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1972), 37-39; Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, esp. Ch. 3; Henry Warner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Elise M. Brenner, "To Pray or to Be Prey, That is the Question: Strategies for Cultural Autonomy of Massachusetts Praying Town Indians," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 27, no. 2 (Spring 1980), 135-152; Nicholas

Meanwhile, encounters between Indians and whites only grew as the young nation developed, its population and reach increasing while native numbers continued to decline in the face of war over territory and resources, removal and reservation, and the continued spread of virgin-soil epidemics.²³ By the end of the Mexican War in the late 1840s, the federal government had concentrated the majority of Native Americans, establishing a “permanent” Indian Territory in the Middle West and a group of Christian businessmen, the Board of Indian Commissioners, to advise and oversee their management by the OIA. Having transferred their care from the War Department to the freshly-fashioned Department of the Interior, the fate of the original Americans seemed clear: they would be wards of the state, rounded up and remade in the image of those now responsible for policy decisions; refusal by those recalcitrant tribes and individuals who refused to submit would occasion being brought in or exterminated by the

Griffiths and Fernando Cervantes, eds., *Spiritual Encounters: Interactions Between Christianity and Native Religions in Colonial America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999); Marvin E. Kroeker, *Comanches and Mennonites on the Oklahoma Plains: A.J. and Magdalena Becker and the Post Oak Mission* (Winnipeg: Kindred Productions, 1997); Bernd C. Peyer, *The Tutor'd Mind: Indian-Missionary Writers in Antebellum America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997); Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979); Salisbury, “Red Puritans: The ‘Praying Indians’ of Massachusetts Bay and John Eliot,” *WMQ*, 3rd Series, 31 (January 1974), 27-54; Szasz, *Indian Education*; Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791*, 71 vols. (Cleveland: Burrows Brothers, 1896-1901); Harold W. Van Lonkhuyzen, “A Reappraisal of the Praying Indians: Acculturation, Conversion, and Identity at Natick, Massachusetts, 1646-1730,” *New England Quarterly*, 63 (September 1990), 396-428; Van Kirk, *ibid.*; Bobby Wright, “For the Children of the Infidels?: American Indian Education in the Colonial Colleges,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 12 (1988), 1-14; and Andrei A. Znamenski, “Strategies of Survival: Native Encounters with Russian Missionaries in Alaska and Siberia, 1820s-1917” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toledo, 1997).

²³ Calloway, ed., *Our Hearts Fell*, 7-8, 40-41; Crosby, “Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America,” in Stanley N. Katz, et al., eds., *Colonial America: Essays in Political and Social Development*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993), 3-14, and “Ecological Imperialism: The Overseas Migration of Western Europeans as a Biological Phenomenon,” in Mancall and Merrell, eds., *American Encounters*, 53-67; Gregory E. Dowd, “The French King Wakes Up in Detroit: ‘Pontiac’s War’ in Rumor and History,” *Ethnohistory*, 37 (1990), 254-278; David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Old Hickory’s War: Andrew Jackson and the Quest for Empire* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); Reginald Horsman, *The Origins of Indian Removal, 1815-1824* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1970), and *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); Melissa L. Meyer and Russell Thornton, “Indians and the Numbers Game: Quantitative Methods in Native American History,” in Calloway, ed., *New Directions in American Indian History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 5-29, but esp. 6-10; Robert J. Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny* (Westport CT: Praeger Publishing, 2006); Marks, *In a Barren Land*, 95-96, 129-131; William M. Osborn, *The Wild Frontier: Atrocities During the American-Indian War from Jamestown Colony to Wounded Knee* (New York: Random House, 2000); Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, eds., *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents*, 2nd ed., (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2005); Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust*; Robert A. Trennert, Jr., *Alternative to Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-1851* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975); and Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993).

Army. Hostilities, of course, continued to seethe, with warfare raging on well past the inauguration of a “Peace Policy” under the Grant Administration (now focused on Reconstruction and war-weary after four bloody years of sectional strife) in 1869, as the Red River campaigns, pan-Indian resistance and success in the Custer fight at the Little Bighorn (so devastating to expansionists, coming as it did on the eve of the country’s centennial), and the slaughter at Wounded Knee all testify. Encroachment along the Indian frontier, and increased resettlement and dispossession by newcomers in the wake of the Homestead Act, first initiated by President Lincoln in 1862 but its advantages now exponentially seized upon after the close of the Civil War, Emancipation and internal black migration, and the uptick in foreign immigration, further inflamed the crisis and confirmed the marginality of Native Americans.²⁴

For most Americans, Indians continued to symbolize a primitive state of man’s development, something that was wild, backward, and savage; and this was reflected in the policy stance of both the U.S. government and white reformers sympathetic to their plight. While some saw their “race” as “noble,” or thrilled to dime novels of their exploits, there was widespread agreement they must vanish, in one way or another, either as a people or culturally speaking. Assimilation became the watchword of the late nineteenth century among reformers and bureaucrats alike, building upon the religious “uplift” of an earlier era (which continued to be an important component of both private religious academies and government institutions for Indian education), now increasingly melded with a civic component meant to

²⁴ Brown, *The American West*, Chs. 14 and 15; William Y. Chalfant, *Cheyennes at Dark Water Creek: The Last Fight of the Red River War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); James Donovan, *A Terrible Glory: Custer and the Little Bighorn—The Last Great Battle of the American West* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2008); Gibson, *The American Indian*, Chs. 16-19; Don Lawson, *The United States in the Indian Wars* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1975); Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest*, 92-93; James M. Marshall III, *The Day the World Ended at Little Bighorn: A Lakota History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007; Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), Chs. 2-4; Philip Weeks, *Farewell, My Nation: The American Indian and the United States in the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed., (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2001), esp. Chs. 2 & 4-5; John Edward Weems, *Death Song: The Last of the Indian Wars* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976); West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); and Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 11-12, 77-84, 106-107.

steer natives toward Western notions of responsibility, work, gender and family relations, land, and citizenship.²⁵

The Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887, named for Indian “friend” Senator Henry Dawes, encouraged splintering the reservations into individual land parcels in an attempt to steer Native Americans away from traditional communal holdings toward dominant mores of private property and the ownership of title in severalty (a repugnant idea to Indians who saw their role as one of stewards rather than possessors of the earth). In return it promised a place in society for natives who would now be well enough informed of and adjusted with the basic tenets of Christian morality and property rights to apply for citizenship. In reality, the imposition of the new law eventually cost Native Americans millions more acres of (reservation) land and left most in limbo on the question of citizenship and its rights. Still, Dawes and other proponents of assimilation legislation (most white, but also some Indians, including Ely S. Parker, a Seneca who had served as the first Native American Indian Commissioner, under Grant, and Charles Curtis, the Kaw politician who served in both the House and Senate, from 1892-1929, before assuming the vice-presidency under Herbert Hoover) pushed for further steps, including, most notably here, the creation of more schools to train Indian youth in the fundamentals of acculturation into mainstream life.²⁶ In 1889, Theodore Roosevelt, then a U.S. Civil Service Commissioner, spoke for many

²⁵ Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), esp. 3-4, 44-49, 72-80, 96-104, and *Salvation and the Savage*, Ch. 4; Conn, *History's Shadow*, esp. Chs. 1 & 6; John M. Coward, *The Newspaper Indian: Native American Identity in the Press, 1820-1890* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), esp. Chs. 1 and 7; Lisa E. Emmerich, “Save the Babies!": American Indian Women, Assimilation Policy, and Scientific Motherhood, 1912-1918,” in Jameson and Armitage, eds., *Writing the Range*, 393-409; Margaret David Jacobs, “Uplifting Cultures: Encounters Between White Women and Pueblo Indians, 1890-1935” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Davis, 1996); Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 50-51; Jeansonne with Luhrssen, *A Time of Paradox*, 46; Felix J. Koch, “Little Mothers of Tomorrow,” reprinted in Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, 102-106; Limerick, *ibid.*, 182-193; Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue*, esp. Chs. 3-5; Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*, revised ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Prucha, *ibid.*, Ch.5; and Elliot Young, “Red Men, Princess Pocahontas, and George Washington: Harmonizing Race Relations in Laredo at the Turn of the Century,” *Western Historical Quarterly* (hereafter *WHQ*), 29 (Spring 1998), 48-85.

²⁶ Calloway, *First Peoples*, 376-381; Conn, *ibid.*, 210; Gibson, *The American Indian*, Ch. 19; Hoxie, *Talking Back to Civilization*, 55, 62; Valerie Sherer Mathes, ed., *The Indian Reform Letters of Helen Hunt Jackson, 1879-1885* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Prucha, *ibid.*, Chs. 8-9; Siobhan Senier, *Voices of American Indian Assimilation and Resistance: Helen Hunt Jackson, Sarah Winnemucca, and Victoria Howard* (Norman: University

whites who viewed themselves as progressive thinkers when he declared that, “we ought to break up the great Indian reservations, disregard the tribal governments, allot the land in severalty . . . and treat the Indians as other citizens, with certain exceptions, for their own sake as well as ours.” Later, as president, he maintained that “The General Allotment Act is a mighty pulverizing engine to break up the tribal mass.”²⁷ Despite the hardships of life on the reservations, they represented the only remnants of the wide open spaces, that Roosevelt so adored in his own life, once possessed by Native Americans, and were bastions for the survival of Indian tribalism and traditional cultures, which Roosevelt (and others) obviously would just as soon see disappear in a classic case of Progressive reform ideals that didn’t match up with the needs of the group supposedly being helped.

Even by the time of his earlier remark, of course, Haskell Institute had already opened, along with a growing number of similar outposts; when he uttered the latter it was the flagship school of the federal boarding system. Their programs offered a vocational curriculum coupled with an inchoate immersion in basic pedagogical principles (i.e., the “three ‘Rs’”), and continued the cultural assault begun centuries before. At root, both the Dawes Act and the spread of federal Indian schools upheld a savagery versus civilization paradigm that was nearly as old as initial contact itself and had helped shape the development of Indian-white relations since. The assumption was that Native Americans were of an inferior order than the European stock from which most other Americans had come; this had once meant been the justification for the vanquishing of a lower racial or ethnic type but in the Progressive Age it had evolved into an agreement in outlook among many reformers that Indians were as teachable and capable as other peoples but too often clung to a lower rung on the ladder of civilization, and if they did not step up (or

of Oklahoma Press, 2001); and Unrau, *Mixed Bloods and Tribal Dissolution: Charles Curtis and the Quest for Indian Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989), esp. Ch. 10.

²⁷ Both quotes cited in Rusco, *A Fateful Time: The Background and Legislative History of the Indian Reorganization Act* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2000), 9. He didn’t elaborate on the “exceptions.” See also William T. Hagan, *Theodore Roosevelt and Six Friends of the Indian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

take the help reformers offered) to get to the next level, that is, toward where Euro-Americans were, they would not survive.²⁸

In fact, however, Progressive uplift, in the form it came from most outsiders anyway, desired just that goal, at least culturally speaking; that is, to see native peoples abandon the perceived primitivism and traditions of their cultures that white reformers believed had held them down for too long. To be sure, on the one hand, this view represented a marked improvement over the bloodshed and genocidal tactics of earlier generations; on the other, it was a continuation of the old model which held that there was little of inherent value to be found or taken away from indigenous patterns of life, therefore it represented only one more step in a long process of cultural destruction and disenfranchisement begun so long before. (It could even be argued that, in targeting Native American youth, this was a more insidious and egregious attack than ever before.) Thus when the Jesuit priest Father Paul Le Jeune, after having lived among the Montagnais Indians of Canada (whom he usually wrote of as “Savages”) in the sixteenth century, referred to the religious beliefs of the people he had left France to help as “superstition,” noting “how much trouble there will be to remove it that they may see the beautiful light of truth,” his thinking was of a piece with Roosevelt, who called the Sand Creek Massacre, where 150 peaceful Cheyennes (men, women, and children) encamped under the American flag in the winter of 1864 were slaughtered by a group of Colorado Volunteers, “as righteous and beneficial a deed as ever took place on the frontier.”²⁹

²⁸ Robert E. Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986); Churchill, *Kill the Indian*, 1-50; Conn, *History's Shadow*, esp. Chs. 1 and 5; Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, Ch. 4; Osborn, *The Wild Frontier*; Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization*, esp. Part Two, Ch. 4; Vaughan, “From White Man to Redskin: Changing Anglo-American Perceptions of the American Indian,” *AHR*, vol. 87, no. 4 (October 1982), 917-953; and Jeffrey Wollock, “Protagonism Emergent: Indians and Higher Education,” in Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices: A Reader*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2001), 267-280. See also Richard A. Grounds, “Yuchi Travels: Up and Down the Academic ‘Road to Disappearance,’” in Grounds, et al., eds., *Native Voices: American Indian Identity and Resistance* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2003), 290-317.

²⁹ Le Jeune cited in Abbot, ed., *Documents Set for Out of Many: A History of the American People, Volume One*, revised 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2003), 20; Roosevelt cited in Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race*, 119. Also see Jacobson, *ibid.*, 3-5. As to the question of whether the shift to widespread boarding—school education was a more concerted, and possibly much worse, form of cultural assault, see Mary Brave Bird (Crow Dog) with Richard Erdoes, “Civilize them with a Stick,” in Lobo and Talbot, eds., *ibid.*, 255-262 ;

Ethnocentrism, then, guided Indian-white relationships from the time of contact up through the creation of federal boarding institutions in the late nineteenth century (and beyond; incidentally, ethnocentric views travelled both ways, with native peoples often showing just as much cultural bias against outsiders as they received). Upon arrival at a boarding school, new students faced a rude awakening, for the regimes there differed greatly from the traditional education they received at home. For reformers, namely those white “friends” who saw the need to help but didn’t usually appreciate Indian cultures on their own terms, removal from the “barbarism” of the reservations was ideal precisely because it separated children from what they deemed the harmful influences of native healers, religious beliefs, storytelling, and the entire social network that supported and believed in their power. For the students, however, cutting them off from the only world they had known could have quite deleterious and devastating effects (of course, after centuries of exposure to non-Indians and tribal factionalism, even reservation life provided a certain mixture of elements from both native and Western life, but indigenous traditionalism still ran high).³⁰ Beyond separation anxiety and homesickness, which could be bad enough, these children were often starting down a path of alienation from their own heritage.

Almost immediately there came a series of moves meant to peel away outward identity with an eye toward greater cleaving of the child from his or her background. This included the haircuts, of which Bonnin so emotionally wrote, for both boys and girls; outfitting in clothes in line with the Western

Churchill, *ibid.*, 12-29; and Tim Giago, *Children Left Behind: The Dark Legacy of Indian Mission Boarding Schools* (Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishing, 2006). The influence of Catholicism, especially within the former French and Spanish borderlands, held strong long after the decline of those colonial empires, and Catholic boarding school training, by the late 19th century, mirrored the general push toward acculturation. See James T. Carroll, “Americanization or Indoctrination?: Catholic Indian Boarding Schools, 1874-1926” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1997); Ross Enochs, “The Franciscan Mission to the Navajos: Mission Method and Indigenous Religion, 1898-1940,” *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol. XCII, no. 1 (January 2006), 46-73; The Reverend Joseph Murphy, O.S.B., *The Benedictine Foundations of Sacred Heart Mission and St. Gregory’s Abbey and College* (1942; rpt., Shawnee, OK: Published by the Citizen Band Potawatomi Tribe, 1987), Patricia Sulcer Barrett, ed.; and Prucha, *Churches and Indian Schools*. For more detail on the Sand Creek affair and the thinking that created it and other such horrifying episodes, see Brown, *The American West*, Ch. 5; Calloway, ed., *Our Hearts Fell*, 96, 102-105; Coward, *The Newspaper Indian*, Ch. 4; Milner, “National Initiatives,” in Milner et al., eds., *Oxford History of the American West*, 154-193; and Weeks, *Farewell, My Nation*, 112-120.

³⁰ On native factionalism, see Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, esp. 125, 158-159, and “Faith and Factionalism Among the Senecas: Theory and Ethnohistory,” *Ethnohistory*, 12, no.2 (1965), 99-112; and White, “*It’s Your Misfortune*”, 439-441. Regarding conditions and the mixed legacies of the reservations, see Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest*, 188-189; and Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 210-217, for e.g.

fashion of the day (often in military-style uniforms, much to the horror of parents or other elders who had direct acquaintance with and traumatic memories of clashes with the U.S. Army); and an expectation that only English be spoken, no mean feat for those who had little or only passing experience with its usage. In addition, youngsters were meant to quickly conform to new ideals of religious instruction, hygiene, class-room studies geared toward a range of topics unfamiliar or of questionable value and application given their past lives, and a vocational curriculum that was often at odds with traditional practices, usually rooted in spiritual beliefs. Thus when administrators cropped students' hair they were tampering with an outward symbol not only of identity but sometimes power or status, too; teachers who discouraged them from integrating Indian knowledge about the natural or spirit realms and dismissed such concepts as low or heathenish tore away at centuries of insight and dogma; and school matrons or farmers who upheld mandates that only girls were to sew or cook and that agriculture should be the sole province of boys were, often unwittingly, attacking the very foundations of personal expression through or formerly fixed belief about gender division of labor in Native American cultures (and its relative fluidity compared to models adhered to in American society at large).³¹

³¹ On traditional Indian education see, esp., Adams, "Before Columbus: Toward an Ethnohistory of Indian Education," *History of Education Quarterly*, 28 (Spring 1988), 95-105; Coleman, *American Indian Children*, Ch. 2; Deloria, *Indian Education*, Ch. 5; George Bird Grinnell, *When Buffalo Ran* (1920; rpt., Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966); Szasz, *Indian Education*, 10-24; and Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock, eds., *Teachings from the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy* (1975; rpt., New York: Liverlight, 1992), particularly Part Two. Although its author has been maligned for his racist associations, Forrest Carter's *The Education of Little Tree* (1976; rpt., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986) is still a useful and poignant novel describing the difficulties of a young part-Cherokee boy in reconciling a traditional upbringing with experiences at an Indian school in the Depression Era, and points up the type of ethnic cleansing common at early boarding schools as well. Regarding the growing phobia about germs in white society by the dawn of the twentieth century, see Lepore, "It's Spreading," *The New Yorker*, 1 June 2009, 46-50; and Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, 129-139. On the other hand, Indian schools, including Haskell, were often hotbeds of disease: see, for e.g., Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 37-39 and 76-78; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, esp. Ch. 6. On putting the new modes of thought into practice, see, esp. Adams, *Education for Extinction*, Chs. 4-5 and 292-293; Coleman, Chs. 5-6; and Trennert, "Educating Indian Girls at Nonreservation Boarding Schools, 1878-1920," *WHQ*, 13 (July 1982), 169-190. On the malleability of gender concepts and associated work, see Sue-Ellen Jacobs, et al., eds., *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Sabine Lang, *Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Cultures* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), transl. from the German by John L. Vantine; Will Roscoe, *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); and Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986).

On top of all this was the use of punishment to procure desired results, ranging from humiliations to the corporal variety. In native societies, children learned by example, encouragement, and an absence of physical discipline, a vast departure from what they now faced at boarding schools. Only a year after opening, for example, reports of harsh disciplinary measures and the use of a school “prison” for recalcitrant students (under second superintendent Colonel Arthur Grabowskii) was a cause for both praise and concern among the competing local Lawrence papers. In 1910, the school built a new three-room “jail” to house incorrigibles that stayed in use for the next quarter century. On a less dramatic (but likely just as offensive to Indian parents and others) level, Haskell also inaugurated during the 1885-1886 school year the cadet system that soon earned its reputation as a military-style academy. Given that many children might not even understand the rules they had broken (or the cost for such infractions), this seems an especially cruel means of reinforcement.³²

How did students adjust to such a regime? Not surprisingly, the history and historiography so far surveyed gives a strong indication, for many of the coping mechanisms well-honed during the centuries of Indian-white relationships that occurred prior to the establishment of Haskell Institute and other like schools found transplantation onto the educational front. First, most of those attending Haskell found some means of accommodation to the system, just as their forbears had in dealing with fur traders, missionaries, military commanders, and reservation agents. They took what they felt was valuable from the experience or new knowledge offered and adapted it to their own needs and worldviews. Some rejected the school and its teachings outright, although perhaps only temporarily, as runaways often returned to fight (and sometimes take flight again) another day. Another form of rejection was casting aside what was learned after the eventual (for most) return home and re-embracing traditional life; this

³² Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 47-49; ARCIA (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), 224; Brave Bird with Erdoes, “Civilize them with a Stick,” in Lobo and Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices*, 255-257; Coleman, *ibid.*, 44, 53-54, 86-88; Chuck Haines, “Haskell Industrial Labor Institute: An Indian Child Labor School” (documents and writings compiled by the author for distribution at Haskell Indian Nations University, 9 February 2006), 3rd p. 4; *Lawrence Daily Gazette* (hereafter *LDG*), 9 September 1885; Szasz, *ibid.*, 17-19; *Topeka Commonwealth*, 15 May 1886; and Vučković, *ibid.*, 218-222. See also: Trennert, “Corporal Punishment and the Politics of Indian Reform,” *History of Education Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 4 (Winter 1989), 595-617; and “Rules for Indian Schools, 1890,” (ARCIA, 1890), reprinted in Binder and Reimers, eds., *The Way We Lived*, 51-54.

was more difficult that it sounds, however, as the schools often left an imprint of some kind that was hard to totally shake off or escape. A quite common tactic was also resistance, either passive or active, the former less likely to garner much attention as it was, by nature, quietly concealed, precisely because it would likely incur punishment of some type. The latter was usually an overt act and the cause for immediate disciplinary action (and which, itself, might have been seen as striking a blow for native culture, individual expression, or just the plain statement of youthful angst in an environment where some students felt oppressed or helpless to do much else).³³

Passive resistance might include speaking tribal languages furtively or engaging in other traditional cultural outlets such as dancing, courting rituals, or sneaking off campus to visit family or friends, or even the city of Lawrence for a variety of amusements and to blow off steam. It could mean drinking alcohol, smoking, or reading forbidden books; discussing Indian religious beliefs or secretly conducting prayer meetings or rituals associated with the same; finding stolen moments to meet with a sweetheart; and a host of other activities, all done away from the watchful eyes of administrators. Particularly adept students might even be able to incorporate some passive resistance into the daily regimen right under the noses of instructors or other overseers, as Myriam Vučković describes in her history of Haskell, when children would purposely slow down the pace of their work in protest, make off with extra food at meal times, or half-heartedly recite prayers or other expected rote portions of the curriculum. Applying less than flattering nicknames to disliked teachers or laughing when their backs were turned to the class would also fit the bill.³⁴ These quieter forms of rebellion were less noticed or likely to cause great ripples in comparison to disruptive outbursts or other actively resistant episodes but

³³ On rejection, resistance, and accommodation generally, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, Part Three; Coleman, *ibid.*, Chs. 7-9; and Vučković, *ibid.*, Ch. 7. See also, Matthew T. Sakiestewa Gilbert, "I Learned to Preach Pretty Well, and to Cuss, Too": Hopi Acceptance and Rejection of Christianity at Sherman Institute, 1906-1928," in Marijo Moore, ed., *Eating Fire, Tasting Blood: An Anthology of the American Indian Holocaust* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2006), 79-95.

³⁴ Vučković, *ibid.*, 223, but also see 212-214; Coleman, *ibid.*, 147-148. It is interesting to note that African-American slaves employed many of the same tactics of resistance and accommodation in reaction to their situations. See, for e.g., Michael Mullin, *Africa in America: Slave Acculturation and Resistance in the American South and British Caribbean, 1736-1831* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

quite important as they inspired a form of student camaraderie and an underground Indian ethos alive and well below the stifling surface atmosphere.

All of these responses might overlap as well, whether in terms of individual students who exhibited a combination, or maybe even all, of these behaviors; or by the mere fact that resistance, rejection, and accommodation could take a multitude of forms allowing them to meld together into a type or series of responses. For instance, a request to have dances at school was, on one level, a reflection of or connection to life at home, although winning such a concession from administrators, who would have rejected out of hand any traditional dances or comportment between the sexes they deemed immodest, represented all three types of student responses at work at once (rejection of the rules as they stood, but then working within the system to find an accommodation through resistance to policy). To take the example further, although the historical record rarely accords such detail (especially as it would have been more or less concealed at the time), we can guess that students likely tried to incorporate traditional movements, steps, or some bending of rules regarding proximal distance between partners that either went over the heads of monitoring chaperones or simply expressed a desire for more freedom and to see how far they could push the limits set by the administration (witness any junior-high or high-school dance since time immemorial).³⁵ Thus students reacted to their circumstances and strove to eke out a niche that would meet their own needs within the larger confines of a system pledged to eradicate “Indian-ness.” In this way they closely resembled Progressive groups and individuals working to make their voices heard across the country in the same period, although, again, they did so in a much quieter (or at least generally unnoticed) fashion than many of their peers in this regard.

Over nearly the two decades the growing body of work on boarding schools has helped to greatly increase and substantially broaden our knowledge of what took place at these institutions and to learn

³⁵ While Vučković (see *ibid.*, 146-147 and 152) asserts that Haskell banned inter-sex dancing “for most of its history,” it appears there were some exceptions, certainly by the early 20th century.

more about the students who populated them.³⁶ Furthermore, they allow us to get away from seeing Indians strictly as victims in a long process of warfare, disease, depopulation, dispossession, and the dictates of federal policy that worked to oppress, colonize, kill, culturally exterminate, marginalize, and malign them. Instead, in many of these newer pieces, Indians emerge as agents in the historical process who acted according to what they perceived were their own best needs and within the strictures of the situations that confronted them. To see Native Americans as merely people whom newcomers (whether to the continent or into the expanding frontier) and the government simply *acted upon* is to only tell, and know, half the story of this relationship. In a sense, too, this perspective, which dominated much of the historical writing about Indian-white interactions well into the twentieth century, is an outgrowth of the very savagism versus civilization paradigm that guided the thinking of Euro-Americans in the first place, because it implies that Indians had nothing of value to offer a presumably more advanced group and

³⁶ In addition to the several works already cited at this point, some others that ought to be included are: Adams, "From Bullets to Boarding Schools: The Educational Assault on the American Indian Identity," in Weeks, ed., *The American Indian Experience: A Profile, 1524 to the Present* (Arlington Heights, IL: Forum Press, 1988), 218-239, and "Fundamental Considerations: The Deep Meaning of Native American Schooling, 1880-1900," *Harvard Educational Review*, 58, no 1. (1988), 1-28; Sonciray Bonnell, "Chemawa Indian Boarding School: The First One Hundred Years, 1880-1980" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Dartmouth College, 1997); Coleman, "Motivations of Indian Children at Missionary and U.S. Government Schools, 1860-1918: A Study Through Published Reminiscences," *MMWH*, 40 (Winter 1990), 30-45; Ella Wells Drake, "A Choctaw Academy Education: The Apalachicola Experience, 1830-1833," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 78 (Winter 2000), 298-308; Phillip Earenfight, ed., *Visualizing a Mission: Artifacts and Imagery of the Carlisle Indian School, 1879-1918* (Carlisle, PA: The Trout Gallery, 2004); Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Howard Ellis, "From the Battle in the Classroom to the Battle for the Classroom," *American Indian Quarterly*, 11 (1987), 255-264; Esther Burnett Horne and Sally J. McBeth, *Essie's Story: The Life and Legacy of a Shoshone Teacher* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Sally Hyer, *One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian School* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1990); Margaret L'Archuleta, et al., eds., *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences, 1879-2000* (Phoenix: Heard Museum, 2000); Henrietta Mann, *Cheyenne-Arapaho Education, 1871-1982* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1997); McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding-School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983); Devon A. Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Paulette Fairbanks Molin, "Training the Hand, the Head, and the Heart: Indian Education at Hampton Institute," *Minnesota History*, 51 (1988), 82-98; Scott Riney, *The Rapid City Indian School, 1898-1933* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999); Szasz, "Federal Boarding Schools and the Indian Child: 1920-1960," in Hiner and Hawes, eds., *Growing up in America*, 209-218, and "Listening to the Native Voice: American Indian Schooling in the Twentieth Century," *MMWH*, 30 (Summer 1989), 42-53; and Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988).

therefore had to be changed in order to have a ‘true’ history or cultural relevance.³⁷ Thus, in only seeing through the eyes of the invaders, we are left with an unsatisfying, because incomplete, picture of the past.

Ever since anthropologist William N. Fenton’s clarion call for a greater synthesis in Native American history in the late 1950s and the blossoming of the “new social history” that began in earnest by the 1960s, researchers and scholars have endeavored to undertake and explore novel and diverse ways of revealing the past more clearly. By employing a methodology that seeks to embrace the findings of numerous disciplines, with an eye toward allowing the native voice to emerge for itself, historians and social scientists have been able to delve more deeply into the recesses of time and produce a fuller, richer account of American Indian beliefs, values, cultural dynamics, and relationships with outsiders for analysis. (To be sure, native peoples had, all along, kept a clear vision of their own histories alive but few scholars, paradoxically, had looked there to recover it for a more general audience.) The still relatively new field of “ethnohistory” (for which Fenton named his new journal devoted to such studies), has become one of the most valuable resources for illuminating the academic’s path by incorporating the findings of anthropology, archaeology, astronomy, sociology, oral tradition, along with indigenous art, tribal artifacts and records, and other materials into more traditional Western historical research. Though the trend was slow to catch on generally (and, indeed, is not fully utilized by all historians even now), a slow burn had begun; with additional sparks, most notably from historian and anthropologist Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., who wrote in 1971 about the need for a new Indian history that seriously undertook to uncover the Native American vantage point, a fire had been lit under the armchairs and within the collective imaginations of the historical profession. A much richer reading of the past has resulted.³⁸

³⁷ The same type of argument may be made of African-American history as well: viewed only as slaves who functioned in a subservient position, much of their vibrant history went overlooked by (predominantly) white historians. Writings about slave communities, agency, social institutions, free blacks, and a host of other issues has dramatically changed that perspective, and for the better, over the last several decades. See, for e.g., Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998).

³⁸ See Fenton, *American Indian and White Relations*, 21-22, “Ethnohistory and Its Problems,” *Ethnohistory*, vol. 9, no. 1 (Winter 1962), 1-23, and “Field Work, Museum Studies, and Ethnohistorical Research,” *Ethnohistory*, 13

Much of the secondary literature that has been surveyed in this chapter at least takes stock of this developing field (certainly those published by the early 1970s could not ignore it), as well as the intense ramifications it has had for Native American history, whether in the pre-Columbian, early contact, colonial, or national periods.³⁹ A great number of these works go further, attempting to weave Indian

(1966), 71-85; Berkhofer, "The Political Context of a New Indian History" *Pacific Historical Review*, 40 (August 1971), 357-382; Olson, "Some Reflections on Historical Method and Indian History" *Ethnohistory*, 5, no. 1 (Winter 1958), 48-59; and Stanley Pargellis, "The Problem of American Indian History," *Ethnohistory* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1957), 113-124, for e.g., on these beginnings. For more recent developments, see Axtell, "Ethnohistory: An Historian's Viewpoint," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 26, no. 1 (Winter 1979), 1-13; Calloway, ed., *New Directions*; Donald L. Fixico, ed., *Rethinking American Indian History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997); Jennings, "A Growing Partnership: Historians, Anthropologists, and American Indian History," *History Teacher*, vol. 14, no. 1 (November 1980), 87-104; Martin, "Ethnohistory: A Better Way to Write Indian History," *WHQ*, vol. 9, no. 1 (January 1978), 41-56, and *In the Spirit of the Earth: Rethinking History and Time* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Merrell, "Some Thoughts on Colonial Historians and Indians," *WMQ*, vol. 46, no. 1 (January 1989), 95-119; William S. Simmons, "Culture Theory in Contemporary Ethnohistory," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 35, no. 1 (Winter 1988), 1-14; William C. Sturtevant, "Anthropology, History, and Ethnohistory," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 13, nos. 1-2 (Winter-Spring 1966), 1-51; and Bruce G. Trigger, "Ethnohistory: Problems and Prospects," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 29, no. 1 (Winter 1982), 1-19.

³⁹ Much of this may be reviewed in notes 19 through 24 above, this chapter, but some additional citations merit mention here. For the pre-invasion, colonial, and early contact periods, see: Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), and *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), and *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West Before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003); and Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001). On the national era, see: John C. Ewers, *Plains Indian History and Culture: Essays on Continuity and Change* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); Thomas W. Kavanagh, *Comanche Political History: An Ethnohistorical Perspective, 1706-1875* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996); Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Vintage Books, 1972); and Daniel H. Usner, *American Indians in the Lower Mississippi Valley: Social and Economic Histories* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

Careful research has also yielded much important new (or else previously overlooked or discounted by non-Indian scholars) information in a diversity of areas within native cultures, including spirituality, medicine and healing arts, law, and women's roles. For a sampling of some key works, see: Sarah H. Hill, *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Lee Irwin, *The Dream Seekers: Native American Visionary Traditions of the Great Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994); John P. Reid, *A Law of Blood: The Primitive Law of the Cherokees* (New York: New York University Press 1970); Karl H. Schlesier, *The Wolves of Heaven: Cheyenne Shamanism, Ceremonies, and Prehistoric Origins* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); and Edward H. Spicer, ed., *Ethnic Medicine in the Southwest* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977). Although written before the term "ethnohistory" came into use, Karl N. Llewellyn and E. Adamson Hoebel, *The Cheyenne Way* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941), in some ways sets a tone and model for how to respectfully undertake such research. Ethnohistorical studies have also yielded new insights into old disciplines and spawned sub-fields of their own. While these largely exceed the scope of the present study, see, for e.g., William Hampton Adams, "Ethnoarchaeology as a Merging of Historical Archaeology and Oral History," *North American Archaeologist*, vol. 4, no. 4 (1983), 293-305; Trigger, "Ethnohistory and Archaeology," *Ontario Archaeology*, Publication no. 30 (1978), 18-24; and Ray A. Williamson, *Living the Sky: The Cosmos of the American Indian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984). This last is an example of "ethnoastronomy."

narratives and perspectives into the historical tapestry in order to arrive at more thoughtful, coherent, and insightful understanding of the past. Without such meticulous quantitative and qualitative studies it would be impossible to reach any meaningful conclusions about the history of Native American students who lived, worked, and otherwise existed within the structures of a federal off-reservation boarding school during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the subject of the investigation at hand. Thus, as with all historians, I am deeply indebted to those who came before, both the writers and researchers on whose backs a good bit of my own work necessarily stands, and the Indian children and families who are the focus of this examination. The following chapters, detailing some of the circumstances students found themselves in at Haskell Institute in the period leading up to and throughout much of the Progressive Era claims less to be an ethnohistorical study proper than it aims for opening the door to yet further inquiry in this area.

The study of Progressivism, as this and the previous chapter ought to indicate, is a slippery slope as far as defining its exact meanings, appreciating the wide scope of its reach and applications, and coming to terms with the multiple groups or types of reform that may fall under that designation. As our approach into the world of Indian students at Haskell Institute proceeds from this point, it is my sincere hope that readers will find these Native American youth to be yet another example of Progressive action and principles in play. Having arrived at a broad definition of the time frame, actors, and type of activities that other Progressives were engaged in, it ought to be clear they fit the bill nicely. I again caution that, in viewing these Progressives and their deeds, the change they evoked was measured,

Ethnohistorical perspectives have, furthermore, allowed Native Americans to reclaim their past as seen in the public image and to speak to old myths and misperceptions. On this front, see, for e.g., James A. Clifton, ed., *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990); and Miheuah, ed., *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998). Finally listening more closely to the native voice has informed the realm of biography as well. Some good recent examples include Paul, ed., *Autobiography of Red Cloud: War Leader of the Oglalas* (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1997), with much recovered from the availability of new manuscripts (see note 1, this chapter, above); Robert W. Larson, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); and Benson Tong, *Susan La Flesche Picotte, M.D.: Omaha Indian Leader and Reformer* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

difficult to achieve, and often not fully realized by the principals themselves; rather it was an incremental, cumulative, and localized set of reactions to particular needs that, by degrees, had a groundswell effect over time, especially when seen in tandem with the actions of other, similar students and activists in (or from) like circumstances. In this way, they also resembled other Progressives who struggled against long odds to attain hard-won desired effects and did not always see the change they were, in fact, creating. In the final analysis, then, what follows is the beginning of one story about unsung Progressives whom we must find admirable and enlightening in their dedication to reforming a system that too often overlooked their wishes or true best interests, and in their perseverance in the pursuit of those ends.

When Red Cloud spoke his visionary words in New York City that day in 1870, from the same dais where, some ten years before, Abraham Lincoln had delivered the speech many believe propelled him to the presidency,⁴⁰ the Sioux chief spoke in much the same spirit for which the now-martyred Great Emancipator was best remembered. A decade later, Red Cloud sought a new freedom for his people, from war, from want, from prejudice, and from the fear that Native Americans might no longer flourish in this changing world; thus he asked for the support and assistance of his listeners in hopes they would respond to the needs of Indian peoples. He probably did not envision, however, at least not entirely, the scope or type of “help” that would arrive in coming years in the form of allotment legislation, promotion of Indian citizenship, and, especially, the federal boarding school system. Yet for the children of subsequent generations who would attend these institutions, the legacy of Red Cloud remained very much present, even if they were unaware of his plea. He had asked for aid, not complete domination; he desired cooperation, not coercion; and he, above all, wished for the survival of the American Indians, to find for them a way to compete, receive equitable treatment, and maintain some independence of character. In this he was quite “progressive” and his outlook would be well matched by the native youth who followed in his footsteps.

⁴⁰ See, for e.g., Harold Holzer, *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech that Made Abraham Lincoln President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).

CHAPTER FOUR

Reliance and Response: Progressivism at Play at Haskell Institute in the Nineteenth Century

You, my friends and teachers,
teach my people in the right way,
and do not abuse them,
but always do what is right.

--Red Wolf, Cheyenne Chief visiting Haskell¹

I am glad that you are deeply interested
in this school and we children here all like you

--Julia Stand, student, to Haskell Supt. Robinson²

The issue of how much influence Native Americans might have had in their own education during the early years of federal boarding schooling is a difficult one to assess. Few records exist that explicitly detail policy shifts, whether local or national, or other changes that came directly in response to the pressures exerted by Indian youth or their parental and familial support networks. In fact, as previously alluded to, on the surface level much of the activity taking place in such school appears to be the work of superintendents, teachers, and staff (all following the dictates of government superiors) who simply *acted upon* the students in their charge; and the historiography of boarding schools (and, indeed, Indian- white relations generally) has often reflected that perspective. As Haskell Institute and other, similar schools were government outposts, there is, of course, no shortage of records detailing much of what went on there. Furthermore, because many other sources indicate that Indian leaders, including Red Cloud and Red Wolf, as well as lesser-known Native Americans, often urged compliance with new directions and sought a brighter future for their children in a changing world, including educational policies aimed at “killing the Indian and saving the man,” it can look as if Indians simply went along with the programs offered, having little direct hand in formulating what took place at Haskell or schools like it.

¹ *Lawrence Daily Journal* (hereafter *LDJ*), 11 February 1888.

² Letter from Julia Stand to Charles Robinson, 3 February 1888, from “Charles and Sara T.D. Robinson Collection, 1834-1911” (hereafter CSRC), in Kansas State Historical Society (hereafter KSHS). Stand was a Shawnee.

This vantage point, however, does not tell the whole story. Just as ethnohistory has suggested new methods and possibilities for teasing out aspects of the native past, careful research into the history of federal boarding schools allows alternative avenues for viewing the role Native Americans played there. Clearly, government records (as anyone who has ever set foot inside a National Archives branch can attest) offer a wealth of data for consideration. Likewise, other traditional historical resources, including newspapers, letters, and journals, may provide valuable insights for making informed interpretations. The problem with these, in terms of Indian-white relations, is that they too often reflect less of the Native American side of the story, whether because, in some cases, Indians left behind fewer of these records, or, quite often, their voices became largely factored out of the equation due to the very type of sources most available to the historical researcher. For instance, the Haskell superintendents' annual reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs were, of some necessity, focused on their own individual responsibilities for running the school and, while they certainly include information about students, they are not written from the perspective of the students themselves; with several hundred Indian children in attendance during a given year, such a recording of events does not truly do justice to what daily life was like for them at Haskell. Other sources may include more of their voice, as Julia Stand's letter cited above surely does, but these were rarely the subject of any wide-scale reportage, again leading to the persistent problem of overlooking native agency, both in contemporary or later accounts.³

³ The publishers of the *Daily Journal*, for instance, saw fit to include Red Wolf's partial approbation, but only within a larger story detailing the "friendly feeling" he and other visiting chiefs "expressed toward that institution" (Haskell); although the story did note this was "of considerable importance as showing their thoughts in reference to education" (*LDJ*, 11 February 1888), suggesting both the need to have some nod of native approval regarding the school and the probably more general feeling that such education was being undertaken for Indians' own good. Along these same lines, much of the scholarly work done on Haskell specifically, at least until quite recently, has tended to reflect institutional history whose primary focus does not examine the role of students, or even much of their very existence in the school's past, underscoring the view of Indians as passive participants in this new wave of federal educational policy. See, for e.g., Geneva Goddard, "A Study of the Historical Development and Educational Work at Haskell Institute" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Kansas State Teacher's College, 1930); Mary Loretta Granzer, "Education at Haskell Institute, 1884-1937" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Nebraska, 1937); and Donna Faye Meradith King, "Haskell Institute: Understanding its Establishment and Studying its Development from 1884-1894" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Missouri—Kansas City, 1988). For more recent, and quite different, takes on the school, including further emphasis on student life, see, for e.g., Anderson, "An Imperfect Education"; Martha K. Robinson, "Assimilation, Ambivalence, and Resistance: Students at Haskell Institute, 1920-1930" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Kansas, 1996); and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*.

Therefore, in order to obtain a clearer picture of what was happening at Haskell, it is necessary to read between the lines of some evidence that, at first glance, seems to supply little of use, or to look further afield at other sources that may bear good fruit. A perfunctory perusal of school records might not immediately suggest the need to investigate whether students “liked” their superintendent or if the opinions of parents or elders, such as Chief Red Wolf, about the kind of education offered at Haskell or other government non-reservation academies, mattered, as the fact remains that these schools were up and running and the writing was on the wall. Yet it is critical to take these types of responses seriously if any valuable reckoning of the period or its meaning in the larger of history of Indian-white relationships is to be achieved.⁴

In keeping with that approach, this chapter examines the role of Indian participation in the daily operations of Haskell Institute from its inception until roughly the close of the nineteenth century. During that time Haskell changed quite a bit, growing exponentially in terms of enrollment, employing a succession of seven superintendents (as opposed to only one from 1898-1911), the majority of whose short-lived administrations allowed for a lack of consistency and some wide latitude in sympathies toward the needs of the student body, and a revamping of institutional goals that generally offered a more advanced course of study that, in itself, reflected Indian needs as the boarding-school experience became more widespread and additional post-graduation employment outlets (as well as more general needs) came to be considered.⁵ Again, it is important to state that overt evidence of Indian students (or their support networks) as the ultimate arbiters of that change is scant, but their responses, desires, and aims form a portion of the process that cannot be discounted, especially when framed as a slow, incremental, progressive agitation and in terms of the limited partnership role they were doubtless able to forge in creating such changes.

⁴ In this entire direction regarding the need for numerous trajectories of inquiry, see, for e.g., Robin W. Winks, ed., *The Historian as Detective: Essays on Evidence* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968); of those more specifically related to Native Americans, see Fixico, “Methodologies in Reconstructing Native American History,” in Fixico, ed., *Rethinking American Indian History*, 117-130.

⁵ ARCIA, 1884-1911 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884-1911); Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 28, 46-47.

The history of Indian educational efforts by outsiders in Kansas follows a path quite similar to what took shape elsewhere in the nation, although, of course, newcomers arrived rather late there in comparison to some other parts of the country, with Kansas acquiring statehood only in 1861.⁶ Still, missionary outposts aimed at “uplifting” Native Americans sprang up surprisingly early, and these are noteworthy as forerunners of Haskell and the type of education offered there. Throughout the region there were a number of these denominational outreach programs, at least two of which are still standing and preserved as state historic sites. Among the earliest, and probably best known, of these is the Methodist Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School (commonly called the Shawnee Mission, and for which a town and major thoroughfare in the area are now named) in Johnson County, established in 1839, although it moved there from an original founding in present-day Wyandotte County in 1830. The following year, 1831, the first of three Baptist missions to come into existence during the 1830s went up nearby to likewise minister to the Shawnees; Jotham Meeker soon made a name for the place by bringing the first printing press to the territory and offering translations of biblical tracts, primers, and pamphlets in a variety of native tongues. By 1835 Meeker had begun publishing *The Shawnee Sun*, the first Indian-language newspaper in all of North America; two years later he went on to set up the Ottawa Baptist Mission, which eventually evolved into Ottawa University; and by 1848 the Baptists had made inroads near Topeka as well with a Pottawatomie (Potawatomi) Mission.⁷

The Jesuits also had designs on the Potawatomis, building their own church and manual labor school the next year; they also established mission schools for the Kickapoos, the first in 1836 and a

⁶ For general overviews of state history, see, for e.g., Kenneth S. Davis, *Kansas: A History* (1976; rpt., New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984); and Robert W. Richmond, *Kansas: A Land of Contrasts*, 4th ed. (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1999). See also Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West*.

⁷ Margaret Whittemore, *Historic Kansas: A Centenary Sketchbook* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1954), 40-43; n.a., “The Shawnee Mission,” *Kansas Historical Society Reflections*, vol. 3, no. 1 (Spring 2009), 5; James K. Beatty, “Interpreting the *Shawnee Sun*: Literacy and Cultural Persistence in Indian Country, 1833-1841,” *KH*, vol. 31, no. 4 (Winter 2008-2009), 242-259; and Stephen A. Warren, “The Baptists, the Methodists, and the Shawnees: Conflicting Cultures in Indian Territory, 1833-1834,” *KH*, vol. 17, no. 3 (Autumn 1994), 148-161. See also Thomas P. Barr, “The Pottawatomie Baptist Manual Labor Training School,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 4 (Winter 1977), 377-431; and Unrau, *Tribal Dispossession and the Ottawa Indian University Fraud* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985). The first Shawnee Mission location was in today’s Turner neighborhood of Kansas City, Kansas.

second twenty years later. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions had sent a missionary to the Osages as early as 1824 but gained a firmer grip with their activities in Doniphan County, which began in 1837. Meanwhile a Quaker mission went up near Merriam (also focused principally on the Shawnees) in 1835. The Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church set up the Kaw Mission in Council Grove in 1849 and the next year the federal government helped them erect a schoolhouse there.⁸ Most of these missionary schools exposed Indian students to a regimen of new appearances, ideologies, and outlooks, as well as a focus on the Protestant work ethic that would be repeated at Haskell. The Shawnee and Kaw Missions are maintained in excellent condition today and open to visitors who may wonder about what now seems to many a quaint part of the Kansas past.

Incidentally, many of the native groups being ministered to represented relative newcomers to Kansas as well, a number of them having been transplanted from the East following the Indian Removal Act of 1830. With increased westward expansion, especially in the aftermath of the Civil War, most of them would be further pushed aside to the Oklahoma (“Indian”) Territory by the 1870s. While many had never been wholly satisfied with their new homes in Kansas, pockets of Indian settlement remained even after statehood and several small reservations yet exist there today. Some Indians who stayed behind severed their tribal ties and opted for U.S. citizenship, foreshadowing the Dawes Act era and mirroring the difficulties faced by Native Americans generally in adjusting to the pressures of a changing world.⁹

⁸ Whittemore, *ibid.*, 46-50; Lalla Maloy Brigham, *The Story of Council Grove on the Santa Fe Trail*, 4th ed. (1921; rpt., Council Grove: Morris County Historical Society, 1989), 11. See also Joseph H. Cash, *The Potawatomi People (Citizen Band)* (Phoenix: Indian Tribal Series, 1976), 37-51; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians: A History of the Wind People, 1673-1873* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), esp. Chs. 4 and 5; Walters, *American Reformers*, 193-194; and P.J. Wyatt, ed., *The Kansa Indians, HOK*, vol. VI, no. 2 (February 1962), *The Potawatomes of Kansas, HOK*, vol. VI, no. 3 (May 1962), and *The Kickapoos of Kansas, HOK*, vol. VI, no. 4 (September 1962).

⁹ Cash, *ibid.*, 51-68; Coward, *The Newspaper Indian*, Ch. 3; R. David Edmunds, *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978); Fixico, “American Indians in Kansas,” *KH*, vol. 26, no. 4 (Winter 2003-2004), 272-287; Joseph B. Herring, “The Chippewa and Munsee Indians: Acculturation and Survival in Kansas, 1850s-1870,” in Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West*, 76-90; Maureen Littlejohn, “Oklahoma: Native America,” *National Museum of the American Indian Magazine* (Summer 2009), 36-41; H. Craig Miner and Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas: A Study of Cultural Revolution, 1854-1871* (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1978); Joseph T. Manzo, “Emigrant Indian Objections to Kansas Residence,” *KH*, vol. 4, no. 4 (Winter 1981), 247-254; and Unrau, *Indians of Kansas: The Euro-American Invasion and the Conquest of Indian Kansas* (Topeka:

Kansas, too, had played a prominent role in the Indian-white warfare period that raged on the Plains once the Civil War had ended, leaving an enduring legacy of mistrust and apprehension between the two groups. During 1867-1868, land disputes had resulted in some deaths on both sides, and Kansans again feared an “Indian uprising” ten years later when a group of Cheyennes, under the leadership of Dull Knife and Little Wolf, killed about three dozen whites during their northward flight home from Army troops in 1878 after their removal to Indian territory. Some of the key forts established to protect the movement of newcomers into the West were located in Kansas as well and a constant vigilance against the threat (whether real or imagined) of Indian depredations lorded over the minds of many who both passed through and stayed in the region from the 1850s through the Reconstruction and final reservation eras, even though the figures of several hundred deaths at the hands of Native Americans given at the time have been challenged by later scholarship as wildly exaggerated.¹⁰

This brief look at Indian missions and military conflicts between natives and (predominantly) whites in Kansas is important because it reveals some key background themes for consideration in the examination of Haskell Institute’s beginnings and early history. It also shows notable parallels to the course of Indian-white relations elsewhere in the country, as discussed previously, and sets the stage for the founding of Haskell. For at the majority of the Indian missions, whites exposed natives to new modes of dress and appearance; ideas about agriculture and land; and focused on “uplifting” their “wards” through instruction in Christianity; and by offering, in many cases, a manual-labor training program meant to further “civilize” the Indians. Thus the haircuts, new clothing styles, moral and religious

Kansas State Historical Society, 1991), esp. Chs. VI-VII. See also, n.a., “Between Two Worlds,” *Kansas State Historical Society Reflections*, vol. 3, no. 2 (Summer 2009), 10-11; Anonymous, “The Prairie Potawatomie: Resistance to Allotment,” in Napier, *ibid.*, 91-100; Herring, *The Enduring Indians of Kansas: A Century and a Half of Acculturation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990); and Wyatt, ed., *The Iowas, Sac, and Foxes of Kansas, HOK*, vol. VI, 2nd no. 4 (November 1962). The Citizen Band of the Potawatomis (or most of them) left for land in Oklahoma but split from their Kansas brethren (who retain a small reservation near Holton, in Jackson County) over the issue of citizenship, as their name implies. Not all Indians remaining in Kansas became citizens.¹⁰ Andrist, *The Long Death*, 321-324; Mari Sandoz, *Cheyenne Autumn* (New York: Avon Books, 1953), esp. 79-80; Utley and Washburn, *Indian Wars*, 188, 206, and 221-223; Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy*, 19, 36-37, 118-122, and 153. See also, Donald J. Berthrong, *The Southern Cheyennes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963); and John Ise, *Sod and Stubble: The Unabridged and Annotated Edition* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), with additional material by Von Rothenberger, 23-24 and 49-50.

components of education, and instillation of a Western work ethic (and all that went with it) were not entirely new features brought to bear when the federal government embarked on its own construction and maintenance of non-reservation schools by the early 1880s. One can surmise, therefore, that during this long experience with whites intent upon changing Indian attitudes and lifestyles, the targeted groups had already gained some proficiency in gaming the early educational systems and their proponents. In addition, the military tradition long ensconced in Kansas, with its attendant violence, and the fear (and sometimes reality) of warfare there, likewise inspired and informed local perspectives on the supposed cunning ruthlessness of Indians; debates over whether they were worthy of receiving a Western education; and even, to some extent, the cadet formations and military uniforms employed during Haskell's early days. Finally, the federal government had a history of partial funding for missionary work in Kansas, most notably at the Kaw Mission, and many of the students who first came to Haskell were culled from the "Kansas" tribes.¹¹

Haskell Institute opened in the fall of 1884, with all of this as a backdrop, with an enrollment of 22 students, mostly Ponca and Ottawa children. Within little more than a decade its average attendance was over 500 pupils and it continued to rise steadily thereafter, becoming, by century's end, among the largest of the federal schools.¹² The questions of why Lawrence became the site of the school and how its installation there figures into the history of federal Indian schools are also important ones that deserve some attention. For one thing, the early Kansas missions all were within close proximity to the town, thus

¹¹ Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 21, 30, 47, 126, and 137; ARCIA (1886), 224; Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society*, 66-70; Robert A. Brightman, "Toward a History of Indian Religion: Religious Changes in Native Societies," in Calloway, ed., *New Directions in American Indian History*, 223-249, but esp. 234-235; Brown, *The American West*, 102, 110-112, and 121; *LDJ*, 18 September 1884; Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, 4-5; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, Ch. 5; Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 38, 71, and 78; and Whittemore, *Historic Kansas*, 44 and 48. Kansas was also the site of some key treaty signings, most notably at Council Grove (1825) and Medicine Lodge Creek (1867). Military regimentation began in the federal Indian schools even earlier, starting at least with Pratt's Carlisle, but quickly came to Haskell, having a profound psychological effect, and well fitting the tense history of Indian-white relations there. Along these lines, see, for e.g., Coleman, *American Indian Children*, 44, 86-88, and 132; and Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 101-106.

¹² "Haskell Enrollment," in "Haskell Indian Junior College, 1884-1899" (hereafter HIJC), Douglas County Historical Society (hereafter DCHS); King, "Haskell Institute," 70; ARCIA (1893), 615; Anderson, *ibid.*, 25-26 and 139. See also *The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas: Compiled and Written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Projects Administration for the State of Kansas with a New Introduction by James R. Shortridge* (1939; rpt., Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 228-229.

making the work of the school a rather logical extension of past attempts to acculturate Native Americans in the region. For another, Lawrence was situated relatively near to Indian Territory, whose reservations would make a handy pool to draw upon for the future student body. In fact, when Superintendent of Indian Schools Major James M. Haworth called for a meeting of school principals in August of 1884 at Chilocco in Oklahoma, one of the chief objectives was to “provide for the collection of children for Haskell Institute.”¹³

Perhaps even more importantly, Lawrence had some other qualities that made it an attractive spot for a government off-reservation boarding school, and only the seventh of its type to be funded.¹⁴ The town had been founded in 1854 by New Englanders as a “free-state” bulwark in the wake of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and its proposed doctrine of popular sovereignty for the future of slavery in the territory; served as a hub of anti-slavery activities during the “Bleeding Kansas” period; and twice endured large-scale armed attacks by pro-slavery forces, including the infamous raid by William Clarke Quantrill’s Confederate guerillas in 1863.¹⁵ After the close of the Civil War and the eradication of slavery with the Thirteenth Amendment, many former abolitionists turned their energy to the nation’s lingering “Indian Problem” and emerged as the reformist “friends of the Indian” responsible for new directions in policy that helped create schools such as Haskell in the first place. In other words, Lawrence offered an ostensibly hospitable environment for the placement of a new government Indian school given its beginnings and sympathies. Even Captain Pratt, who harbored well-known objections to the founding of

¹³ ARCIA (1885), 455. See also Haskell Indian Nations University General Catalog (2008), 5; and Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 1 and 9-10. The Chilocco School was originally named Haworth Institute.

¹⁴ Fischbacher, “Role of the Federal Government,” 106-107, 256-257. Those schools that preceded Haskell were Hampton, Carlisle, Salem (in Oregon), Howard Institute (North Dakota), Genoa (Nebraska), and Chilocco.

¹⁵ David Dary, with Steve Jansen, ed., *A Pictorial History of Lawrence* (Lawrence: Allen Books, 1992), 9-20 and 60; Duane Schultz, *Quantrill’s War: The Life and Times of William Clark Quantrill, 1837-1865* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), esp. Chs. 8-9. The earlier “Sack of Lawrence,” in 1856, had been critical in earning the state’s sobriquet as “Bleeding Kansas” (or “Bloody Kansas”), inspired John Brown’s retaliatory Osawatimie massacre, and hastened, in the minds of many, the coming Civil War. See Davis, *Kansas: A History*, 52-65.

these institutions in the West due to overt prejudices against American Indians there, conceded that Lawrence might well be the only city so situated that could successfully manage such an undertaking.¹⁶

Furthermore, Lawrence citizens had long taken a strong interest in education. In director Ang Lee's 1999 film *Ride with the Devil*, which examines the Kansas-Missouri border wars of the 1850s and 1860s (including the Quantrill affair), one wealthy Confederate sympathizer hosting a dinner for starving Bushwhackers at the front lines of his agenda notes that a major difference between Northern and Southern towns is the former's dedication to education, naming Lawrence as a key example of this trend. Indeed, the abolitionists there quickly founded a number of schools and had established and opened the State University in their town by 1866, partly through the work of Governor Charles Robinson, of Lawrence, a committed former abolitionist himself who would later be Haskell's third superintendent. Robinson served on the board of Regents for the University for twelve years and also on the Board of Directors for the Quindaro State Normal School, a training institute for blacks in what is now Kansas City, Kansas. As for Lawrence, it soon began touting itself as the "Athens of the West" in light of its liberal and pedagogical traditions.¹⁷

¹⁶ *LDJ*, 28 September 1883. On connections between abolitionists and Indian policy reformers (many of whom had missionary connections as well), see Larry E. Burgess, "We'll Discuss it at Mohonk," *Quaker History: The Bulletin of the Friends Historical Society*, XL (Spring 1971), 14-28; Gibson, *American Indian*, 457-459; Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest*, 196; and Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 25-26. For broader sketches, see Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian*; and Walters, *American Reformers*.

¹⁷ Quote cited in *Douglas County Historical Society Newsletter*, vol. 13, no. 1 (May 1984), 1; Don W. Wilson, *Governor Charles Robinson of Kansas* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1975), 10-11, 72, 129, and 131-139; *WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas*, 224-225; and C.O. Wright, *100 Years in Kansas Education, Vol. I* (Topeka: The Kansas State Teachers Association, 1963), 1-2. See also ARCIA (1885), 455; Rev. William P. Ames, "Highlights of Haskell Institute: A Brief Sketch of the Half Century of Indian Education at Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kansas" (WPA: USA Work Program, 1936), in Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas (hereafter KCSRL); Frank W. Blackmar, A.M., Ph.D., ed., *Kansas: A Cyclopedic of State History, Embracing Events, Institutions, Industries, Counties, Cities, Towns, Prominent Persons, etc., in Two Volumes* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1912), Vol. II, 831-838; and Cliff Griffin, *University of Kansas: A History* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1974). A much older biography of Robinson is Blackmar's *The Life of Charles Robinson* (Topeka: Crane & Company, 1902). The State University is now the University of Kansas, commonly called Kansas University (or KU). Notably, Lawrence also boasted a number of competing daily newspapers, allowing for healthy debate on the major topics of the day, another tradition that had arisen from its abolitionist heyday; in fact, the bold and inflammatory press statements issuing from the various print shops on the Kaw River had been a key reason for the attack on the city by pro-slavery forces in 1856.

In addition to these reasons supporting Lawrence as a leading candidate for the location of a new Indian school, the area had a strong advocate in Representative Dudley Chase Haskell, of the Kansas Second Congressional District. First elected in 1876, he had quickly risen to become chairman of the House Committee on Indian Affairs by his second term, and he meant to steer the appropriations for the new school toward his hometown as his interest and influence in Indian education only increased during his third term of office. By doing so, he might enhance his own prestige, as well as that of his community, and perhaps also create a lucrative alignment between potential federal needs and local commercial contractors. There were even more personal connections to be fostered here, as his elder brother John's architectural firm, Haskell and Wood, of Topeka, was renowned for institutional buildings, including the new state house, completed in 1869. This partnership had designed the school at Chilocco and would, in fact, do so for the institute at Lawrence once the younger Haskell had secured the town for the school site; Haskell and Wood conceived the original three buildings of the campus in 1883 and then the girls' dormitory and dining hall added to the grounds five years later. With a number of Lawrence merchants signed on to donate land through a subscription fund, the \$10,000 they raised went to purchase 280 acres at the southeast edge of the city from Colonel Oscar E. Learnard, a leading local attorney and businessman who himself would go on to serve as an interim superintendent at Haskell for nine months in 1889.¹⁸

It was also in Dudley C. Haskell's honor that the school acquired its name, in part, at least, due to tragedy. In December 1883, little more than a year after having finalized the placement of the new federal outpost in Lawrence, the forty-one-year-old Haskell passed away suddenly due to illness on the seventeenth. His work being so closely connected to the creation of the school, it was rather natural for it

¹⁸ Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 102; ARCIA (1885), 457; David Dary, *Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas: An Informal History* (Lawrence: Allen Books, 1982), 188-189; Alva C. George, "Dudley C. Haskell and His Times" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Kansas, 1934), 3; *The Lawrence World*, 21 January 1896, in HIJC, DCHS; John M. Peterson, *John G. Haskell: Pioneer Kansas Architect* (Topeka: H.M. Ives and Sons, 1984), 35-36, 83-98, and 145-149; and "Vol. I: Clippings, 1885-1938," in KSHS. Haskell was a rising political star cut down in his prime and some have speculated he may have been a leading contender for president one day. See Jansen, "Dudley Haskell: From Shoe Merchant to Esteemed Congressman," *Douglas County Historical Society Newsletter*, vol. 13, no. 2 (November 1984), 2.

to bear his name in remembrance. While this title didn't officially come until 1890 (through an act of Congress), by August of 1884 the *Lawrence Journal* was calling it "Haskell Institute," and in the first annual report from the school published the next year, Superintendent James Marvin wrote that "by authority from the Secretary of the Interior the name and title of Haskell Institute was made the legal title by which the institution should be known."¹⁹

The manual-labor focus of the school, building on the earlier missionary traditions, began even before the institute had opened, as a small contingent of six Indian boys, transferred from Chilocco, joined a newly-hired carpenter, farmer, and his assistant, in addition to the general contractor's laborers, to do much of the hard work of preparing the grounds in July of 1884 in anticipation of the official opening on September first. This small crew planted several hundred trees, sowed a large garden, cleared debris, cleaned the new buildings, fenced a range for a small herd of livestock, and did other necessary work on campus that summer. This dependency on Native American labor set the tone for the early years at Haskell, with operational costs defrayed by employing students (without remuneration) and passing for "training" that often had few real-world applications, or at least not much beyond menial aspirations. Two of the original farm force stayed on to make up the group of fourteen students who actually comprised the inaugural student body; eight more joined them on 16 September for the public dedication that took place the next day.²⁰

Thus, from the start, Haskell Institute, much as the early Kansas missions had, relied on Indian goodwill, here to populate the campus and do much of the hard work of running the school; this second feature, especially, was typical of many early boarding schools, but considering the fact that the Lawrence school was the largest of the three government institutions funded by acts of Congress in the summer of

¹⁹ *LDJ*, 18 December 1883 and 21 August 1884; *ARCIA*, *ibid.*, 455; Ames, "Highlights of Haskell Institute," *KCSRL*, 2 and 8. See also *LDJ*, 21 September 1884; and *Leavenworth Times*, 19 February 1888.

²⁰ Ames, *ibid.*, 1; *ARCIA*, *ibid.*; Haskell Indian Nations University General Catalog, 5; Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 10.

1882,²¹ it was hardly an auspicious beginning, and is a likely signaling of some native families' resistance to letting go of their children for this new venture. In particular, during the early years at Haskell anyway, there was a continued begrudging attitude among many students to performing much of what we might today term "grunt work" aimed simply at the daily maintenance of the school with little other obvious results, as it seemed to go against both the grain of the boarding schools' promised loftier goals of providing a path to citizenship and social equality, and further offended Indian (especially the boys') sensibilities of dignified work. In one of Superintendent Robinson's numerous innovative, and apparently rather effective, maneuvers, the former governor responded to this complaint by suggesting it was not beneath a man of his stature to do such work himself, a remark that clearly impressed his charges and seemed to silence other objections of this nature. The *Lawrence Daily Gazette*, which had earlier reported, rather tellingly, given the strict disciplinary code enforced by Haskell's second superintendent, Colonel Arthur Grabowskii, that the intelligence of native students observed there "refutes the popular belief that 'you can't pound anything into an Indian,'" now seemed to make the point that Robinson's deft handling of student complaints with mere badinage had much more saliently dealt with the problem than any threat of recriminations or corporal punishment might have, saying his words alone "settled it and now they take their turn at work of all kinds without murmur."²²

Whether by dint of personality, past leadership experience, or his acquaintance with the art of political compromise (or some combination thereof, or something else entirely), Robinson clearly grasped a vital insight that Grabowskii had failed to latch onto during his own tenure, and by dealing with his students in such a manner as this, he had obviously struck a responsive chord with them. He may have seen the wisdom of using the soft touch, especially with his administration of Haskell, following as it did, on the heels of Grabowskii's repressive regime; he may have been acting on the old adage that one is apt

²¹ Fischbacher, "Role of the Federal Government," 103, 106-107, 147-149; Lomawaima, *ibid.*, 6; Peterson, *John G. Haskell*, 146-148; Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, "Origin and Development of the American Indian Boarding School System," in Trafzer, et al., eds., *Boarding School Blues*, 1-33, but esp. 14-15; Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 20, 110, and 112-114; and Wollock, "Protagonism Emergent," in Lobo and Talbot, eds., *Native American Voices*, 267-268.

²² *LDG*, 8 September 1885 and 24 February 1887; the latter quote is cited in Vučković, *ibid.*, 112.

to catch more flies with honey than vinegar; regardless, he was no doubt sincere in his admonition and won the day (and even further, if the report is to be taken at face value) by it. One very likely reason his framing of the situation won converts on this question was that he had spoken to the students as peers of a sort, not simply wards, responding in a way previous superintendents at Haskell had not, as we shall see. Beyond that, he offered a compelling rationale for the work that he believed needed to be done and that would be ultimately beneficial to all, regardless of status. In this way he had also, probably unwittingly, tapped into some major tenets of traditional Indian education: on one level, his words commanded force due to the wisdom of taking care of the group, or at least mastering an understanding of an entire set of circumstances for common goals, a notion akin to tribal obligations that sought to relieve pressure and create cohesion among the many; on another, he offered leadership by experience in announcing that he was not asking the students to do work that he himself would shun. Although both principles were not unheard of, certainly, in the ideals of the dominant Euro-American social milieu that Robinson, as a federal functionary upholding an educational agenda geared toward the dissolution of tribalism, sought to instill, it is nevertheless an extremely interesting viewpoint to examine his actions through the lens of native traditionalism, precisely because the children in his care would most assuredly have picked up on these similarities and behaved in accordance with the deeply-held strictures they believed his reaction represented and warranted.²³

On a much more practical level, Robinson hoped to achieve success by getting through to his students on a personal level, seeking to cultivate individualism, the Western standard bearer of social contract theory, by whatever methods he found successful; and he may have made a huge leap in the minds of his students in this case by leading through example, although ironically via a method of teaching they were very much accustomed to in traditional learning. Robinson also likely sensed that, as is true of most groups one is trying to lead (and as he so often had in his life), especially in new,

²³ On the prevalence of these perspectives in native cultures, see, for e.g., Grinnell, *When Buffalo Ran*; Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 14-16; Szasz, *Indian Education*, 10-14; and Trafzer, Keller, and Sisquoc, "Origin and Development," in Trafzer et al., eds., *Boarding School Blues*, 5-6.

unpopular, or relatively untested directions (as with abolitionists, Easterners trying to settle in hostile western terrain, or former slaves exposed to formal education, to name a handful among the many causes he had previously taken up), the targeted audience must be shown the value of what they were doing or why the proposed change being undertaken was worthwhile; otherwise the undertaking had little chance of succeeding.

This episode, which may seem rather minor at first glance, in fact also allows for a revisiting of the questions about whom Progressives were and where their reform agendas emanated from, as Robinson's inclusion of the students' opinions (by directly addressing them) points up a give-and-take process recognizing student power but also flexing the authority of administrators. To take the analysis a bit further afield than what Robinson may have been thinking, although he surely had some inkling of it, especially given his anti-slavery work and commitment to African-American mainstream social achievements after emancipation, we need not look too deeply into the experiences of controlled groups (prisoners, slaves, etc.) to see that they wield some of the ultimate power in affecting change for themselves. This is true even if the obstacles to such change are difficult, perhaps seemingly insurmountable, and the proposed shifts or modifications to get there present troubling questions because they may require abandoning (or at least stepping away from) what is familiar in favor of a model upheld by a (usually) dominant, and not always completely trusted, group that often holds the keys (sometimes literally) to opening new doors.

To make an oversimplified example, for enslaved blacks, freedom was certainly the longed-for goal, but giving up the accustomed surroundings that slavery had institutionalized (their own community structures, bare necessities being furnished, a sense of home and belonging, no matter how grim) was a daunting proposition; if this were not true at some level then surely more African Americans would have fled the South earlier than did so in the late, failing stages of Reconstruction (to be sure, other impediments blocked the way as well). In the same vein, the imprisoned seek release, and incarceration (ideally, at any rate) offers rehabilitation as the means for that goal; yet to walk the straight and narrow

path there often means turning one's back on fellow prisoners who have become friends and confidantes; aligning oneself with a power structure (i.e., "the man") so long resented and mistrusted by those on its underside; and the ability to remove oneself from a number of relative "comforts" that have theretofore made life bearable, or simply familiar. Again, this is a very pared-down, uncomplicated view of these situations, and Indian students at Haskell were neither chattel slaves nor prisoners *per se*, but the education being offered them asked them to tackle a similar set of very hard choices that surely appeared extraordinarily difficult to achieve and for sometimes dubious end results, and that, again, in their case, built upon the foundation of the missionary and warfare experiences (as well as much more ancient sensibilities) that were by then part of a larger Indian collective consciousness and helped inform their responses. In the end, all of these groups, it should be noted, had, or at least *desired*, to have a hand in overcoming the hurdles and winning necessary, expected, or hoped-for changes *on their own terms*, and it is insightful to note each group has helped affect real change, nearly always, and rather necessarily, *from the inside* of their respective institutions or socially proscribed positions, that is, from the bottom up, even if often "assisted" (the term may be viewed as relative) by outside reform elements or actors.²⁴

Finally, Robinson's reaction here points up noteworthy roots of Progressive reform, or at least one type of them that bore fruit at Haskell; other superintendents may be said to represent other approaches that could be deemed rather different strains of Progressive thought, as certainly would the more grassroots-style (and often low-rumblings) of student agitation observable at the school, given the wide defining scope of Progressivism thus far adopted here. In Robinson's case consider his early abolitionism, which serves nicely as an expression of outlook informing the desire for social change, and

²⁴ See, for e.g., Adams, "Beyond Bleakness: The Brighter Side of Indian Boarding Schools, 1870-1940," in Trafzer, ed., *ibid.*, 35-64; Nancy Oestreich Lurie, "Indian Cultural Adjustment to European Civilization," and Winthrop D. Jordan, "The Beginnings of Slavery in North America," both in Frazier, ed., *The Underside of American History: Other Readings, Vol. I: To 1877*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), 11-36 and 51-80; "The Official Report of the New York State Commission on Attica," reprinted in Frazier, ed., *The Underside of American History: Other Readings, Vol. II: Since 1865*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), 317-345; Lawrence W. Levine, "Slave Songs and Slave Consciousness: An Exploration in Neglected Sources," in Frazier, ed., *The Private Side of American History: Readings in Everyday Life, Vol. I, to 1877* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 237-263; and Martin, *In the Spirit of the Earth: Rethinking History and Time* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 5-7 and 137-141.

then its reflections in racial and ethnic educational experiments he came later to embrace and serve. To be sure, Robinson and the others who filled his place at Haskell sought reform of Indians in what they believed, just as missionaries had before them (and a host of people generally seen as Progressives afterwards), was the best interests of those being targeted for change, although the level of measurable success among these men in reaching the proverbial hearts and minds of their pupils is widely variable. It is important to take stock, therefore, of some of the administrative tactics and perspectives precisely because it allows a picture of give-and-take with students to be revealed; and when students and their supporters could win useful concessions or see substantive, compelling reasons for their own behavioral modifications, these usually translated (in the eyes of government bureaucrats and other outside “friends of the Indian” but also, in many cases, for natives themselves, albeit from often quite different viewpoints) into evidence of positive change afoot in the system.²⁵

Of course, on some level, neither superintendents at individual schools nor Indian students themselves had a strong or immediate hand in shaping federal education policy but they did exert an influence that was quiet, cumulative, and exuded a certain flavor of the place and time from which it emerged, as they were both reflecting and responding to local, institutional, and sometimes larger needs. These, by turn, could be picked up upon by the bureaucracy and factored into new directions that were becoming visible at Haskell (and other places), thus showing how students, especially, could exert a type of reform on their own, one that usually came from a desire to achieve faster or more effective changes and that worked within the larger governmental framework, and was in that way satisfying, for all involved (yet, again, for very different reasons in many cases). This could hold true for the introduction,

²⁵ Adams in Trafzer, ed., *ibid.*, esp. 35-37 and 55-59; Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light*, 23-26 and 94-99; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 28-29 and 94-96. Robinson’s early Progressivism, as it must be aptly called, can also be traced through the later paroxysms of Populism in the 1890s, which had a significant impact on Kansas politics and politicians, Robinson among them, and on into the various Progressive reform ideals emanating from the state by the early twentieth century. See, for e.g., Davis, *Kansas: A History*, 145 and 148-161; John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers’ Alliance and the People’s Party* (1931; rpt., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 5, 100, 156, 167-170, 256, 261, 275, and 328; Miller, ed., “*The Populist Vision*,” esp. 18-19, 34, and 36-40; A. Bower Sageser, *Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive* (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1968); and Paul Sutter, “Paved with Good Intentions: Good Roads, the Automobile, and the Rhetoric of Rural Improvement, 1890-1914,” in Napier, ed., *Kansas and the West*, 249-270.

in 1894 and 1895, respectively, of Normal and Commercial departments at Haskell, that both showed Indian “progress” as far as outsiders were concerned and also allowed for greater focus on non-manual labor at Haskell, benefitting at least a number of students while at school and in the future, the latter not just as lauded success stories of assimilation but also in terms of how they could serve their own people better.²⁶

This interplay was at work much earlier than that, however. In order to understand how Haskell began with an enrollment of 22 children and regularly enjoyed attendance of over 500 students within a decade, becoming second in size only to Carlisle (it would eventually surpass it), is, at least in part, a matter of looking at how the various superintendents and their administrations interacted with Indian people, for this determined their own success in terms of job performance by government standards of measuring it.²⁷ Furthermore it also was a sign that they were getting through to students and parents, thus defining success for them by gaining their trust enough to send increasing numbers of youngsters to the school. As a federal emissary who stood between Washington and the reservations in the realm of Indian education, the superintendent maintained a sometimes rather precariously balanced position, for he must produce results satisfactory to both his superiors and the Native Americans on whom he necessarily relied to populate the school, do much of the work there, and bring to life the various programs implemented by policymakers. In walking this tightrope of sorts, the thoughtful superintendent had to remain limber and find flexibility that allowed him to respond to Indian needs, further increasing his reach among them by showing some willingness to consider their opinions and goals as well as those of the bureaucracy.

²⁶ ARCIA (1894), 381; ARCIA (1895), 345-346; ARCIA (1896), 10-11; Haskell Indian Nations General Catalog (2008), 5; “Haskell Institute,” in *A Souvenir History of Lawrence, Kansas, 1898: Containing Fine Half-Tone Illustrations and Descriptive Matter Reflective of the City and County* (Lawrence: Compiled and Published by E.F. Caldwell, 1898), pages unnumbered, p. 1 this section; Haskell Normal Department Commencement program, 16 July 1896, HIJC, DCHS; “Haskell Then and Now,” undated, in “Haskell Junior College Buildings,” in DCHS; Stewart, *A Voice in Her Tribe*, 31; Vučković, *ibid.*, 108-111; Winnie, *Sah-Gan-De-Oh*, 53-55. Haskell is believed to have offered the first classes in touch typing anywhere in the state.

²⁷ *LDJ*, 30 September 1889; ARCIA (1983), 615; Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indian*, 225-226; Washburn, ed., *The American Indian and the United States: A Documentary History—Volume I* (New York: Random House, 1973), 441, 547.

Recognizing this reality allows the historian to make good use of school records that do not always explicitly make that balancing act clear. Still, once that insight is achieved, it reveals much about the power (even if limited) held by native peoples themselves in the equation, for, at nearly every turn, any superintendent who wished to retain his office or attain fundamental results found that this required some practical applications of give-and-take with Indian students, parents, and elders. Thus attendance at federal non-reservation boarding schools, which, at first glance, has only the appearance of “an invitation to cultural suicide,” as the historian David Wallace Adams has called it, in fact offered a much more nuanced set of circumstances.²⁸

Initially, it was the negative aspects of these schools that weighed most heavily on Indian minds. They remained fearful of sending children away from home; hence the low turnout at Haskell for its opening. Yet the student population quickly increased, somewhat remarkably given attendance there had to come on a largely voluntary basis. Despite evidence of some coercive or deceptive tactics by agents, or manipulations via the whims of those functionaries like Major Haworth who transferred students (but almost always in limited numbers) from one school to another, this alone cannot account for the large numbers of students coming to Haskell in subsequent years. In addition, compulsory education rules never came to be applied uniformly at Indian schools generally and did not apply to the off-reservation boarding institutions at all.²⁹ Therefore administrators had to rely on Indian themselves to supply pupils for Haskell; this meant it was crucial to develop a rapport of goodwill and trustworthiness between superintendents and Native Americans. Enrollment at Haskell, in fact, remained a key issue, especially in the early years, until the school, and those in charge of it, could establish a reputation which would allay Indian fears and be convincing enough to assure them of some compelling reason to go there.

²⁸ Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 212.

²⁹ *LDJ*, 21 August and 18 September 1884; *LDG*, 8 September 1885; Coleman, *American Indian Children*, 45, 61; Fischbacher, “Role of the Federal Government,” 125-132; Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indian*, 255; Washburn, *The American Indian and the United States*, 446, 555-556, and 604. On coercion and the forceful removal of children to schools, see Gibson, *The American Indian*, 432; and Kim Warren, ““All Indian Trails Lead to Lawrence, October 27 to 30, 1926’: American Identity and the Dedication of Haskell Institute’s Football Stadium,” *KH*, vol. 30, no. 1 (Spring 2007), 2-19, but esp. 5-6.

In the case of Dr. James Marvin, the former State University Chancellor who first took the helm of Haskell,³⁰ a somewhat strange, even paradoxical, situation developed, in light of the government's rationale for creating the school. Built away from the reservations to separate children from what were the perceived harmful influences of home, many of Haskell's earliest students came to school, in the fall and winter of 1884, not only accompanied by parents or guardians who meant to see no immediate harm came to their relatives, but who stayed on for several months; in later years, reports of Indians camped in the woods and fields near the Haskell campus (and other schools) continued. Presumably their presence, if only transitory, offered some solace to students and a chance to visit with kin outside of the prescribed, and often stringent, vacation policies.³¹ It also signaled that the school and its activities were under scrutiny. Certainly this would not have been encouraged or tolerated under official federal rules governing the schools, but any forceful objection, at least in that initial period where concern ran high for populating Haskell, seems to have fallen by the wayside.

Another proscription that went by the boards in the rush to swell school numbers was the intended age restrictions for students, which was supposed to be limited to children between 10 and 18 years. Yet even by mid-September of 1884 Haskell already had two children under the minimum age and thirteen over the maximum one when a group of 79 Pawnees, Cheyennes, and Arapahos arrived on the nineteenth of the month. They came with many of the adult chaperones just mentioned and the party included 23 more prospective students over eighteen and nine additional children under ten years old, some as young as three and four. The tender ages of these new arrivals makes clear the concern Indian

³⁰ Griffin, *University of Kansas*, 66-67.

³¹ Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 41, 64; HISR, RG 75, NACPR; *Lawrence Journal World*, 28 May 1973. See also McBeth, "The Primer and the Hoe," *Natural History*, 4 (August 1984), 3-12, but esp. 3 and 9; L'Archuleta, et al., *Away from Home*, 15, 36, and 44-45; and "Rules for Indian Schools, 1890" in Binder and Reimer, eds., *The Way We Lived*, 51. The south end of Haskell's campus, beyond the large farm and children's garden plots, near the Wakarusa River, was a likely spot for furtive visits, whether among campus confederates or with family members. It was also a popular pathway for escape, as school officials eventually placed a staff cabin in the area to combat runaways, clearly shown on a map compiled by Chuck Haines (accompanying "Haskell Industrial Labor Institute," n.p.). Indian families camped on the south end of campus at the "Indian Village" set up for them during the festive dedication of Haskell's football stadium in 1926, perhaps in some odd nod to earlier days, but the electrical lighting and water run from the main buildings meant this campground was not nearly so far away from the school itself (nor did it need to be, since it was sanctioned). See Warren, "All Indian Trails Lead to Lawrence," 10.

parents had for the care and safety of their children, but their willingness to bring them to Haskell, if even on a tentative basis, also speaks to their curiosity about what the school might offer and perhaps a hedging trust in the reputation of this first superintendent.³²

In fact, 280 students were in attendance by the end of the year, the largest single-period increase during Haskell's first ten years of operation, and a good bit of that must be credited to Marvin's ability to allay Indian fears. This winning of trust, of course, was a two-way street, and Marvin surely realized he must be flexible enough to listen to native voices if he was to make good on what he had been hired to do. Allowing family members to stay at the school (they lived in the dormitories with their children) showed empathy with their plight, for instance. As a minister, Marvin's main focus remained on spiritual uplift, even in the ostensibly secular setting of a government school. Indians at, or considering going to, Haskell may have found this approach a less threatening form of acculturation, for most native groups by then had decades (or more) of experiences with missionary efforts and had learned how to co-opt and adapt these teachings into tribal life. Moreover, Marvin saw little need to employ harsh discipline at Haskell, an attitude that jibed with traditional modes of education, and his kindly disposition sat well with both Indian parents and children.³³

Trust and gentility alone cannot entirely explain the situation, however. During that first winter illness ran rampant at the school, at least partly owing to an early onset and the fact that "steam was not passed through the radiators until the 29th of November" due to a hold-up of government funds that

³² ARCIA (1885), 456; HISR, RG 75, NACPR; and *LDJ*, 21 August 1884. Although King contends of the rule violation that "these ages were the extremes and there were few of these special cases," even a cursory examination of the student case files show a surprising number of students who fit the bill throughout the first decade of the school's existence. See King, "Haskell Institute," 40. By the end of 1884 alone, for example, there were 32 children aged three to nine, and 60 over eighteen years. A quarter of a century later, Supt. Peairs advised one Rufus Caleb (who had himself entered Haskell that first year, at age 18, and whose own children currently attended the school), that the new government rules nominally prevented their attendance due to youthfulness, but that he would take them anyway, "as they were enrolled here last year," i.e., before the rules had changed. On the other hand, he did reject the application of John Burnett, aged twelve, that same year. See HISR, Box 18, RG 75, NACPR, Peairs to Mary Burnett, 6 August 1909, and to Rufus Caleb, 2 September 1909. See also Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 40.

³³ ARCIA, *ibid.*, 460; King, *ibid.*, 65; Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest*, 189; and letter of John Williams to "My Cheyenne and Arap. Friends," 11 March 1887, in CSRC, KSHS. See also Berkhofer, *Salvation and the Savage*, Ch. VI; and Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, Ch. 2.

prevented completion of the buildings and adequate facilities or means for treating the sick. Marvin had to requisition emergency monies for a full-time nurse and complained in his report that the necessary appropriations from Congress that finally came in February of 1885, and which in part went to construct a new school hospital, had saved Haskell from “financial embarrassment for the remainder of the current year.” In the meantime, the school’s youngest resident, the infant Harry White Wolf, only six months old and part of the Indian family entourage (which included several of White Wolf’s relatives) that had been staying on campus, died amidst the red tape on November 13. In addition, a total of eleven students died that first year, two of them, like the White Wolf baby, before government assistance arrived in February, but enrollment did not drop drastically, which strikes a surprising chord upon its initial consideration.³⁴

After further reflection, however, this situation helps get at the heart of an Indian ambivalence about the boarding school experience and the promises of this education toward assimilation. Many parents viewed the hardships of life on the reservation as a dead-end road without some form of amelioration for, and hopefully through, subsequent generations who could receive useful training in government institutions like Haskell. Their children must have an acquaintance with the dominant society and its ways for any indigenous cultural survival to take place, even if the short-term costs to procuring a future were enormously high in terms of loss of acquaintance, or possibly the lives, of some of their progeny. In this way, accommodation with the educational process in place, in an attempt to meet Indian needs for group persistence, might look like (or even masquerade as) support for the school by all outside appearances. Administrators, of course, relied on this “support” even if it emerged from deeper,

³⁴ ARCIA, *ibid.*, 456; ARCIA (1886), 223, 224, and 675; King, *ibid.*; *Lawrence Journal World*, 28 May, 1973; Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 130; and n.a., “The Haskell Cemetery,” 48. Some parents, Marvin reported, did call for the return of their children, which he apparently agreed to, in the wake of the sickness and death at the institution. Harry White Wolf was not an enrolled student at Haskell, but Marvin doubtless felt awful about the loss on his watch. The Haskell graveyard first came into existence as a result of the epidemic at the school this first year; eight of the dead from that period occasioned the earliest stones there. Marvin referred to the infant simply as “White Wolf’s child.”

traditional dictates of accommodation, adaptation, and aspirations for continuity of which school officials were unaware or ignorant.³⁵

The shock of this system did prove too much for Dr. Marvin sensibilities, though, and he left the post after only one year at Haskell, obviously disappointed by what he viewed as a true lack of commitment to the Indians' future by the federal government. A man of high ideals and principles, and "whose heart was in the work," according to former Cheyenne and Arapaho reservation agent John Williams, Marvin's departure saddened and concerned Indians at his old agency. Williams further related in this letter to "My Cheyenne and Arap. Friends," that when he had asked them to send children to Haskell during Marvin's tenure, "you and all your friends were satisfied that we had done the right thing. Your good friend Dr. Marvin then had charge of the school" and "your children loved him and improved."³⁶ Based on Marvin's gentle hand and the needs and goals of Indians themselves, enrollment had been heavily boosted and remained stable during Haskell's first year, and continued to be so for some time afterward. Reliance on Indian support in the form of statistical figures such as this continued to be of utmost important for the administration in years to come, and Marvin had set the bar high. On this issue might hang the fate of a superintendent, the perceived success or failure of the school (on both Indian and government terms), and, by extension, the merits of this educational experiment overall. Furthermore, it should be clear that the role of Indian faith, trust, and goodwill toward Haskell did count for something in the effectiveness of operations there. This will become even more evident in regard to the school's next two leaders.

After Marvin's retirement in July of 1885, fewer than 200 children were on campus to greet Colonel Arthur Grabowskii, the new superintendent; because classes had adjourned until the fall term, this was little cause for alarm. Within two months Haskell was back up to 260 permanent residents and the average attendance for the year would be 310 pupils, respectable but still below the 350-student

³⁵ Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 249-252; L'Archuleta, et al., eds., *Away from Home*, 16; and Milk, *ibid.*, 24.

³⁶ Williams letter, 11 March 1887, in CSRC, KSHS.

capacity the school could accommodate. By the following fall, however, the total had again dwindled down to 260; and although 434 new students had come to Haskell during the 1885-1886 school year, only 43 entered during all of 1886 (an all-time low), by the end of which Grabowskii, too, had left. Assuming some students returned and other, new ones came in partly on the strength of Marvin's established rapport and reputation, it seems obvious Grabowskii was the source of some of this population decline at the school. His chaotic reign and widespread dislike by students in particular and the tribal support networks generally did, indeed, conspire to force both his ouster and the need for his successor to go into major damage-control mode almost immediately at the start of 1887.³⁷

Almost from the start Grabowskii provoked "unfavorable responses," especially among Haskell's Indian constituency, highlighting another example of the quiet, but completely tangible, power they could wield regarding the success of the school, both on their own terms and for a superintendent's record of achievement in discharging his duties.³⁸ One major objection to the new regime at Haskell was the introduction of a much "stricter system of discipline" than had previously been in place, or for that matter even been deemed necessary.³⁹ While Marvin had placed teacher J.L. DuMars in charge of disciplinary actions, these were rarely severe, with denial of privileges and the threat of additional duties usually being enough to bring wayward students back into the fold.⁴⁰ Grabowskii, for his part, and befitting his military background, seemed to thrive on order and a code of discipline that outlined numerous offenses and respective punishments. Toward that end the Colonel quickly established a "cadet battalion organization" that divided students into five companies meant to break up old tribal associations and any "unwilling spirit" amongst the children.⁴¹ Almost overnight Haskell had become a military-style installation and embraced a much harsher regimen that Indians greatly feared in boarding-school environments. This

³⁷ ARCIA (1886), 223 and 934; *LDG*, 8 and 9 September, 1885; King, "Haskell Institute," 45, 65, and 70; and Peterson, *John G. Haskell*, 148.

³⁸ ARCIA (1887), 320; Wilson, *Governor Charles Robinson*, 141.

³⁹ ARCIA (1886), 224.

⁴⁰ ARCIA (1885), 456-459.

⁴¹ ARCIA (1886), 224.

transformation into a what (Brule) Sioux Chief Spotted Tail called a “soldier’s place” (and that had caused him to withdraw his own children from Carlisle in 1880) began to have similar effects in Kansas.⁴²

For many parents, the introduction of military marches, drills, and uniforms was highly offensive and a deep cause for concern. There were too many (not-so-distant) memories of warfare and other negative associations with the U.S. Army and they had no desire to see their children trained in such a way or exposed to what they or their forebears had endured; nor could they stomach the thought that their offspring might somehow turn out to be molded into an extension of this dreaded institution. Another aspect of Grabowskii’s make-over of Haskell was the appearance of the stockade, or “prison,” intended to scare students into obedience, through both its use and the threat of same. Although the Commissioner’s report for 1886 noted “marked improvement in the discipline of the school,” signaling some government approval of these methods here, in keeping with those already in place at the eastern schools (Carlisle and Hampton), this tune would dramatically change once Grabowskii’s near-total shattering of Indian trust in the school (as well as the lack of confidence he eventually engendered among many onlookers in Lawrence) resulted.⁴³

During his time in office, Marvin had noted that Indian children were “very sensitive to ridicule” and that “they often manifest a contemptuous indifference to reproof. Their first impulse under censure is to run away, ‘to go home,’” he wrote in his report.⁴⁴ In an editorial review of the school under Grabowskii, the *Lawrence Tribune* chastised the new superintendent for “brutality and general cruelty” toward his students, and the effects showed immediately: by the close of 1885, forty-five children had

⁴² Cited in Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 213.

⁴³ Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 47-49 and 62; ARCIA (1886), 139 and 934-935; *LDG*, 8 and 9 September 1885; and “Vol. I: Clippings, 1885-1938,” 41-42, in KSHS. The divergent opinions in Lawrence about Grabowskii’s handling of the school, made public (and also somewhat mirrored) in the *Daily Gazette*, which nominally supported him, and the *Lawrence Tribune*, which did not, found expression in a *Topeka Commonwealth* article entitled “Haskell Institute Muddle” that appeared on 15 May 1886. On the use of harsh discipline at other boarding schools, including “jailing” of students, see, for e.g., L’Archuleta, et al., eds., *Away from Home*, 42; and McBeth, “The Primer and the Hoe,” 9.

⁴⁴ ARCIA (1885), 459.

run away from the school⁴⁵ For Grabowskii (probably not surprising given his own military training) the worst offense was for children to take unauthorized leave of the school; he dubbed such violators “deserters” and controlled runaway rates by paying a bounty fee to anyone who assisted in the return of wayward students. Interestingly, although again perhaps not entirely surprisingly, Grabowski managed to keep attrition rates while in charge of Haskell at their lowest point during the school’s first decade.⁴⁶ His strict discipline apparently kept the students he did watch over *in* the school; what it also did was keep many more from coming there, at least while he remained at its head.

Again, the Indian voice had spoken, quietly, but measurably and authoritatively. In withholding their children from Haskell, the school, still new and very much in need of an inspired reputation to fill its halls, was floundering. The embarrassing (and lethal) situations that had arisen under Marvin had some deleterious effects, to be sure, but the Grabowskii debacle, at least from an Indian perspective, was unacceptable and untenable. Although the government’s report on Haskell for 1886, especially in the portion written by new Board of Indian Commissioners member William H. Walby, had been favorable, as noted above, it is clear the Indian Department was almost simultaneously casting about for a replacement for Grabowskii.⁴⁷ While runaways remained a constant problem, certainly from an administrative standpoint anyway, during Haskell’s early years, we may conjecture that it also signaled something to Indian parents about the operation of the school. First, if these unauthorized forays off campus (sometimes they were only quick trips to Lawrence to explore the local environs, not full-blown home visits) took place with some regularity, that is, almost as a matter of course, and were then handled as minor infractions (most students did, in fact, return to school on their own), perhaps parents had a real chance to see how administrators reacted to what they viewed as their children simply being children, wishing to explore, bending the rules a bit, or responding to natural bouts of homesickness. Reports of dealing with the situation with an iron hand would not be viewed favorably by them. One parent, in fact,

⁴⁵ “Vol. I: Clippings, 1885-1938,” 41-42, in KSHS; King, “Haskell Institute,” 65-66.

⁴⁶ *LDJ*, 12 October 1885; King, *ibid.*, 65.

⁴⁷ ARCIA (1886), 934-935; and ARCIA (1887), 239. Walby’s visit to Haskell had been brief, really lasting only one full day, 2 December 1886, having arrived late on the night of the first before leaving by noon on the third.

wrote Superintendent H.B. Peairs in 1908 wanting to know why “my boy gets so much whipping and I want to know if you can stop it. If you cannot stop it send him home.”⁴⁸ Second, if they saw that Haskell officials’ true commitment was to the children and their betterment, not simply enforcement of the rules, by their welcoming them back into the fold, scolding but not always severely punishing them, it would be a good indicator that administrators had the children’s best interests at heart and parents might be more likely to send their youngsters to Haskell, a place where they couldn’t normally oversee the daily interactions between staff and students except through such secondary means of observation.

Of course, parents remained deeply concerned about the attendant dangers faced by runaways and discouraged the practice almost unanimously; and the punishments upon return to Haskell could be harsh, even physical. Still, even the use of a “belt line,” wherein other students administered blows to the offender via a gauntlet they must run, seemed to sit better (no pun intended) than the idea of jailing children in isolation or of disciplinarians alone meting out any corporal response.⁴⁹ (One wonders, too, if students would be less likely to overly abuse fellow pupils in this situation, especially since running away was relatively common among the student body as a whole.) As Native American historian K. Tsianina Lomawaima notes of boarding schools generally, “Indian students and Indian parents brought their own intentions, plans, and hopes into the boarding school system and influenced the institutions that had been created to transform them.”⁵⁰ By deciding whether, when, and under what circumstances they would

⁴⁸ Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 49-51; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 219-220, 232, and 234. Quote cited from page 219. See also McBeth, “The Primer and the Hoe,” 9-10.

⁴⁹ Vučković, *ibid.*, 50 and 235-236. The running of a gauntlet, incidentally, was not an unheard of punishment, especially for captives, among certain native tribes, sometimes as a prerequisite to eventual adoption into the group. See, for e.g., John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 81; Brian Moore, *Black Robe* (1985; rpt., New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 134-135; and Trigger, *The Huron: Farmers of the North*, 2nd ed. (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1990), 54-55 and 58-61. Trigger notes some similarities between practices of the Hurons and tribes of the Northwest Coast. As the “recaptured” (or sometimes simply returned) Haskell students were prisoners of sorts or faced a type of (re-) adoption, could this, too, be some nod to Indian values and ritual, e.g. a native sense of justice? Trennert, in “Corporal Punishment and the Politics of Indian Reform,” notes that “it does not appear that extraordinary reliance on corporal punishment was common in government Indian schools” (p. 597), although many others have offered evidence to the contrary. See also “Rules for Indian Schools, 1890,” in Binder and Reimers, eds., *The Way We Lived*, 53, which states in Rule No. 53 that “Corporal punishment must be resorted to only in cases of grave violation of rules.” Both of these citations read as rather relative statements.

⁵⁰ In L’Archuleta, et al., eds., *Away from Home*, 56.

allow their children to attend Haskell, native parents clearly exerted some influence over the success of the school.

When Robinson took the helm of Haskell on New Year's Day of 1887, he had his work cut out for him. He had to reassure students, parents, and other Indian supporters (as well as some in the local community and at the federal level) that the ship of his school would right itself after nearly being dashed on the rocks of oblivion under Grabowski's questionable navigation. In keeping with his quest to restore faith in Haskell at each of these turns, Robinson introduced a number of innovations during his two years as superintendent. Since boosting enrollment was the greatest measure of success as far as Washington was concerned, and could only embolden the school's reputation among the tribes, regaining Indian support topped the list. The new superintendent thus greatly relaxed the military regimen at the school (although he did not entirely abandon it; a compromise that seemed to satisfy both natives and federal officials); gave students greater autonomy and an apparatus for airing grievances; took the Haskell band to perform for President Cleveland when he visited Kansas City; invited local citizens to take part in school activities; brought various Indian leaders to campus to review progress there; and made or commissioned numerous trips to Indian Territory to explain the new order of things at Haskell, often using his best students to recruit and speak of improvements, resulting in the winning over of even some former hardened native opponents of Indian education.⁵¹ Taken together, this list of undertakings went a long way toward salvaging the wreckage created by Robinson's predecessor and putting Haskell on the path of success for all concerned parties.

While examining the changes that took place (all rather quickly, too) at the school in this period, it is important to keep an eye on the ideas about Progressive reform previously discussed. On the one hand, it is tempting to view the new work afoot at Haskell as largely, even solely maybe, the output of a tireless, well-connected, and thoughtful superintendent, thus matching well the paradigm of Progressive change flowing from the top, more evidence of an elite leadership style that then washed over the

⁵¹ ARCIA (1887), 321-322; and *LDJ*, 9 October 1887, and 1 and 11 February 1888.

disadvantaged group below. On the other hand, it is vital to recognize that, while Robinson surely did move to do much of the bridge-building during these years, he acted in response to the needs and desires of Native American peoples so clearly spelled out by their reactions to what had taken place before his arrival. In other words, he was less the entire inventor and arbiter of change at the school than a conduit for making sure that Indian people's voices remained at the fore, and without which he, too, could not have achieved real success. In this way, Indian students and their support networks exhibited a strong pull on the school and its leadership, revealing, yet again, that they acted as Progressive reformers themselves, and for their own ends.

Robinson's close ties to Lawrence, near-heroic status in early state history, and fervent interest in educational causes had made him an excellent choice to head up Haskell, to be sure, and while Indians themselves had not been consulted on the matter, they soon responded positively to the directions he leaned his stewardship, glad that the changes he helped usher in were reflective of their concerns and would hopefully be lasting ones in terms of the road they envisioned for the future of boarding-school education. All this must be viewed as a matter of gradualism, too, as it would be inaccurate to suggest that Robinson (or any of the superintendents at Haskell during its first quarter-century, and well beyond then even) was divorced of notions about assimilation as the key theme in his work. Many egregious elements of boarding-school life remained while he held office, and for years afterward, but when investigated in light of a slow pace of systemic reform tied to ultimate Indian goals, Robinson truly did help jump-start a series of engines for change that are remarkable.

Take, again, for example, the enrollment issue. When he took charge of the school the numbers were in serious decline and Haskell's reputation had been blackened in such a way as to inspire little faith these could soon be boosted to earlier levels without yeoman workmanship. This was the task he set himself to above all, which required close attention to the needs and aims of Indian children, their parents, and tribal elders who had the final say in this arena. While enrollment was down, Haskell still had 27 Indian nations represented, and therefore no shortage of agencies from which to apply for more pupils.

Yet simply going to the reservations as the immediate course of action (which he initially did attempt), Robinson came to realize, would bear little lasting fruit without first fostering a new image for the school that would appeal to both potential students and their parents or guardians. By the time of his departure from Haskell at the end of 1888, nearly 400 students regularly attended there, actually exceeding the capacity of the buildings, and this despite continued high rates of disease and death among the student body.⁵² What had he done to help evoke such change and to rekindle Indian faith in so short a time?

Probably the most common fear that Indians had voiced about Haskell since Marvin had left the school was the harsh discipline that had taken root there. In former agent Williams' letter to the Cheyennes and Arapahos of Darlington, Oklahoma (itself prompted by Robinson's discussions with Indian Commissioner John D.C. Atkins as to how best to set a new tone for Haskell and win back Indians through the words of trusted allies), he addressed the issue most bluntly:

when Dr. Marvin resigned another man was chosen, Col. Grabowskii. I did not ask you to send your children to him for the reason that I did not believe him to be a proper person to have charge of them. The 'grand' Col. is gone. I am glad that I can to day (sic) unhesitatingly advise and urge you to give your children to the man who shall present this letter to you. Governor Robinson, your friends here are well acquainted with him. Know that he is thoroughly competent and the Indians' friend. You will know from the appearance of the man that you can trust your children with him, that he will be a father to them and will make the best use of the authority and means at his disposal given by the Government for the benefit and advancement of your children⁵³

Such testimonials from those whom native peoples already (apparently) held in esteem would go a long way, but actions spoke even louder. One of Robinson's early policy changes was to give students more responsibility in maintaining order on campus, granting them limited autonomy over their own cadet battalions by rank of individual officers, which kept the feared Grabowskii system in place but allowed discipline to be "largely self-enforced," which both students and parents deemed much more acceptable,

⁵² ARCIA, *ibid.*, 321 and 323; ARCIA (1888), 260-261; and n.a., "The Haskell Cemetery," 48; "Vol. I: Clippings, 1885-1938," 7, in KSHS.

⁵³ Williams letter, 11 March 1887.

if increased enrollment figures count for anything. In keeping with the new regulations, infractions occasioned a “court martial” of peers who pronounced sentence on the accused. In addition, Robinson forbade employees from applying corporal punishment or even using abusive language to modify student behavior, a measure meant to assure Haskell would not garner any further reputation for brutality. In doing so he remained sensitive to previous Indian complaints about the school, especially their objections to the use of physical violence as a means to enforce the rules, and showed he recognized their role as central to the success of the school.⁵⁴

The methodology was, in short, ingenious, and highly effective. An early court martial proceeding was typical in its process and resolution: three students, charged in the surviving records only with “their late misdemeanors,” received final administrative clearance for the violation(s?) through the school’s principal, James P. Gorman, to “solicit their pardon, providing they apologize for the offense, and promise to act in a becoming manner for the future.”⁵⁵ This tribunal system allowed the military cast of the school to remain a useful tool for preserving discipline but gave pupils a far greater sense of independence, and was, to a certain extent, a good hands-on lesson in American civics as well via the jury-of-one’s-peer nature of the trial. Robinson, ever the adept politician, encouraged students to write letters home that noted the positive changes going on and that might get some parents to send other children to Lawrence.⁵⁶

At times the new order may have worked only too well. Although Robinson’s innovative handling of disciplinary measures hardly cut out the staff (as Gorman’s required signing off on the court martial just described makes clear), it seemed to bolster student autonomy to grander levels and was the source of some rumblings by white employees. For instance, in late 1887, then-disciplinarian (and later superintendent) H.B. Peairs and teacher E.E. Van Bushkirk complained that student battalion Major

⁵⁴ ARCIA (1887), 321 and 322.

⁵⁵ Student petition to J.P. Gorman, 9 March 1887, CSRC, KSHS.

⁵⁶ ARCIA (1887), 321.

Leonard Tyler had haughtily exceeded his (and their) authority and sought to bring charges of insubordination against him for,

Ordering the battalion to close order before the inspection was completed, and when asked to wait until the inspection was finished before giving the command to close order, said, I am not going to wait on *you*, and then gave the command to close order, thereby ignoring the command of the inspecting officers. When asked to order the battalion back into position for inspection again he left in a dignified manner which was a detriment to the discipline of the boys.⁵⁷

Tyler, a Cheyenne, in fact, came to be one of Robinson's most trusted student representatives in the field, making the case for the kind of education Haskell could provide and persuading others to come there. He was older than most pupils, twenty-three when he first came to Haskell in its inaugural year; after his graduation in January of 1888 he worked tirelessly to assist the superintendent in procuring pupils for his alma mater. Although the Cheyennes had consistently supplied the school with the greatest number of children, there were still many who doubted the wisdom of such an education, and Tyler was instrumental in helping to change their perspective. In the spring of that year he wrote Robinson of his successes: "My meetings with young Indian men are well attend (sic). I have been working out among the Indians as you told me to do."⁵⁸ Haskell chief clerk William Sears echoed the enthusiasm, soon after reporting back that, "This afternoon Tyler and I went out among the camps. We visited Red Wolf and he promised to help us. Talked with many and found all pleased with Haskell." He continued, "All praised it very highly. . . . Geo. Bent is very friendly and promises to help."⁵⁹

The George Bent referred to in Sears's letter was a strong ally to have won over indeed. The half-Indian son of Colonel William Bent (who built an early trading "fort" near present-day La Junta, Colorado, in the 1820s) and Owl Woman, the daughter of a Southern Cheyenne holy man, Bent had borne

⁵⁷ Peairs and Van Bushkirk to Robinson, 26 December 1887. The whole affair sounds relatively minor but obviously represented some affront to the white staff members. The fact it took place the day after Christmas leaves one to speculate as to whether Tyler may have felt entitled to something he hadn't yet received that holiday; he also graduated the following January and perhaps felt little inclination to take orders at that late date. The italics (i.e., underscoring) are in the original. What, if anything, came of the matter is unclear. On Peairs's long affiliation with Haskell, see Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 88 and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 46-47.

⁵⁸ HISR, RG 75, NACPR; and Tyler to Robinson, 3 April 1888, CSRC, KSHS.

⁵⁹ Sears to Robinson, 28 May 1888, CSRC, KSHS.

witness to many of the pivotal events in Cheyenne history, including the Sand Creek Massacre. Although Bent held some bitterness toward the United States due to its Indian policy, he also recognized the importance of education for Cheyenne survival; still, he had only recently complained to Tyler that Indian school officials “took the children away like dogs,” so this softening represented a major coup.⁶⁰ In addition, Tyler’s inroads among the “camp Indians,” including Red Wolf (who had lately visited the school himself), were another indication that Robinson’s policies were gaining ground on the various reservations. Ponca student Frank Eagle was another who helped to proselytize on Robinson’s (and Haskell’s) behalf, for example writing during the summer vacation of the previous year that he had convinced others to return to school with him, stating that “18 children want to come [and] we will start any time if you send the tickets from Ponca to Lawrence.”⁶¹ The use of these student emissaries was savvy, for whom better to make the case for Indian education than those Indians being currently (or just recently) educated at Haskell? They very likely also made convincing advocates, for they could speak directly to what was taking place there and make assurances that were much more credible than white government functionaries or school officials. Thus Robinson had again keyed into the importance of having Indians on board in the education process and this was a strong nod toward the role they must play for Haskell to be a truly successful institution.

Robinson did, in fact, help usher in a new freedom at the school, one that took stock of the Indian voice in this difficult equation, and it was a position that many Native Americans, particularly students, warmed to considerably. Although it would not always hold firm during the first 25 years of Haskell’s existence, this spirit of openness planted a critical seed of change that could not ever be completely suppressed again either. Apparently feeling unconstrained to speak their minds, during Robinson’s tenure pupils began to regularly circulate petitions as “citizens” of the school, questioning basic rules,

⁶⁰ Tyler, “Report of Trip to Cheyenne and Arapahoe Agency” (undated, Spring 1888?), CSRC, KSHS. On Bent, see David Fridtjof Halaas and Andrew E. Masich, *Halfbreed: The Remarkable True Story of George Bent—Caught Between the Worlds of the Indian and the White Man* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2005); and George Hyde, *Life of George Bent: Written from His Letters* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1968), Savoie Lottinville, ed. Bent was also a key informant for Grinnell’s classic *The Fighting Cheyennes* (1915; rpt., North Dighton, MA: JG Press, 1995).

⁶¹ HISR, RG 75, NACPR; and Eagle to Robinson, 8 August 1887, CSRC, KSHS.

procedures, circumstances, and even, sometimes, general policy directions, all good indications that they were beginning to take a quite Progressive interest in operations there and to move toward influencing reform on their own terms.⁶²

Sometimes these were tentative (and somewhat humorous, at least by the current vantage point) steps, asking for slight concessions or minor alterations; at other points they represent student angst or could be poignant in their search for change or answers to questions of pressing import to the young people attending Haskell. Of the former variety, consider this petition that crossed Robinson's desk not long before the Tyler inspection-closing flap and which also concerned the military order of the school:

The undersigned being satisfied that blowing the bugle each morning as at present practiced in the different halls of the boys' dormitory for the purpose of awakening the pupils is unnecessary . . . in addition to the two bells which are regularly sounded, there is generally noise enough in the above named dormitory from 5 until 6 a.m. to awaken the most proficient sluggard in all the land. We would further state that no bugle was required to awaken the students last winter, or the past summer, and we do not see the necessity of it now. That if pupils do not get up, the loss of several morning meals will in all probability touch their mark in such a manner as to cause them to perform their duty . . . While we may seem to be noting a rather insignificant matter, and this petition may appear out of place to one contemplating the call to arms at a safe distance, yet to those who are compelled to listen to the disagreeable trumpeting at short range it is of some importance and with all due respect to every one concerned your petitioners wish [to] respectfully request that you have the nuisance abated.⁶³

The petition bore the signature of seven students, both boys and girls. Clearly they were exasperated at the cacophony that sounded each morning without the additional reveille call, but they also edged toward the attempted eradication of a bothersome (and to them unnecessary) aspect of the military drills yet pervading campus. That they felt comfortable in asking for its end was a sure sign that their voice counted for something, although the record does not reveal whether they had the request honored. It is also notable that they remark upon the consequences of oversleeping (i.e., repeated missing of breakfast)

⁶² For use of the term "citizen," see for example, Student petition to Robinson, 29 October 1888, CSRC, KSHS.

⁶³ Student petition to Robinson, 4 December 1887, CSRC, KSHS.

as sufficient motivation to soon roust even the most recalcitrant goldbricker, some evidence that they saw a much lighter course of punishment as the rule of the day under Robinson's watch. This was generally the case, too: the court martial of student Ben Harrison, for example, for having "deserted without any cause or reason," and which would have likely ended in some severe recourse under Grabowski, now only resulted in extra work duties for the offender.⁶⁴

Even if government officials viewed the more relaxed atmosphere at Haskell in this period as a temporary measure resorted to in order to save the school (one could argue that it was, in fact, as later administrators and their rules were not so forgiving, nor the environment always so relatively free), the die was still cast in terms of opening a critical door for allowing the Indian voice to emerge at Haskell. Robinson's tenure set a tone, therefore, that nurtured Progressive reform there, both his own and that of students (which, in turn, probably reflected the larger concerns of their parents, elders, and leaders). This time frame, then, truly helped establish Haskell as a place where Native Americans could, and did, continue to build upon a foundation of an imposed education that yet might be flexible enough to allow achievement of their own ends, albeit in a limited, gradual way.

Other student petitions were of a far more serious nature, adding credence to this last idea, for in seeking redress or explanation of deeper problems Indians felt a certain comfort (amidst what was a very confusing and assaulting situation, culturally speaking) to pursue answers tied to ultimate goals they had for future improvements, both of the school and their place in American society. As mentioned earlier, one noteworthy petition came from a group of boys who pressed for the right to hold dances. After Principal Gorman had earlier stopped several boys from doing so, six signatories made the appeal "allowing us to have dances. After study hours it only adds one more amusement and a pleasure," they opined.⁶⁵ While the record does not make known what type of dancing (i.e., Western or traditional) they

⁶⁴ Proceedings of student court martial, 10 April 1888, CSRC, KSHS.

⁶⁵ Student petition to Robinson, 5 January 1888, CSRC, KSHS. Of some interest, see Ellis, "We Don't Want Your Rations, We Want This Dance": The Changing Use of Song and Dance on the Southern Plains," *WHQ*, 30 (Summer 1999), 133-154. It isn't clear what the immediate administrative response to this request was, but dancing between

had in mind, the freedom to ask for such a concession from staff goes a long way toward illuminating the environment Robinson, along with students, had created at the school. In a particularly poignant example, students made clear to Robinson their “desire to know what is the cause of so many deaths amongst us,” clearly signaling their concern over a continued problem at the school.⁶⁶ Seventeen children had died during the 1887-1888 school year, all but one during an epidemic of pneumonia and scrofula (a respiratory infection similar to tuberculosis) in the spring, the highest figure for any year during the period surveyed here, but mortality would mar the operations at Haskell during much of its early history.⁶⁷

Yet the gross loss of life did not significantly affect Indian support for the school, either in terms of increased enrollment or by other means of measurement. In February of 1888 a group of six chiefs visited the school and lent their voices to the growing swell of Native American encouragement for the work going on at Haskell. Conformity was their watchword, as they promoted education of their youth as the path of adaptation and survival. As Split Ax, the lone Osage among them (all the rest were Cheyennes) remarked, “Our old customs are being done away with. Now is your chance to learn white people’s ways.” Wolf Face, in a speech interpreted by Leonard Tyler, said, “Haskell is a very good school since the Governor took hold of it. It is now noted among the Indians in the territory. Indians all call him a very good man. You young men, as you receive instruction here, you must not forget you are to help us when you come home.” A Citizen Potawatomi, identified only as a Mr. Grinel, who was also visiting on this occasion, added that students should, “Take my advice and learn all you can” in order to maximize their own futures and those of their tribes.⁶⁸ Southern Cheyenne chief Red Wolf expanded upon their ideas, commenting that “I saw many schools in the east, but none were so good as this, because

partners of the opposite sex remained officially banned at Haskell well into the 20th century. See Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 146-147. Still, complete segregation of the sexes was never totally implemented, even as a goal. See King, “Haskell Institute,” 52.

⁶⁶ Student petition to Robinson, 9 May 1888, CSRC, KSHS. The document was signed by 19 children, including Frank Eagle.

⁶⁷ ARCIA (1888), 261. See also King, “Haskell Institute,” 71; Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 76-78; and n.a., “The Haskell Cemetery,” 48-49.

⁶⁸ LDG, 1 February 1888.

Governor Robinson has taken hold of it in the right way” and that, “To-morrow I go back to my people, and I want to say I will go back with a glad heart, and tell all the Cheyennes what I have seen here in work shops and school rooms.”⁶⁹ Apparently pleased with the direction the school had moved under Robinson, they pledged continued support for Haskell and offered testimony that many Indians saw the wisdom of this education, particularly if ensured they had some hand and stock in the process.

With the reputation of the school and stable enrollment secured by the former governor, during Haskell’s next decade dependence on Native Americans centered largely on promoting the work of the school among students (including prospective ones) and their support networks. Of course, as a manual-labor institution, offering a half-day’s classroom studies matched with another half-day of vocational training (although sometimes this was simply work needed to keep the school running), Haskell had always relied on Indians as the backbone of operations. This would continue to be so under the guidance of the school’s next three superintendents, who also had to prove, and usually for quite different reasons, the worthiness of the assimilation agenda to both natives and the federal government, as well as to outside observers of such schools.⁷⁰

Much of 1889 represented a transitional period under the leadership of interim superintendent O.E. Learnard, the Lawrence attorney and businessman who owned the *Daily Journal* and had sold the original parcel of land to the government for the construction of Haskell.⁷¹ Learnard had accepted the position under protests that his other pursuits kept him far too busy to fully tend to this additional duty (indeed, he did not even pen an annual report for the school that year, instead deferring to Daniel Dorchester, Superintendent of Indian Education, in that regard), and most of the changes taking place during his nine months on the job dealt with infrastructural improvements. Besides repairs and the addition of a new girls’ dormitory during this period, however, he did focus energy on making life more

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 11 February 1888. Although the visit and sentiments came prior to the epidemic, support for the school under Robinson continued even afterwards.

⁷⁰ On increased ties to Lawrence, and the public at large, see, for e.g., Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 143-146; and Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 107-113.

⁷¹ *LDJ*, 8 November 1911; Peterson, *John G. Haskell*, 147.

tolerable for students, especially in terms of health, by eliminating stagnant pools of water and open mud pits on campus, thereby elevating sanitation standards; and, with Dorchester's assistance, seeing to it that the school hospital provided greater comfort to the sick, particularly in terms of better food and drugs made available. As the death rate remained high for the year (ten more students succumbed to the poor conditions at the school during the year beginning in September 1888), these steps went a long ways toward answering Indian concerns about poor treatment of the ill and infirm. The office of chief matron was another new addition. The first to take up the position, Harriet Kelsey Haskell, the widow of school namesake Dudley, had a kindly influence on the pupils, perhaps making the pull of homesickness less onerous.⁷²

With the arrival of Charles F. Meserve, of Massachusetts, on 1 October 1889 to replace Learnard, the school entered its first real period of prolonged stability in terms of leadership. Meserve would remain at Haskell nearly five years, and his replacement, J.A. Swett, who would serve from 1894 until 1898, had been Meserve's assistant, so the tenor of life at Haskell remained on a relatively constant footing during these years.⁷³ Although it would not always be so ostensibly democratic as it had been under Robinson, these men clearly gleaned the lesson of listening to Indian voices as a matter of course in conducting their work at Haskell and as the school continued to grow in size and reputation. Again, these features appear to be linked as well, for Indian support in terms of Haskell's enrollment and continued growth was necessarily tied to a willingness to listen to Native American needs and goals for the school. Even if the leadership at Haskell did not always formally recognize the critical role of Indian responses in maintaining smooth operations there, they nevertheless acknowledged it by acting to incorporate native desires into the curriculum or ameliorate conditions that sullied the school's appearance and appeal.

The selection of Meserve to head up the school came at the prompting of his old friend and fellow educator Thomas Jefferson Morgan, who became Indian Commissioner in the administration of Benjamin

⁷² Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 102-106.

⁷³ ARCIA (1890-1898); Ames, "Highlights of Haskell Institute," 8-11, KCSRL. Swett was, apparently, also a relative of Meserve's wife; see King, "Haskell Institute," 75.

Harrison, and both Meserve and Morgan moved to enact new Progressive policy changes at the school and throughout the Indian Department. These included systematic and consistent rules for Indian schools, a push for compulsory education, and a sharp focus on patriotic virtues as a path to citizenship, this last bearing a keen similarity to the attempts toward assimilation being proffered with relation to the growing waves of foreign immigrants who were also to be melted into mainstream American life. In fact, neither man had any real experience with Native Americans before taking up their posts, but brought their ideas of pedagogy and reform to the new positions they occupied with an enthusiasm meant to make successful, lasting inroads among their Indian charges.⁷⁴

One of the main thrusts advanced during this period at Haskell was the idea of introducing a curriculum that would afford instruction beyond a primary education, an important goal because it came at least partly in response to Indian complaints that the school system established for them ill-prepared graduates for life in the outside world. Such changes would be slow to come, were never total (and could be sporadic in application), and did not affect the majority of Haskell students.⁷⁵ Still, for the first time, there was a focus on education itself at the school as a major component of what could be achieved there.

This approach also reflected both the concerns of Morgan and a more general drift among the “friends of the Indian.” The Commissioner firmly believed it the duty of the American public school system to produce model citizens by inculcating all students, whether native or foreign born, into the cherished notions of the nation, and he intended to inspire Indians similarly with his plan for “patriotic citizenship.” The idea was in keeping with the platform recently embraced by the Lake Mohonk Conference of the Friends of the Indian; having helped inspire the Dawes Act and its focus on land as the path to Native American citizenship, the group now put education front and center as the means for

⁷⁴ Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 292, 294-299, and 305, but also see 395-396; and “Vol. I: Clippings, 1885-1938,” 21, KSHS. One of Morgan’s major educational contributions was his book, *Patriotic Citizenship* (New York: American Book Company, 1895). Also see Bodnar, *The Transplanted*, 190-193; Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, 3 and 156-161; and Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indian*, 257-259. The compulsory education goal ended in failure for a variety of reasons. See Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 138-139.

⁷⁵ ARCIA (1890), 290 and 293; Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indian*, 228-229; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 36-37.

promoting assimilation and an understanding of what it meant to be a citizen. Toward this end Morgan and his subordinates promoted an increased Americanization program for Indian students of all ages and the creation of high school departments at select schools, including Haskell.⁷⁶

Although Meserve soon gushed in his hopes that Haskell “shall some day become the great Indian College of the West,” a remarkably prescient prediction given its status today, this was far from true, or even within reach, at the time.⁷⁷ Morgan, too, had sought to develop the school into a crowning point for Indian education where older children matriculated from lower grades at various reservation schools, but such ideas were slow to take hold and did not fully develop during either man’s tenures. In 1892, Fourth District Indian Education Supervisor John W. Richardson wrote of key boarding institutions that, “We hear them often spoken of as ‘Haskell College,’ ‘Carlisle University,’ and the like,” but noted also, “When it is remembered that the course in mental development in these schools is very much limited, not extending beyond the grammar grade, for the most part, a modified opinion of these schools will be formed.”⁷⁸ Indeed, many in the Indian Department (and elsewhere) saw the wisdom of taking children away from the reservations at very young ages in order to remove them from the perceived harmful influences of home life, and thus continued to admit students as young as four into kindergarten programs, including the one at Haskell, until new government rules officially banned the practice in 1909. Even Haskell’s much vaunted high-school program did not become a reality until years later, in 1921.⁷⁹ In the meantime, for most Haskell students, the manual-labor regimen, limited educational opportunities, and a rather narrow assimilation agenda held the day.

On the other hand, there were noteworthy improvements, some of which directly spoke to Indian goals and desires for the school. Again, many of the changes were infrastructural, but these included the

⁷⁶ ARCIA, *ibid.*, 790; Burgess, “We’ll Discuss it at Mohonk,” 19; Gibson, *American Indian*, 493-494; Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 4-5 and 20-21; and Prucha, *ibid.*, 221, 229, 231, and 257-258, and *American Indian Policy*, 292-293 and 300-303.

⁷⁷ ARCIA, *ibid.*, 293.

⁷⁸ ARCIA (1892, Vol. II), 642. The Fourth District included Haskell, as well as some other schools in the region.

⁷⁹ ARCIA (1890), 290; Robinson, “Assimilation, Ambivalence, and Resistance,” 43; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 36-37 and 40.

addition of new shops, among them one for sewing, indicating the growing number of girls attending Haskell, and another for harness making; and again, students did much of the work of making these changes possible, which speaks to both the reliance of the school on their labor and the fact that pupils had a literal hand in determining future direction for training, however limited it might be.⁸⁰ In August of 1894 incoming superintendent Swett could report that “The thirty-eight buildings comprising the institute are all in an excellent state of repair, and, beyond the ordinary care and occasional job work, need cost but little for years to come,” given that a permanent Indian labor force helped keep expenses low.⁸¹

Still, there were some substantive curricular changes that would be ushered in on Swett’s watch that did make Haskell rather unique and offered an appeal to Indians (and built on the work of former officials like Morgan and Meserve) who had called for more advanced courses of study at the institute. These were, of course, the teaching (or Normal) and business (or Commercial) departments that opened at the school in 1894 and 1895, respectively, under the auspices of an Indian Department headed by Morgan’s replacement, Daniel M. Browning. For the first time, Haskell allowed some students to take part in an experimental program that could help them to make their way in the world at large and actually began to make good on the promise of putting them on the path to a brighter future (and ideally first-class citizenship), at least as the definition stood within the assimilation model; not surprisingly, the courses attracted a number of Indian scholars eager to make use of the new knowledge and were highly successful in their first few years of operation.⁸²

The school as a whole also grew steadily as the twentieth century loomed, although a number of key problems remained. When Meserve had taken charge of the institute in 1889, enrollment stood at 425; by the time Swett stepped into his position the study body averaged a yearly attendance of 538 and Haskell was second only in size and capacity to Carlisle, with representatives of 36 different tribes

⁸⁰ ARCIA: *ibid.*, 291, and (1893), 417; *Kansas City Times*, 25 June 1891; and King, “Haskell Institute,” 45.

⁸¹ ARCIA (1894), 381. Also see Blackmar, “Our Indian Problem and How We Are Solving It,” *Review of Reviews*, vol. 5, no. 29 (June 1892), Albert Shaw, ed., 551-561, but esp. 558.

⁸² ARCIA: (1895), 345-346, and (1896), 10-11; Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 96-107; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 28 and 263.

brought together at the school.⁸³ In addition, Indians seemed generally supportive of the school, reaching out in ways they previously had not, or at least not since very early in the institute's history. For instance, in his first annual report to the Commissioner, Superintendent Swett wrote that "It is somewhat remarkable as well as encouraging to note that during the month of June 37 new pupils arrived, unaccompanied by escort and without solicitation."⁸⁴ Obviously administrators had built on the goodwill set in place by Robinson and that continued to earn a measure of Indian trust in providing students to the school. The addition of new and appealing courses at Haskell may have increased its reach as well, along with the ever-widening tribal pools into which school officials waded for applicants.

Even so, there were compelling reasons for Native Americans to be concerned, whether they were students (even potential ones), parents, or others in their support networks. The most pressing concern, certainly for Indians themselves but also for school officials, was the issue of student health. While Meserve had seen, to the best of his ability given limited government funds, to Indian complaints about their children being "neither properly fed, clothed, nor instructed," by providing a sounder diet, more bedding and uniforms, and pushing for more advanced courses of study, and could claim, reliably, that the number of serious infectious outbreaks (such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, and scrofula) had markedly decreased, other illnesses yet ravaged the student body.⁸⁵ Epidemics of chicken pox, measles, and influenza regularly swept through the close quarters of the school, as did bouts of conjunctivitis and acute diarrhea, with such afflictions passing from student to student with ease in the dormitories; as the annual reports testify, poor health was such an endemic problem on campus that nearly 1800 hospital visits are on record for the years 1891 and 1892 alone. Improvements to the school infirmary made conditions for the sick somewhat better but did not ameliorate the chronic problems entirely, and sixteen more pupils

⁸³ *LDJ*, 30 September 1889; *ARCIA*: (1893), 419-420 and 615, and (1894), 381; "Haskell Enrollment," *HIJC*, *DCHS*; King, "Haskell Institute," 48 and 65; "Haskell Institute," in *A Souvenir History of Lawrence*, p.1 this section; and Washburn, ed., *The American Indian and the United States*, 441 and 557.

⁸⁴ *ARCIA* (1894), *ibid.*

⁸⁵ *ARCIA*: quote from (1890), cxxxviii, but see also 289, and (1891, vol. II), 138-153. The allocation of \$175 per student per year remained in place at most government schools during this period of Indian boarding-school history. See, for e.g., *ARCIA* (1893), 615; Blackmar, "Our Indian Problem," 553; King, "Haskell Institute," 73; Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School*, 9; and Washburn, ed., *The American Indian and the United States*, 434 and 441.

lost their lives at Haskell between 1890 and 1894, such losses becoming yet another sad but all-too-common reality there.⁸⁶

Running away, or desertion, whether as a form of concerted resistance to the school or more a matter of blowing off steam for students who, as often as not, sooner or later returned to Haskell, also continued to be a regular feature of school life. Meserve noted, tellingly, that, “on the part of a large majority of the parents a feeling that their children are drifting away from them” created serious “opposition to the schools.”⁸⁷ Such separation anxiety doubtless played a role in the desire of students to return home, if only temporarily. In the same period discussed above, almost 200 left the school without authorization for some period of time, permanently in some cases. Of course, staying at school (or returning there) neither guaranteed that students would take the assimilation agenda to heart and forever find a wedge between themselves and their relatives back home nor that they would necessarily find a place in the larger, outside world, as a good many would, in fact, return to the reservations after life at Haskell.⁸⁸

Yet the tantalizing question remains: why did Indians continue to come to the school? Despite its many negative aspects, and if we are to take at face value the rules which stated parental consent was necessary for attendance, what pull did Haskell have on Indian youth (and their support networks, for that matter) that caused the increased growth and relative stability of, and general Indian goodwill toward, the institute? The fact that a decidedly harsh approach to Indian cultural values was the very rationale for the assimilation approach being proffered at Haskell makes our understanding of the dynamics at work doubly convoluted, for why (or how) would Native Americans willingly endure this treatment throughout

⁸⁶ ARCIA: (1890), 291, (1891), *ibid.* and 565, (1893), 674-692, and (1894), 382; King, *ibid.*, 71; and n.a., “The Haskell Cemetery,” 49. One of these deaths was the result of an accidental gunshot wound, but the circumstances of this situation, are, unfortunately, not expanded upon in the records. In general, administrators often tended to blame Indian students themselves for having weak constitutions or coming to school in poor health as the root cause of such high rates of illness and disease. See, for e.g., ARCIA (1891), 72.

⁸⁷ ARCIA (1893), 420.

⁸⁸ King, “Haskell Institute,” 65; and Blackmar, “Our Indian Problem,” 559.

subsequent generations who attended Haskell and other like schools? This is a nettlesome thread of inquiry and one for which only perhaps partial answers are available.

On the one hand, as previously discussed, the creation of the government non-reservation boarding-school phenomenon took place during a time of great change in terms of Indian history as it had existed heretofore, with regard to Indian-white relations, and in the overall development of the nation. For many Native Americans it was clear that the old ways could not fully survive without at least some concession to the realities of a larger, changing world. For different reasons, Indian leaders of various temperaments, including Red Cloud, Red Wolf, George Bent, and Geronimo all saw some greater purpose or need in exposing future generations to white society through means of education, and each encouraged Indian youth to become familiar with these new ways as a path toward continuity through adaptation.⁸⁹

On another hand, school officials at Haskell (and elsewhere) depended on Native Americans to populate, work at, and make a measurable success of their school(s), whether they outwardly recognized that fact or not, thus opening the door, by necessity, to some fluidity and flexibility in what, by most appearances, seemed a rigid regime bent on total destruction of native cultures. In part due to their own cultural blindness, wherein they saw only the value of white/Western standards of behavior, dress, and civility to the detriment of any other paradigm, administrators, bureaucrats, and well-meaning “friends of the Indian” probably often overlooked the extent to which Indian responses to education mattered even while cultivating it. Maybe even more importantly, these non-Indian promoters failed to assess how much an education for assimilation left open to interpretation by native peoples who found ways to cling tenaciously to their own traditions and ideas amidst, and despite, the cultural assault they were undergoing; and therein lay the ability for native cultural survival and renewal. After all, by the time boarding schools became the order of the day, Indians had learned well how to adapt, adopt what was useful, and still hang onto their respective traditions and values in their dealings with outsiders, if sometimes only furtively or sparingly. With the advent of this new system they found similar ways to

⁸⁹ On Geronimo and others, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 248-249.

maneuver in rough waters and quickly realized the schools, and those who operated them, were somewhat hamstrung, precisely due to the level of dependence on native responses and support they required. In this way the reliance on Indians within the education process afforded room for some limited choice, voice, adaptability, and, paradoxically, survival of native cultures.

In addition to these factors, Haskell during this period often had the good fortune, relatively speaking, to exhibit some rather Progressive leadership on the part of administrators and educators which served to work in tandem with the more grassroots Progressive change being fostered by the student body and its support networks, which combined to create an engine of reform, if one whose revolutions moved slowly and in rather gradualist moves. For the purposes of understanding how Indian responses actually influenced the operation of a school like Haskell, it is quite useful to look at the larger picture of these responses (one might even say the larger *response*), because those are the ones to which the functionaries of the system most often reacted, if sometimes even mostly unawares. Because the leadership usually viewed Indian cultures as inferior to white society (no matter how compassionate or Progressive they might have been) and, on top of that, saw such cultures monolithically (rather than for the diversity of traditions and views they in fact represented), they exhibited an ignorance of how those cultural dynamics could come into play within a system geared toward eradication of those very same cultural perspectives. Ironically, this situation could lead to an even greater dependence on Native Americans within the system as the “wards” began to increasingly understand and game the system they found themselves in, leading to a modicum of Indian power, however limited, within this structure, opening the way for renewal and the gradual, eventual accomplishment of Indian Progressive goals for the schools, their future as a people, and cultural survival.

This being said, no mistake should be made in recognizing the difficulties and destructive elements associated with the educational system encapsulated by the early history of Haskell and the assimilationist agenda it promoted. The Indian Progressivism being explored here was a gradual, limited, and hard-won process that took immense time, patience, and sacrifice to accomplish its ends. It may also

be said that it was rarely a concerted or organized effort, but instead an amalgamation of desires, hopes, and wishes for a better future. As the next chapter should make clear, there were many setbacks in the winning of these goals and a multitude of unhappy results that took place along the way to an eventual turning point that allowed for the slow creation of the actual “great Indian College of the West” (as Superintendent Meserve had once spoken of it, albeit in much different terms) that Haskell Indian Nations University represents today.

CHAPTER FIVE

Following the *Leader*: Haskell's Newspaper as a Revealing Source, 1899-1909

We are here to solve the Indian problem. We are here to shatter the theory that the only good Indian is a dead one and to convince the world that the American Indian has a mind to cultivate and a soul to be saved. . . . We are here to aid our people by fitting ourselves to be their servants, and to aid ourselves by learning the great secret of a successful life.¹

--"Why are We Here?" by Elijah Brown, Haskell Normal Department, 1899.

Are we educated? Yes, but how? Can a lame man teach dancing? Ninety-nine out of a hundred of our teachers are lame dancing-masters, and it is lame dancing they teach.²

--Anonymous, "Lame Dancing Masters: An Indian View of Government Schools," 1900.

This study began in 1884 for the obvious reason that it was Haskell Institute's first year of operation, and also to point up that Progressive strains in American life and history do not always neatly fit the widely-accepted contours prescribed to them. It ends, essentially, in 1909 for several reasons. First, this allows a view of the school and its work over the first twenty-five years of its existence. While the quarter-century mark is itself a matter of some convenience as a reference point in reviewing the past, there are further, perhaps more compelling rationales for the employment of this time frame. A second idea to support this approach is the incredible growth of the school during that period, both in terms of its actual student population and the type of courses (as well as extra-curricular activities) being offered there, which seem to well fit the idea of varied Progressive changes afoot generally within the nation. Some of these, including the creation of Normal and Commercial Departments, have been mentioned

¹ *The Indian Leader* (hereafter *TIL*), 1 April, 1899, 1; see also *TIL*, 15 March 1899, 2.

² *Land of Sunshine: A Southern California Magazine*, 12 (May 1900), 356. This periodical ran from 1895-1906, changing its name in 1902 to *Out West: A Magazine of the Old Pacific and the New*. The entire series appeared under the editorship of Charles F. Lummis, who counted the crusade for American Indian rights among his many interests. For more, see Mark Thompson, *American Character: The Curious Life of Charles Fletcher Lummis and the Rediscovery of the Southwest* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001). Lummis vouched for the veracity of the author's identity and findings on Indian education in the 1900 article.

previously; others will be more greatly detailed in this section. Yet another point served in looking at these years is that, while Haskell made great strides in new and rather unique expressions of education for American Indians, there were also some setbacks, notably those geared toward eradicating the more advanced levels of study that had been so hard-won and which represented a real chance for equanimity among its graduates in American society after leaving school.

Finally, in 1909, the Indian Office issued a new edict regarding the age limit for students attending the non-reservation boarding schools; henceforth Haskell and other like schools were to accept no children under fourteen years old without the express consent of the Indian Commissioner. This change, while not always strictly adhered to (many younger students were already enrolled and allowed to stay on and the required permission forgoing the rule was apparently easy to obtain), meant that Haskell began to move away from its beginnings as a school designed to remove Indian youth from their home environments at the earliest possible point for inculcation in a program of assimilation; and the haphazard collecting and grouping together of pupils representing a myriad of ages was, at least nominally, drawing to a close. Despite such appearances, however, and some pressure by those at the school to head in this direction, Haskell was not yet a high-school institution comparable to those for white children, a change that did not occur until 1921, even though it had begun to offer more advanced courses for some of its students.³ Still, even the small, incremental change growing out of this shift is noteworthy and signals the effect of Progressive thinking at work in Indian education.

In addition, and rather remarkably, curricular cuts, especially to those business classes aimed at a higher (or at least non-manual) education came to be restored in time for the celebration of Haskell's twenty-fifth anniversary, in part due to the vast popularity of these offerings among Indians and the reputation this coursework garnered for the school. A good bit of credit for this ought to be given to those Progressives (whether or not they saw or styled themselves that way) connected to the school: students

³ H.B. Peairs to Mary Burnett, 6 August 1909; *TIL*, 23 June 1905, 1 and 4; and 4 September 1908, 4 (see also 11 and 18 September and 2 October 1908); Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 37, 40, and 44.

and their supporters, including tribal leaders, families, and those white “friends of the Indian” who believed firmly in the wisdom of creating a level playing field for all as part of the great American experiment in democracy. Therefore, the last decade or so of this study’s scope provides an exciting and often turbulent historical framework for examination, and which is the focus of this chapter.

Of course, this does not mean that the emerging picture of life at Haskell was an entirely positive one. It is important to remember that the assimilation agenda was still in full swing and would continue to be for decades to come. Even the classes aimed at business or teaching as pursuits for its graduates (maybe especially these) upheld this outlook, seeking to place students in positions quite different than what their parents, or brethren who didn’t attend school, held or might expect from life. Moreover, those who attended Haskell with these loftier goals in mind were always a small sub-set of the general student population there. Most Indian youth at the institute continued to receive a cursory education focused on acquaintance with the “three ‘Rs” supplemented by immersion in some industrial or agricultural work that comprised the other half of each school day.⁴ Although, in fairness, the majority of non-Indian Americans also found employment in similar fields, primarily as farmers and laborers, the manual-trades approach evident at Haskell virtually guaranteed that the bulk of its student body would not rise above a low level of exposure to the world of letters or the bottom classes in society such training presupposed.

As earlier discussion indicates, the Progressive Era was a time of great change and an era full of a multitude of varying ideas about what might best serve the nation, all on a dizzying array of fronts. Also, as is true of other periods in American history, the Progressive age and its reformers were not always in agreement about what should be done to solve the problems facing the country. Furthermore, times of great change are usually attended by reactionary movements meant to counter such evolution, and the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries were no exception. As historian Frederick E. Hoxie has ably demonstrated, this time frame generally encompasses two distinct phases of expression in terms of how

⁴ On this type of curriculum, see, for e.g., Coleman, *American Indian Children at School*, Ch. 6.

government policy related to Indians can be viewed. In the first, corresponding to the last decades of the nineteenth century, there was a great wave of optimism that a quick and easy solution to the perceived “Indian problem” (i.e., what to do with, or about, the remaining indigenous population of the United States) could be affected through assimilation programs such as those in place at Haskell. During the second, in the early part of the following century, this approach gave way to a more guarded vantage point wherein Native Americans would achieve only a kind of secondary citizenship of a type compatible with the segregationist ideology of the day.⁵

His thesis is useful in thinking about the paradoxes of the period but, as with many theories, this one does not completely hold fast and true in every instance, as some of what was happening at Haskell makes apparent. On the one hand, reformers who fought for equality or acceptance in the arena of race (or the perception of it, in the case of American Indians), including W.E.B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells, Zitkala-Sa, and Charles Eastman, operated in a time of greater relative freedom and social mobility for both blacks and Native Americans than their forebears had, but they and others likewise had to confront the ugly realities of prejudice, Jim Crow-ism, whether *de jure* or *de facto*, and the restrictions of “separate but equal” treatment and facilities upheld in the wake of the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. On the other hand, a number of bright spots appear that somewhat confound Hoxie’s ideas. A key example lies in the upper-division coursework being offered at Haskell: while its elimination in the early years of the twentieth century seems to dovetail with his findings, its restoration after a brief hiatus does not.

In other areas, the Hoxie evaluation is similarly thought provoking. One place in which Haskell students began to emerge as social equals, albeit in a limited venue, is competitive athletics. By the latter years of the nineteenth century the school supported a variety of sports programs, whose teams went up against white colleges and organizations, on both the regional and national level, often outshining the

⁵ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*; see esp. Chs. 1, 3, 6, and 7.

supposedly superior race's best players. This situation may be seen comparably to African Americans breaking the race barrier in athletics at about the same the time and even later (witness the boxer Jack Johnson's feats in the early twentieth century or Jackie Robinson's in baseball several decades after), a small but serious crack in the wall of bigotry that helped tear down some of the dividing lines in American society over time. Other extra-curricular activities at Haskell point to Native Americans bootstrapping for themselves in ways that do support the point that much of the work of advancement would have to be done within the confines of a segregated atmosphere but also, in this case, with the assistance and approval of the federal government (sometimes in limiting ways, however).

Another intriguing development to take stock of at the school in this period is the growing awareness and cautious celebration of native history and cultures beginning to supplant the older model of blind fealty to a future that would abandon all ties to the past. This, too, nicely mirrors the growing self-esteem theme found in the work of Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and the pride of heritage apparent in the nationalism espoused by Marcus Garvey in the era of the First World War, although without the near-militancy of the latter's approach.⁶ Of course, it also matches up with the specific Progressive reform impulse already in play at Haskell among many of its students anyway, forming a next logical step in the process of answering Indian needs on their own terms by building tomorrow's dreams with the insight of yesterday's vision and sacrifices, as well as hewing to more general Progressive notions about what education should mean. As historian James Marten notes in his brief survey *Childhood and Child Welfare in the Progressive Era*, "In the early twentieth century—as in the early twenty-first century—schools were expected to do more than simply teach children reading, writing, and arithmetic. They were supposed to train good citizens, impart appropriate values and attitudes, provide safe havens from violent neighborhoods and offer stability and order to children . . . Schools became, in

⁶ Jeansonne with Lührssen, *A Time of Paradox*, 44; Southern, *The Progressive Era and Race*, 154 and 192.

effect, laboratories for a number of Progressive experiments.”⁷ For Indians at or connected to Haskell, the time had come for education there to include a more outright reflective view of their own backgrounds, ethnicities, and duty to one another, long key themes upheld in native cultures but now brought to the fore, albeit with the important caveat that real change to the system would not come overnight or without further struggles, particularly given the type of social (and therefore, to some extent, governmental) opposition Hoxie shows existed concurrently.

In 1915, writing in the SAI’s *Quarterly Journal*, the magazine’s editor, Arthur C. Parker, gave voice to the shift underway at Haskell beginning a decade or more previously. Writing of the necessity for “a new view of the purpose of education,” he lent support both to higher learning and leadership roles for Indians who had a solid understanding and appreciation of their own people’s past and needs for the future, “men and women of its own blood who are able by reasons of their highly-cultivated intellects to understand the plight of their race, the remedies that must be applied, the ultimate destiny of their race, and how to lead to its inheritance.”⁸ By the time his article appeared Haskell was already much in the business of graduating a cadre of well-informed young Indians, supplying a large number for employment in the Indian Service, whom Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa) maintained found their calling there “from a sense of duty” to their people, and where they might “give the kind of help that money could never buy.”⁹

One way to get a bead on the activities afoot at Haskell is through examination of the school’s own newspaper. *The Indian Leader*, published with the subtitle “Devoted to Indian Education,” began monthly publication in early March of 1897, eventually churning out weekly issues holding forth on a

⁷ 106-107.

⁸ Cited in Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 129 and 131. Parker, the part-Seneca anthropologist, also served for a time as the Society’s president; see Hertzberg, 48. The same year, in the following issue, he wrote a scathing indictment of the U.S. government’s role in “Certain Important Elements of the Indian Problem,” essentially chastising it for creating the whole situation in the first place and for feeble attempts to solve it through an unsatisfactory educational system. See Hoxie, *Talking Back to Civilization*, 95-102.

⁹ Cited in Hertzberg, 148. She made the statement in 1916. See also 130-131 for Parker’s like-minded support.

variety of topics.¹⁰ Set to serve a host of functions, the *Leader*, perhaps foremost, offered real training in the printing trade for Indian (male) students, for like Carlisle's *Indian Helper*, started some dozen years prior, the main physical task of turning out the periodical fell to pupils at the institution. As Haskell grew in size and prominence, it also made plain sense to provide a spotlight on what was taking place there for the consideration of students past and present, as well as interested outside parties. Being second in size to the East's Carlisle by the time circulation began, the Haskell paper could shoulder newsworthy items pointing up continuity (and, at times, some counterweight) with Indian educational developments in the West.

While the "grunt" work of publishing fell to Haskellites themselves, the content and character of the *Leader*, certainly in its earliest years, was largely the brainchild of Helen W. Ball, a teacher of English and the school's first librarian.¹¹ As a non-Indian employee of the government, her firm guidance of the paper obviously lent it a strong institutional cast, both in terms of the type of stories published and their particular slant. This was also the case with Carlisle's publication, whose anonymous "Man-on-the-Band-stand" editor (likely Marianna Burgess, the school's superintendent of printing) had the final say in what went into each issue. The bias that went along with the stewardship of that newspaper has led scholars to be suspicious, even dismissive at times, of its value in delineating actual student opinions or insights about the education they received there, although it often featured their words and purported insights regularly.¹² This was also a common occurrence in the Haskell paper, with pupils' thoughts and

¹⁰ The paper started bi-monthly publication by October 1898 and ran weekly (sometimes sporadically, however) beginning on 5 January 1900. The entire run of the newspaper is available for review at either the Haskell Cultural Center and Museum Archives or Tommaney Library, both on the school campus.

¹¹ Susan Zuber-Chall, "Tommaney Library at Haskell Indian Nations University: An Ethnographic Case Study" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Emporia State University, 2007), 43-44. The library was formally created in 1904 where Ball retained her position until she died 20 years later. Supt. Meserve first called for a library in his third annual report (see ARCIA 1892, 665); a reading room, started under Robinson in 1887, containing several hundred volumes by the turn of the century, was in Sequoyah Hall (the name given this multi-purpose building, erected in 1884, during the 1930s). See Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 86; *TIL* June 1898, 1 February 1899, 27 July 1900, 15 August 1902, and 8 May 1903; Granzer, "Education at Haskell Institute," 66; "Haskell Institute," in *A Souvenir History of Lawrence, Kansas, 1898*, n.p., page 3 this section; Thelma D. Haverty, *Buildings on the Haskell Campus: Past and Present* (Lawrence: Haskell Press, 1975), 3 and 47; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 169.

¹² See, for e.g., Jacqueline Fear-Segal, "The Man on the Bandstand at Carlisle Indian Industrial School: What He Reveals about the Children's Experiences," in Trafzer, et al., eds, *Boarding School Blues*, 99-122; and Katanski,

writings (including excerpts from home letters), both without attribution and under individual bylines, making up a significant portion of the contributions one finds in them.

Because the student “voices” contained therein are potentially muffled by an editorial process that, certainly in a number of cases, set out to put the best possible face on the government’s agenda, program, and curriculum at Haskell, use of this data presents a troublesome quandary. On the one hand, here is what appears to be a virtual treasure-trove of primary materials that affords a close look at everyday life in the school, much of it supplied by a generation of students now past the reach of a scholar’s interview questions or techniques. On the other hand, could these glittering remains be merely fool’s gold, pleasing to the uncritical eye but apt to yield little of real worth? After an exhaustive investigation of *The Indian Leader* from its inception through the fall of 1909, it is my considered decision that these early records are, in fact, diamonds in the rough, and if pored over carefully, using the loupe of historical acumen, the lens of time to determine perspective, and the illumination of other, comparative sources, clarity and color can emerge for a judicious weighing in the final analysis. In short, there are some precious stones, or gleaming nuggets, which shine out brightly (as well as much more paltry fare) which the modern researcher would be remiss to ignore in evaluating and piecing together the story of student life at Haskell Institute in this period.

To be sure, Haskell’s early newspaper occupied an orientation that often meant to support the government’s mission in assimilating and propagandizing Indian youth. It harped on themes reinforcing class lessons and the instillation of a hard work ethic. The inaugural issue, for instance, featured the first of many (presumably) fictionalized accounts of Indian children raised in the supposed darkness of traditional home lives before being bought under the civilizing influences of the English language, a Western education, and Christianity. In this early story, told partly in the first person and concerned with the upbringing of one Wah-Ku-Tay-Mani, or “Walking Shooter” (who is soon to be transformed into the

Learning to Write “Indian”, Ch. 2. The former author finds much more room for incisiveness in that school’s paper than the latter does.

boy known as Huntington), one especially stressed moral is that “Work is so essential to the spiritual growth of our people,” trotting out familiar platitudes that laziness and paganism reigned among the untutored Indians, the cure for which could be found in assimilation to white ways.¹³ Another article, entitled “Learn a Trade,” printed some two-and-a-half years later, was typical pabulum on the solution of the much-lamented (but infinitely surmountable, such pieces assured) Indian problem.¹⁴ A blurb inserted in a still later edition preached the virtue of patience in achieving future security with this advice:

There is not much hope for us in the field of the world’s work unless we are willing to begin at the bottom and work our way upward slowly and patiently. We must not expect that great success will come to us at once.¹⁵

Other heavily-trod ground included a constant underscoring of patriotism, much in the mold of former Commissioner Morgan’s approach, with short commentaries on American dates or hallmarks ranging from Washington’s Birthday, Decoration (now Memorial) Day, Franchise Day (commemorating passage of the Dawes Act), and the story of Columbus’ voyage to and “discovery” of the “New World” all making notices over a decade’s perusal of the *Leader*.¹⁶ In the last example, one “uncorrected story” (played for humor? cuteness?) by an unnamed girl from the second grade class is noteworthy for the concluding line, which remarks of the Indians the Genoan sailor encountered that, “They were good to Columbus at first and they treated him mean afterward,” leaving open to interpretation whether she had been taught to view Indian reactions to colonialism as a matter of ungrateful wickedness or if she believed the oppressed natives had good reason for their behavior toward the Admiral of the Ocean Seas.¹⁷

Such questioning of the material the Haskell newspaper presents allows for greater latitude in estimating student attitudes and reactions to their lives while at the Institute. At times the articles reveal,

¹³ *TIL*, 6 March 1897, 1. Such features were mainstays of the early copy. See, for e.g., the May and June editions of that same year.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15 September 1899, 4. Nearly identical in spirit was “The Value of a Trade” in the 26 June 1903 issue.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 5 September 1902, 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1 March 1899, 2; 15 May, 1899, 1; 1 June 1899, 2; 27 October 1899, 4; and 12 February 1909, 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 27 October 1899, 4. A good recent work revisiting the violent conquest and attendant legacy of Columbus and other European invaders is Tony Horwitz, *A Voyage Long and Strange: On the Trail of Vikings, Conquistadors, Lost Colonists, and Other Adventurers in Early America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2009), esp. Ch. 3.

for instance, and likely unintentionally, the humdrum monotony and incomplete explanation (or student cognizance) of what the staff intended in some of their teachings or trappings about what American life should mean or represent. The importance of patriotic symbolism could easily be lost in repetitive show-casings that lacked any true impact due to associated drudgery, as one *Indian Leader* article (reprinted verbatim from a report made in *The Topeka Capital* after a visit by one of its writers) makes clear. H.B. Peairs, the longtime Haskell employee who had risen to the superintendent's chair in 1898 (a position he held until 1910, or throughout the remaining time frame of this study, and which he again resumed from 1917 until 1926, in the interim serving as chief Superintendent of Indian Schools) clung to Morgan's patriotic citizenship idea with a tenacity and fervency that, apparently, bordered on the fanatical. The *Capital* journalist's story, which the Haskell broadsheet diligently rebroadcast under the title "How Patriotism is Taught at Haskell," is an excellent example of how the school paper offers some ability for the researcher to read between the official lines of what took place on campus, posing intriguing insights into student life, and is worth quoting at some length.

The reporter's visit occurred barely two years after the cessation of hostilities in the Spanish-American War, a fact which helps to further set the stage for and dramatize the events witnessed at the school on this occasion:

The wave of patriotism that was started when the *Maine* went down in Havana harbor has gathered volume and vigor as it swept over the country, and the result is an aroused interest in the flag . . . The *Capital* correspondent witnessed a devotion to the flag yesterday that had in it much of the pathetic. It was at Haskell Institute, the big Indian Industrial School at Lawrence. The regulations of the Interior department require the flag to float from 9 o'clock to 4 . . . but Superintendent Peairs was not satisfied with this perfunctory performance. He loves the flag, and he wants the 600 boys and girls, of aboriginal blood, the "real" Americans under his charge to love it, too. Every morning at sun-up and every evening at sundown, these 600 pupils gather and salute the flag as it goes up, and as it is lowered. . . . and to the stirring notes of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes," played by the Indian band, the tramp, tramp, tramp of

six hundred pairs of feet turned toward the ellipse around which the Institute buildings are located. . . . At a sign three hundred boys caught as many hats from the same number of heads and held them over their hearts. Then the band broke out with the first strain of “The Star Spangled Banner,” and peeping above the trees, the starry emblem unfolded itself on the soft morning breeze. . . . Again silence for a brief space, and then the band played “America”, while the six hundred boys and girls marched into the great dining room to the bountiful breakfast awaiting them. In the evening . . . the pupils gathered again, to the music of their splendid band, and saw the flag come slowly down . . . showing that “the flag of the stripes and stars” means more to these wards of nation than ever before in their history.¹⁸

After this jingoistic display, all on top of the long day students already had, one may well wonder if it did.

In addition to not having been satisfied with government rules regarding the proper display and what he deemed appropriate affection for the flag, Peairs was a regular contributor to the school paper, writing on his various trips to meetings at Lake Mohonk and additional policy conferences on Indian education; supplying “logical papers” for reprint on topics ranging from “Kindness to Animals” to the need for increased responsibility among reservation Indians to supply students; and providing (sometimes self-congratulatory) commentary on the good work being done at Haskell and other Indian schools.¹⁹ In fact, any serious survey of *The Indian Leader* during his tenure at the Institute makes clear his near-constant presence in almost every aspect of its workings, as he appears at nearly each turn of the page. His deliverance of regular, required (for both students and staff) “Short talks are given on different topics” every Tuesday and Thursday at 12:30 P.M. beginning early in 1905, making “Papa Peairs” an inescapable presence at Haskell.²⁰ Peairs’s longtime connection to Haskell made him well acquainted with successive Native American generations and family legacies at the school, perhaps lending him a

¹⁸ *TIL*, 21 September, 1900, 2 (italicizations are not in the original). On the Peairs association, see Charles A. O’Brien, “The Evolution of Haskell Indian Junior College, 1884-1974” (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1975), 90; Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 46-47; and *TIL*, April 1898; 1 February 1899; 22 February 1907; and 20 October 1926.

¹⁹ See, for e.g., *TIL*, May 1898; 27 October 1899; 2 March and 8 June 1900; 11 September 1903; and 2 and 24 May 1907.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 20 January 1905, 2; and 2 July 1909, 1.

mythic, and certainly magisterial quality; by the time of his (initial) retirement at the dedication of Haskell's football stadium in 1926, his 40 years of service there represented a history so intertwined with Haskell Institute's it was doubtless hard for many to imagine the school without him.²¹

Peairs was far from being the lone featured soloist in the recital by government performers the *Leader* provided a platform, however. Other leading lights in Indian policy and educational work also made up the *dramatis personae* the paper's readers could expect to encounter with some frequency. These included national figures such as Lyman Abbot, a long-time Lake Mohonk Conference attendee and Indian "friend," who allowed articles, such as his treatise on "The Indian Problem" to be reprinted (somewhat regular proceedings from the Mohonk Conferences also constituted a popular subject); other "friends" included the writer and ethnographer George Bird Grinnell and (now former) Senator Henry Dawes, who lent their support to the work of the school. Naturally the pronouncements and policies of Indian Commissioner Francis E. Leupp, who served under President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909), generated interest and made worthy fodder for publication in a government-sanctioned periodical such as this, as did those of his Superintendent of Indian Schools, Estelle Reel; occasionally excerpts from the Commissioner's annual reports were also printed, especially as they related to Haskell itself.²² The paper also saw fit to include inspirational maxims from the President himself, particularly his ideas on "The

²¹*Ibid.*, 20 October 1926. The article appeared under the headline "A Strange White Teacher" with a photo of Peairs as he looked in 1895, before attaining the superintendent's seat. He would return to the helm of Haskell for one final time in the 1930-1931 school year; see O'Brien, "The Evolution of Haskell," 90. In her thesis, Martha Robinson paints Peairs as a rather dictatorial figure, a credible argument given the long shadow he cast there, the power base he built over the years, and the sometimes high-handed manner he exuded; and Vučković notes that accusations of and complaints about harsh punishments of students for minor infractions continued to dog his administration well into the latter stages of his leadership. On this last note, see, for e.g., *Voices from Haskell*, 219-221. Peairs himself had faced charges of breaking a student's leg while disciplinarian, in 1887, a fact I uncovered in research for my M.A. thesis, and which Vučković likewise cites; see Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 88.

²² *TIL*, 6 September 1901, 1 (here Abbot rather brusquely concluded that some Indians would have to suffer, and even die, in the process of acclimating to the new challenges they faced, just as immigrants had); in 1908 he addressed Haskell students in person, urging them to embrace the "square deal" of the Roosevelt Era and do their utmost for each other and their "fellow men" (see *TIL* 10 April 1908). The Grinnell and Dawes testimonials appeared in the 6 February 1903 issue; on Mohonk and other policy issues, see, for e.g., 14 November 1902; 11 December 1903; 23 November 1904, and 6 January 1905. Leupp served during Roosevelt's second administration; his predecessor, a McKinley appointee, was W.A. Jones.

New Citizen”: “he must not merely think, and talk; he must act; he must work,” Roosevelt had said, adding “he must be brave and strong as well as truthful and unselfish.”²³

Such aphorisms as these likely rang truer among Indian students, largely because they spoke to traditional native cultural values as well, than did repeated propaganda the *Leader* put out warning against the dangers and evils of tobacco and alcohol. While a bold headline condemning “Poison in Cigarettes” had, of course, some grounding in fact, student testimonies explaining “Why I Don’t Smoke” or vague suppositions that “Cigarette smoking blunts the whole moral nature” then, as now, probably did little to reach an audience of young people who felt inured to disease and decay at this stage of their lives and many of whom were accustomed to ritual or ceremonial tobacco use in their home lives. Peer pressure or the chance to escape the rigors of daily life at the Institute may also have informed decisions by students to turn to smoking and/or drinking as an expression of freedom in defiance of school rules (or a coping mechanism while away from familiar surroundings) and the steady campaign at Haskell to eradicate the use of such nevertheless (especially at that time) largely socially acceptable vices. Notably, despite evidence of the destructive possibilities of alcohol abuse that some youngsters no doubt had witnessed among their own people or relatives, covert drinking by members of the student body was a problem the administration continually battled, and one in which both sexes were known to indulge.²⁴

None of this preceding drift of exploration regarding *The Indian Leader*’s use as a tool of the bureaucracy should come as any great surprise. It was, after all, throughout this early period, published

²³ *Ibid.*, 28 February 1902, 1. These are but a few among the litany of obligations Roosevelt outlined.

²⁴ Traditional Native American ethics have been discussed at some length in previous chapters but, again, Grinnell’s *When Buffalo Ran*, idyllic as it might be, makes a useful case study for thinking about the nature of values many students probably had ingrained in them even before arriving at Haskell. On the anti-smoking movement at Haskell, see, in the order of those instances cited above, *TIL*, February 1898; 13 July 1900; and March 1898. The paper even employed dark humor at times to discourage drinking, as when it printed the following homily on 3 November 1905: “Will alcohol dissolve sugar?” “It will,” replied Old Soak; “it will dissolve gold, and brick houses, and horses, and happiness, and love, and everything else worth having.” The same page (4) featured a full-length article on how the “The great curse of the Indian is firewater,” entitled “Four Indians and a Keg.” On the prevalence of alcohol and tobacco use at Haskell in the early twentieth century see Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 213-214. Ingestion of peyote was also beginning to creep into the picture as the reach of the Native American Church increased by the mid-1910s (see *ibid.*, 216-217); as a sacrament of the religion its use should be seen primarily as ritualistic but we may speculate that some employed it as a form of escapism as well. Whether alcohol may have been imbibed as an alternative to achieve visionary states is also open to speculation.

at government expense and under the aegis of a white editorship. Additionally, the use of propaganda, whether in terms of inculcation of patriotic values, guidelines for moral behavior, or what comprised dominant social trends, could just as easily be found in the standards and practices adopted during the Progressive Era in most non-Indian schools as well. Textbooks in widespread overall use, including the *McGuffey Eclectic Reader* series, spoke to many of the same ethical, spiritual, and nationalistic mores as what found its way into print in the Haskell newspaper, and the schoolhouse (or room) as a social laboratory (or “settlement”) for change was a popular idea in an age of mass immigration and the general focus on assimilation into Americanism viewed by many as concomitant with the future of the country. Just how much influence this indoctrination had on the student body as a whole at Haskell Institute is not easy to gauge, but with the concentration on standardized, rote memorization of repeated lessons and ideologies, the values being proffered were certainly committed to mind by many, if not always to heart.²⁵

What probably interested students most much more than the loftier philosophical goals of the Indian Department and the school administration was how the curriculum, and by extension the extra-curricular outlets available, affected their own lives and futures. This is a second major trajectory to explore in the records preserved by *The Indian Leader*, and it ideally reveals quite a lot about how students reacted to life at Haskell Institute. In a connective thread to the more overt government agenda present in the newspaper and just previously surveyed, certain aspects of that curriculum that more directly touched the Indian students on an everyday basis they likely accorded greater weight. This could include visits to the school by previous superintendents or ties to local civic, religious, and other instructional individuals or groups. The outcome of both study and leisure while in Lawrence also affected how pupils, and outsiders, saw the school and its mission. Through a process of give and take, students had some say in what came to be viewed as successful (and therefore often lasting) components

²⁵ Elliot J. Gorn, ed., *The McGuffey Readers: Selections from the 1879 Edition* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1998); Lindberg, Stanley W., *The Annotated McGuffey: Selections from the McGuffey Eclectic Readers, 1836-1920* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1976); Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare*, 89-98 and 106-107; and Daniel T. Rodgers, “Socializing Middle-Class Children: Institutions, Fables, and Work Values in Nineteenth-Century America,” in Hiner and Hawkes, eds., *Growing Up In America*, 119-132.

of the educational program in place (or absent), as well as to other activities that shaped their time outside of the classrooms or shops where they spent the majority of their days. It is to this aspect of life at Haskell Institute that we should now then turn, asking several key questions along the way.

First, what was the curriculum and how much did it change or remain the same in these years? Of course the most widely known and constant portion of the training that took place at Haskell (and at other, similar institutions) was the vocational-type instruction given in a number of areas, among them cobbling, carpentry, baking, painting, wagon-making, sewing, domestic arts and sciences, and, front and center, agriculture, the largest department. Such manual trades comprised the original focus of these off-reservation government schools, supplemented with basic classroom studies to prepare Indians for new lives in American society at large. Yet, especially with time, it was this core menu that drew the sharpest fire from critics of the system, including Indians themselves, who complained that such samplings were too limited, restricting future options, or simply inadequate as they were taught, either due to a lack of competence or originality among instructors (the “lame dancing masters” mentioned at the outset of this chapter) or because much of the hands-on application of the work done at school was simply geared to institutional upkeep rather than with an eye toward eventual employment or outside utility. This was certainly the case at Haskell: the large farm crew supplied fresh vegetables and milk from dairy cows for use in the kitchen’s daily preparation of meals for several hundred children; girls in home economics courses put up the excess output, making jams, condiments, and pickled items for later consumption; school uniforms were cut, washed, and mended in-house; and boys repaired fences, whitewashed walls, maintained boilers and wells, and did a whole range of other chores in a model of self-sufficiency that defrayed government expenses but didn’t always translate into later skill sets or future jobs.²⁶

²⁶ See, for e.g., Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 132-135; “Haskell Institute” in *A Souvenir History of Lawrence, Kansas, 1898*; O’Brien, “The Evolution of Haskell,” 26; Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 148; *TIL*, 15 January 1899, 2, and 22 June 1906; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 110 and 112-115. The output of some departments was so large, in fact, that Haskell offered surplus foodstuffs and manufactured items for sale on the open market, further helping support the work of the school.

In addition, at Haskell, a sizable contingent of students remained on campus throughout the year, helping to keep operations running smoothly. Others spent this “vacation” time in the employ of white families in the surrounding countryside or the urban Kansas City area, working as farmhands and domestics in the much-heralded “outing program” that supposedly would afford pupils acquaintance with the world at large, opportunities for some measure of independence, and a practical use for their labors. First initiated at Carlisle, Haskell had begun a fledgling outing system under Governor Robinson but pursued it in earnest by the early 1890s and continued to rely on it throughout the period under study here (and after).²⁷ Superintendent Meserve had lauded it, gushing that “The chief advantage of the outing system is in lessening the expense to the Government of educating a given number of Indian youth” and proposed that “If all the children could be kept away from the reservation and scattered throughout the country it would be a very satisfactory solution to the problem” of what to do with Indians generally.²⁸ He was mute, however, as to what kind of lives, exactly, such menial tasks the employment offered would provide for Native American graduates.

Beside the fact this was funneling Indian young people into a course of second-class citizenship, the system was rife for abuse and many objected to its use altogether. Meserve did seem to recognize that some whites looked upon Haskell students as simply a source of cheap labor (as he did, too), noting, without irony, that “To employ an Indian for what can be gotten out of him does not tend to a very high order of development.”²⁹ One Indian parent who complained about the manual-labor focus of the school gave voice to many native people, both students and their supporters, who questioned if this course of training was less for their own advantage than the government would have them believe. His daughter worked in the school laundry and wrote home about the dreadful toil she experienced there and her desire to return home. He asked of the administrators, “now think if you had a child in like conditions, what

²⁷ Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 157-163; Anderson, *ibid.*, 87-88; HISR, RG 75, Box 6, NACPR; *TIL*, 16 August and 18 October 1907. It appears students did receive some (minimal) remuneration, as a sample contract for 1917 stipulates a wage of \$3.00 per week; it was presumably much less in earlier years.

²⁸ ARCIA (1892, Vol. II), 668.

²⁹ *Ibid.* (1893), 420.

would you do,” adding, “I did not send Her there to be an Irish washerwoman. She is Indian Blood, the more the pity. . . . I cannot stand any more Dear papa come and get me.”³⁰

Thus when Haskell ushered in divisions of study aimed at a more white-collar future in the form of Commercial and Normal courses in the last years of the nineteenth century, the development began to directly answer Indian calls for reform and the need for greater opportunities. Although the military drills and Christian religious instruction persisted, flag-waving and blind allegiance to authority continued to rule the day, student illness and death remained a problem, and most children languished in hot, overcrowded shops and dormitories pursuing trades of dubious value, these programs made Haskell somewhat unique and allowed Native American pupils to embark on new paths that would ideally give them a leg up in the competitive capitalist social framework that such government schools so celebrated. While the new courses reached only a smaller sub-set of the student body (the elite of the school who had risen up through the eight grades below it or completed a comparable education elsewhere and transferred in), the Haskell “Normals” and “Commercials,” as they were known on campus (and so often referred to by these nicknames in *The Indian Leader*), attended classes all day and received instruction in a wide variety of focused areas.³¹

While Haskell’s teaching program was short-lived, in its first incarnation anyway, lasting only ten years (1894-1903; it resumed again in 1921), it was popular, successful, and thorough. A two-year course of study included concentration on algebra, physics, rhetoric, history, and Kindergarten methods for the

³⁰ E. Townsend to Charles Robinson, 2 October, 1888, CSRC, KSHS. Punctuation and capitals in original.

³¹ All of the following citation dates represent issues of *The Indian Leader* (unless otherwise specified) divided by theme. On military drills, see, for e.g., 29 May and 30 June 1902. On religious instruction, see, for e.g., 15 March 1899. On illness and death, see, for e.g., June 1897; 25 July and 17 Oct. 1902; and 6 January and 24 November 1905 (this last contains the obituary of former student Ned Little Warrior who “met inglorious defeat” at the hands of “King Alcohol,” in keeping with the anti-drinking campaign of the school). Some of these deceased students were interred at “the little cemetery” on campus, as so many others before them had been. See also Milk, *Haskell Institute*, esp. 135-140. On the retention of an industrial focus and class outlines for the lower grades, see, for e.g., 13 April and 24 August 1900; 29 March 1901; and 17 and 24 November 1905. The paper, almost from its inception, regularly featured “Normal Notes” and “Commercial Notes,” updating students on progress in these departments; see, for e.g., February, March, June, and 1 November 1898; 25 May 1900; and 29 March 1901; and 15 August 1902. When the business program resumed in 1906 after a hiatus of two years, the moniker “Business Briefs” became the more common designation for developments in print on that front; see, for e.g., 5 October 1906. The Haskell Normal Department would not re-open until 1921 when the Institute became an accredited high school.

incoming class. This was supplemented with training in geometry, psychology, English literature, pedagogical methods, and practice teaching in the second year.³² In welcoming Normal courses to the curriculum Haskell was not alone among Indian schools; Carlisle, Hampton, and the Santa Fe Institute also began similar programs that same year. Yet Haskell was unusual in producing the earliest and highest level of achievement throughout the off-reservation boarding system. In its first year Haskell's Normal class consisted of 4 male and seven female students; it graduated its first seven members in the summer of 1896. Three years later Superintendent of Indian Schools William Hailmann, who had been instrumental in helping to secure these novel offerings, singled out Haskell alone for praise in this area:

Of the twenty-five normal graduates put out by the institution in the three years, fourteen are now acting as teachers, one as principal teacher, one as disciplinarian, one as lumber inspector, two as clerks, one as farmer and dairyman, one as an assistant matron. One has entered the school for kindergarten training, one a high school in a western city, and one the law school of the university.³³

With over two thirds of its graduates entering the arena of education, Haskell Normal students certainly spoke loudly to the desire for increased occupational opportunities among Native Americans and the possibility of reception for them. Most entered the Indian Service, acting as teachers and functionaries in other Indian schools. On the one hand, this may be viewed as an expression of the lack of general acceptance for native peoples in American society at large; on the other it can be read as a signal of devotion on the part of their numbers to help secure a brighter future for their own people. Haskell continued to grow as the twentieth century dawned, with some 700 students attending (representing 60 tribes) by 1902, making it clear that the demand for greater access to education existed, and the Normal

³² *Ibid.*, 1 April 1899 and 22 June 1900; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 94. Practice teachers assisted on site.

³³ Cited in O'Brien, "The Evolution of Haskell," 18-19. See also 1896 Haskell Institute Normal Department Commencement program, HIJC, DCHS; and Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 94-95. Hailmann noted none of the other schools had made nearly the progress witnessed at Haskell. The university mentioned was likely KU.

program continued to be a draw in this regard throughout its short initial life span.³⁴ Businesses courses would have a similar effect. As Haskell Superintendent J.A. Swett noted in his annual report for 1896:

the benefits of a more thorough education and training are being appreciated by Indian people as never before. . . . A commercial department was established at the beginning of the year, and . . . is very popular with the pupils, and gives promise of becoming an important factor in fitting Indian young men and women for usefulness in the business world. . . . Many letters are being received from Indian youth in various parts of the country desiring to enter Haskell. Most of these are from applicants for entry into the higher grades and our commercial and normal departments. . . . There is more willingness on the part of parents for their children to come, and there seems to be a better understanding on the part of the Indians of the desires and purposes of the Government with reference to the education of their children.³⁵

With Haskell at last beginning to answer the desires and purposes of Indians themselves it is small wonder that increased enrollments and friendlier interchanges ensued. A few Haskell graduates who took advantage of the new advanced educational pursuits at the school afford us some additional detail worth discussing to further understand how Indian and government goals for education, while not always at complete loggerheads with one another, could vary in the shading of interpretation over their application and helps put a finer point on the meaning or practicality of what might be achieved through this often arduous process requiring the ultimate sacrifice of children going away to school. One of these

³⁴ On the popularity, prevalence, and acceptance of native employment in the Indian Service, see Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 21. By the close of the period examined here, Haskell had 14 Indian employees, although it does not appear any were full-fledged teachers there; see *TIL*, 16 April 1909. Schools, including Haskell, also continued to grow as this type (i.e., basic, industrial, boarding) of education became a more accepted (almost expected, in many cases) cultural phenomenon among various tribes; see, for e.g., Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 263. The experience was becoming increasingly common, multi-generational in its reach over time, and Haskell was probably no exception as it began to cultivate legacies within families (which also included numerous cases of contemporaneous attendance by siblings, cousins, etc.). On enrollment, see *TIL*, 15 August 1902; also see “Haskell Enrollment,” in HIJC, DCHS.

³⁵ ARCIA (1896), 375 and 377.

was George Bent (“Junior”), the son of that same George Bent who had seen firsthand some of the most horrific examples of Indian-white conflict and was previously so opposed to what a Haskell education represented. The younger Bent entered school there at age nine with that early group of Cheyennes who arrived in the Institute’s first year of operation (although his father took time to warm to the idea of what Haskell might offer, the boy lived with his mother; the parents had separated in 1878 and divorced five years later so the elder Bent had no say). He would attend Haskell intermittently for over a decade, eventually graduating from the Commercial Department in 1897. From there he went on to teach and serve as a disciplinarian and band leader at several Indian schools, including at Tomah, Washington, and Flandreau, South Dakota, before settling into a permanent position closer to his boyhood home as a disciplinarian at the Chilocco Indian School.³⁶ In such capacities he could interact with Indian youth in an environment likely comfortable to him after the long road he’d himself walked as an Indian boarding-school student, ideally bringing a softer and more understanding touch to his job(s) for having done so.

Another intriguing figure is James Vandal, a Sioux who graduated from the Haskell Normal Department in 1898 then entered Kansas University’s Law School, passing the bar a mere two years later. Vandal went on to work as a clerk at the Stewart Indian School in Carson City, Nevada, before returning to fill a similar capacity at his alma mater. He took these posts partly to support himself while also seeking to establish his own law practice but also due to his deep passion and concern for advancing fellow Haskellites and spurring their dreams forward by his example. As a student he had helped found a literary society at the school and called for the creation of an alumni association to keep track of former

³⁶ HISR, RG 75, NACPR; and Halaas and Masich, *Halfbreed*, 300. The younger Bent crops up numerous times in the Haskell paper but the notices are usually short and offer little personal detail. It is unclear, for instance, whether Bent obtained a teaching degree in some other school before becoming a teacher. See, for e.g., *TIL*, July 1897; 22 June and 13 July 1900; 27 May 1904; 3 May 1907; and 12 February 1909. Dr. James Marvin gave the opening invocation at Bent’s commencement (just as he had the year before for the Normal Department); having known one another from Haskell’s formative days it would be wonderful to know what, if anything, the two might have discussed that day although that information is probably lost in the mists of time. A much older James Bent also attended Haskell during some of the years George spent there but their relationship is also an unknown. George Jr.’s mother was Kiowa Woman, who apparently allowed his early entry to Haskell despite any objections by George Sr..

pupils and their accomplishments. His untimely death at age 26 in 1902 of typhoid fever stopped short the ambitions of this remarkable young man who embodied many of the Progressive values of his time.³⁷

A classmate of Vandal's, both in the Institute's Normal program and at KU Law, was Matthew Seattle. Grandson of the legendary Chief Seattle (Sealth), the Puyallup (Duamish) Indian had much in common with both his namesake and the young Sioux man he had known during his time in Kansas. Like Vandal, he believed firmly in the power of a Western education to transform Native Americans and secure their future. Five years prior arriving in Lawrence he had made a speech at his Tacoma, Washington, high school asserting that "Education in the broad sense in which it is here taken and used is the Indians' only salvation. . . . That such a great revolution for this people is possible is becoming more and more evident," he added.³⁸ His open reading of what education meant is telling indeed.

Like his grandfather, Matthew saw the wisdom in both accommodation and retention of key traditional values. Following his graduation from Haskell he briefly returned home before beginning the next phase of his knowledge quest. In another address there he greeted members of the *Leader's* editorial staff in a park overlooking the Puget Sound and spoke to the power of place and the natural world that he believed should yet resonate in the minds of modern Indians and inform their thoughts about what place they had in it. "All these things which are yours to see have been prepared by Nature to welcome you," he began, explaining that "From here you have a view of that beautiful mountain called by the Indian 'TAKOBID,' meaning to him 'near to the Eternal.'" Continuing, he asked his audience to:

allow me say right here that an erroneous idea has possessed the white man, and he has called it "Rainier" in the honor of some almost unknown adventurer. But when you return to your homes and have forgotten those who have figured in this respect, may it ever be remembered that you heard one of the aborigines call that revered mountain by its true name.³⁹

³⁷ *TIL*, July 1897; January and July 1898; 15 and 22 June 1900; 13 September 1901; and 19 December 1902.

³⁸ Cited in *ibid.*, 15 September 1899.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1 August 1899, 2; for more on Matthew Seattle see the May 1898 and 15 March 1899 issues.

The gift of oratory had obviously been another inheritance the young man received from his forebear and wielded with equal weight. His words, when taken in tandem with the actions and insights of Bent and Vandal, offer up a view of Indian Progressivism that Haskell helped nurture, even if their vision of sticking close to the teachings and needs of their own people were at some odds with the hope government and school officials had that they would look beyond the past. In addition, although each of these men could be counted as success stories in the assimilation campaign by virtue of the outward progress that matched well the ideology of taking on the trappings of Western civilization, it is equally true that they responded to the pull of their own roots and traditions in selecting the roads they would traverse. As Haskell Senior Mary Arkeketah would so eloquently and succinctly aver in an article published in *The Indian Leader* during 1906, “The highest duty that every Indian boy and girl should consider is what they owe their people.”⁴⁰ In the above examples it seems clear many kept this message firmly in mind while so far from home, managing to keep their hearts there despite any physical distance.

A second major question to ask about Haskell’s curriculum is how much influence, effect, or sway could students have over what they studied? If the preceding discussion gives any indication, one idea to bear in mind may be that they could at least exert some degree of interpretive spin on what confronted them at school, allowing them the chance to bend the results of their learning to fit personal needs and those of their kin. Also, with regard to what extra-curricular activities they took part in, Haskell students had some measure of autonomy. As many of the topics increasingly cropping up in the school newspaper also make clear, there was an interest in and push to place issues related to Indian heritage more squarely in the limelight at Haskell by the early twentieth century, and students surely had some hand in making this shift away from the older government model calling for outright rejection of such themes. Both the ideas of what leisure pursuits were common (or engaging) to students in this period and their more visible embrace of the past will be discussed presently but first it is necessary to

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 20 March 1906.

point out how, in other ways and areas, control of the school environment was far beyond their immediate ability to change or dictate.

For instance, when a “Progressive experiment,” to again use historian Marten’s turn of the phrase, ended, as it did with the abolition of the Normal Department after a decade in place at Haskell, students and their supporters were unable to achieve any quick resurrection of this, doubtless much to the chagrin of many. The outcry that erupted after the cessation of the Business courses was another matter, although proving that its reinstatement was solely the work of Indian students and their tribal or familial networks is something else again. Certainly they helped the cause and made the case for continuation of the opportunities such classes afforded, but they also enjoyed the assistance of the school administration and those in the Indian Office who had the actual bureaucratic power to make the reappearance of the program possible.

Former Haskell Indian Nations University instructor Theresa Milk has argued in her work examining the school in the late nineteenth century that because the teachers in these more advanced departments were quite accomplished, that is, less “lame dancing masters” than other Indian schools (or even other Haskell departments of the time) had in their employ, the Institute’s upper-division curriculum was more successful and sustainable than elsewhere.⁴¹ While she does have a point inasmuch as Haskell’s devoted staff helped these programs bear far more fruit than other outposts in the federal system, this does not entirely explain their summary cancellation there and the more longstanding discontinuation of Normal courses in comparison to the relative hiatus of business classes. Moreover, it is important to take into consideration the impact students may have had in winning back these latter opportunities.

My own duties as a teacher at Haskell sometimes lead me over to a small building on the southwest part of campus called Blue Eagle Hall. Built just over 50 years ago and dedicated as part of the

⁴¹ Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 95.

school's 75th anniversary celebration, the structure is named for the Native American artist and scholar Acee Blue Eagle, several of whose paintings are part of the school's permanent collection and have graced the walls there. Originally conceived to house the Commercial Department, some business classes still meet there, in addition to other locations. One remnant of its former designation, however, is a display case containing a brief history of the Department, including a number of old, clunky-looking, and now-obsolete adding machines, typewriters, and stenographic devices. A small placard within notes that Haskell's business courses always had the most up-to-date equipment available, being a government-sponsored program devoted to the advancement of its Indian students.⁴²

This assertion should give one pause when considering the outfitting of many shops and work rooms at the Institute, particularly in its earliest days when resources were scarce and much skepticism existed about the experimental nature of the government's new school system for Indians. Although the vagabond Western journalist Charles F. Lummis described Haskell after an 1884 visit as being "generous in size and equipment" (this when it consisted of a single main structure, albeit surrounded by ample farm lands) others remarked on the paltry offerings there, even much later. George A. Boyce first came to work at Haskell in 1938, where he helped formulate and oversee the curriculum, and he later wrote that "the quality of equipment and teaching was unimpressive" at the time. While this was during the Great Depression, his lackluster review indicates the school didn't always measure up to general standards in the field thirty years or more after the period under discussion here. Students in the early twentieth century did have access to a range of mechanized innovations (laundry steam presses—or "manglers," belt-driven saws and sanders, cylinder print copiers, industrial sewing machines, gas ovens, and the like),

⁴² Haverty, *Buildings on the Haskell Campus*, 8-9 and 69-70. The case also has a picture of the late Haverty, a long-time instructor in the Commercial Department. Blue Eagle covers the ground where the old root cellar, used to store vegetables from the school farm, once stood.

but much of the work at the school continued to be cumbersome, difficult, and demanding, often performed in the dim, dusty, and dangerous conditions of shops and outbuildings.⁴³

Two fires occurring within a five-year span testify to this. The first, in the fall of 1902, quickly and completely engulfed a hay barn on the farm and the loss was nearly total, causing \$8,000 in damage and resulting in the loss of 22 horses, farm tools, 100 tons of hay and 1400 bushels of oats stored there (two of the draft team managed to escape). The destruction was so extensive partly because the school's standpipe could not obtain the necessary pressure to combat the blaze. A second conflagration struck the print shop during the summer of 1907, destroying much of *The Indian Leader's* supplies and machinery, including a new press, before the arrival of the Lawrence Fire Department and "a blessed rain" combined to extinguish the flames and prevent it from spreading further. Luckily no casualties resulted and the paper managed to muddle through, rising up from the ashes to report on the incident after a six-week hiatus during July and August. By then Haskell's 700-plus students were spread out across 50 buildings on several hundred acres of land, making the potential for accidents or injuries a very real possibility.⁴⁴

Despite all this, pupils in the new Commercial Department did enjoy relative comfort and modernity in their pursuits. A program that had begun with only five typewriters soon offered instruction in penmanship, stenography, typewriting, book-keeping and business arithmetic, shorthand, and other skills for both males and females. By the turn of the century Haskell boasted the first touch-typing classes in the state of Kansas and even presented preparatory commercial law materials. While the focus of student work remained squarely on assimilation tactics meant to steer Indians away from past associations (George Bent, for example, gave a speech as part of a Commercial oratorical contest entitled

⁴³ Lummis and Boyce cited in Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 149-150 and 154. On available equipment in the early 1900s, see *TIL*, for e.g., 1 July 1899, and June 1906 (Supplemental issue on Course in Woodworking); and "Haskell Institute," in *A Souvenir History of Lawrence, Kansas, 1898*.

⁴⁴ *TIL*, 17 October 1902 and 16 August 1907. See also 15 August 1902 and "Haskell Enrollment," HIJC, DCHS. The cause of the both fires were never fully explained. We can speculate that careless or furtive smoking would be an excellent candidate for igniting the barn's dry tinder. Faulty or overheated machinery may have been to blame in the second incident, as such industrial catastrophes, including the infamous Triangle Fire in New York just four years hence, were not uncommon in the era and due to similar circumstances. On injuries and deaths in this period at Haskell, see Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 208-210.

“The Trident of Success” that could have been delivered by any white student of similar development; his classmate James W. Plake chose as his subject “Exterminate the Indian but Leave the Man,” echoing Pratt’s motto), the new coursework offered these young Native Americans a chance to succeed on their own terms as well, at last beginning to answer the call of Indian Progressives at Haskell and elsewhere. By 1909 the restored business department had established a mock “bank” that taught students how to maintain company financial records and use checking accounts, and the Underwood Typewriter Company regularly hired or helped place Haskell graduates into office and clerical positions nationwide.⁴⁵ Once the worth of each pupil’s “faithfulness and character . . . can be measured in good, solid silver and gold dollars, then will he truly see the advantages which the government is so generously offering him and begin to understand their value”⁴⁶ ran the official line, but Indians were already estimating the outcome of this education via their own goals and ethical formations as well.

As Milk has suggested, the Haskell Commercial Department did enjoy a level of support and competence few other schools possessed. Superintendent Peairs (himself a graduate of the Emporia State Teachers College) stood firmly behind the program even when his peers and superiors in the Indian Office did not, and instructor Clarence E. Birch, who headed up the program throughout the years examined here, wrote that a course of training like this would “better fit the pupils of our public schools for the actual working problems of life.”⁴⁷ No lame dance master, Birch shepherded the business curriculum beginning in 1899 and spurred his pupils to greatness. *The Indian Leader* soon noted that

⁴⁵ *Haskell Indian Nations University: Haskell Looks to the Future to Reclaim a Past* (HINU Self-Study Process Publication, 2008), Section 1, page 5; Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 104-105; *TIL*: 15 February and 15 March 1899; 9 February, 25 May, 8 June, and 13 July 1900; 26 September 1902; and 5 March 1909; and Vučković, *ibid.*, 264. For samples of the machinery in use by the Commercial Department, see *TIL*, August 1906 (Supplemental) and 20 December 1907.

⁴⁶ *TIL*, 1 February 1899, 4.

⁴⁷ Cited in Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 111, but see also 94, 108, and 112. See also Milk, *Haskell Institute*, 98 and 106; and Birch, *Methods of Teaching English* (Lawrence: Haskell Printing Office, 1914) and *John Faithful: Schoolmaster* (New York: The Exposition Press, 1949). Birch apparently meant government Indian schools by the designation “public” here. He had previously worked as an English teacher and principal at Haskell.

“Mr. Birch is entitled to extra credit, and no doubt the students are also, for the excellent showing made, as the writing is much better than the average writing of white students in business colleges.”⁴⁸

The Haskell experiment represented the first opportunity for Indian youth to take business classes anywhere in the nation’s federal boarding system and attracted students right away: from an initial group of seven in 1895, the commercial offerings had drawn in sixty interested students by the time it closed in 1903, denying twenty who had already begun work the chance to complete it when the program was suspended that year. Leupp’s predecessor, W.A. Jones, sternly advised Peairs that “The instruction in Indian schools must be limited to what would correspond with the eighth grade in common schools of the country. Commercial courses, normal courses, etc., have no place in the function of an Indian school.”⁴⁹ In keeping with the Hoxie thesis, the focus at Haskell and other like institutions soon returned solely to the work of its industrial departments, for the time being virtually guaranteeing that such schools would not provide any direct access to white-collar employment upon graduation.⁵⁰

Yet a reprieve came with the reimplementing of the program just three years later. The cause of this turnabout can partly be found in the more forward-looking policies of the Indian Office under Roosevelt’s appointee Francis E. Leupp. There was a practical as well as progressive application behind the decision, as Birch later surmised:

In 1906, the scarcity of clerical help in the Indian service, and the recognition of the efficient work being rendered in various superintendencies and in the Indian Bureau in Washington by the graduates of the Haskell Business Department, led to the reestablishment of this course at Haskell.⁵¹

While the directives that both closed and reopened the course of study flowed from on high, it is important to recognize the lobbying work taking place at Haskell itself in seeking the latter action. Peairs

⁴⁸ 11 May, 1900, 3. The high praise originally came from the New York *Penman’s Art Journal*; see Milk, *ibid.*, 107.

⁴⁹ Cited in Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 94; see also 108.

⁵⁰ See, for e.g., *TIL*, 30 January and 20 March 1903, and 16 January and 3 February 1905.

⁵¹ Cited in Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 109.

had written Commissioner Jones for special permission to extend the life of the program. Rebuffed, he nevertheless allowed the *Leader* to serve as a prospective agent of change (or at least continuity). One key article there proposed letting Haskell students attend similar classes at the Lawrence Business College, thereby keeping open a door to the civil service examination (and other potential future job markets) some Indian graduates had previously entered.⁵² The relatively quick return to the status quo of business course offerings did not necessitate a concentrated follow-up to this novel idea, however.

Staff and students alike reveled in the shift back to the past state of affairs. Birch wrote a lengthy article taking up the entire front page (and part of the last) in the school newspaper entitled “Does the Indian Need Business Education?” which began with the affirmation “Most emphatically yes.” He went on to state that “I do not hesitate to say that the survival of any considerable portion of the Indian race depends upon their aptitude in grasping business problems. I do not believe in throwing them out in the world to exemplify the ‘survival of the fittest,’ but I hope we can make many fit to survive.”⁵³ Pieces earlier that year had updated readers on the successful career of James Plake “in the Indian department in Washington, earning \$1,000 a year” (his brother John, another Haskell alumnus, commanded the same wages in a similar capacity in New Mexico) and foreshadowed Birch’s words by noting how “A practical business training is necessary for all boys and girls who have property to manage.” Continuing along this line, the editorial cautioned that:

With the land and money controlled by the Indians they especially need to learn business methods in order to protect themselves from unprincipled men, who take advantage of ignorance in others to reap a rich harvest for themselves. Prepare yourselves for your battle with all these things, boys and girls, by a thorough course of training in the up-to-date business department for Indian youth.⁵⁴

⁵² *TIL*, 23 June 1905. See also *ibid.*, 94; and “The Lawrence Business College” in *A Souvenir History of Lawrence, Kansas, 1898*. The proposals debated also included sending Haskell pupils to the Lawrence High School.

⁵³ *TIL*, 14 December 1906, 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 4 and 11 May 1906, 2 and 1, respectively. See also Haskell School Calendar for 1906-1907 (supplemental).

The celebratory mood could be summed up in the announcement by the *Leader* in March 1906, certain “The friends of Haskell and the Indian will rejoice with us that the Business Department has been re-established here.”⁵⁵ While none of these examples contain direct student testimonials they surely were representative of the opinion held by many of them, especially given the disastrous consequences of the Dawes Act, leading to the huge loss of reservation lands, and the encroachment of greedy outsiders who sought to swindle Native Americans out of the mineral rights and wealth they held. Eager to maintain their own affairs, Indian Progressives could point to Haskell as a key partner in securing a better future, and the actual needs and voices (if somewhat muted here) of Indian peoples should not be discounted in speculating upon what helped bring about this restored opportunity.

That being said, most students did not take part in the training these courses gave, at least not during the period being investigated here, and even the reinvigorated Business Department came to be viewed as simply an outgrowth of the earlier manual-labor focus of the school (by bureaucrats anyway). In his survey of Haskell’s first 90 years of operation, Charles O’Brien maintains that “Restoration of the commercial department in 1906 was considered a part of the vocational training program, with business simply an added vocation.”⁵⁶ Still, it was a major step toward conforming to what Indians had all along been aiming for in winning a greater role in the process of their education and must be at least partly viewed as a concession by the government to such goals. Furthermore, and as O’Brien also contends, by about the same period, Haskell was making a break with its past by becoming, however slowly, a place that matched up with not only the developing national trends away from a mostly agricultural economy but also the courses of study to be found in the standardized, Progressive educational curricula of Kansas and other states.⁵⁷

Another critical idea to bear in mind is that Native American desires and governmental policy had always worked in tandem, if not always complete agreement, at Haskell, as earlier discussion ought to

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 13 April 1906, 2. See also 10 July 1908.

⁵⁶ “The Evolution of Haskell,” 21.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

indicate. The school, after all, relied on Indians to provide the large student body (especially with the steadily decreasing allowance of coercive tactics, little oversight of student ages, and funneling mechanisms allowing quick and easy transfers from other institutions). Haskell Institute's continued growth during this period is a useful marker in determining whether natives themselves saw the policy changes and education there as, at least in some measure, agreeable and successful. By 1909, marking the close of the twenty-five year span being investigated, 5,315 pupils had passed through Haskell's halls; and although less than 400 made it all the way to graduation, clearly there was something, including the existence of advanced training, in the experience that rose above those dreadful aspects of Indian boarding schools now widely illuminated and more commonly recognized or understood.⁵⁸

The increase in Haskell's female population can serve as an example in this regard. Indian schools had long sought greater representation of girls due the perception by outsiders that they were condemned to a life of servitude and drudgery in traditional environments. By the dawn of the Progressive age there was a more general push to educate women in the United States as a means to provide more equal footing with men and further democratize the nation. Indian parents and tribes were slow to respond to the call for sending girls away from home in great numbers, particularly in the early years, perhaps due to fears of abuse but also perhaps due to the type of education being proffered. At Haskell and other outposts the delegation of work duties tightly conformed to Western standards, with girls only given positions in the kitchen, laundry, dining halls, sewing rooms, and other places hewing to the so-called "domestic arts and sciences" (later home economics) that Victorian morality dictated as the ultimate sphere of women as homemakers, child-rearers, and help-mates for their husbands and ignoring more open possibilities in native societies. This view of women in the dominant society was, of course,

⁵⁸ "Haskell Enrollment" in HIJC, DCHS.

beginning to change in the Progressive Era with women stepping up to fill universities, political parties, and the new role of “municipal housekeepers” who could influence policy matters in a variety of ways.⁵⁹

As female students became a more visible contingent on the Haskell campus, their numbers roughly in accord with males by the early 1900s, most remained at work pursuing a four-year vocational course in home economics. The large increase in their population, hastened as the boarding-school experience itself became more familiar and less objectionable (especially with the assurance of monitoring by matrons in the dormitories), in fact necessitated the construction of a large Domestic Science Building (named for Indian politician Charles Curtis) in 1902 (it was completed the following year). An avenue for further female advancement was the nursing program at Haskell. At first designed to provide training in the care of the infirm within the confines of home and family, it soon developed into an advanced program in practical nursing that employed them in the school hospital (a new, more modern facility joined the growing campus structures in 1905) and could put them into competition with others on the job market in the health profession after graduation.⁶⁰ In this way, too, then, Progressive trends at Haskell, both among Indians and those charged with their education, began to converge (if not yet fully) and point the way for a stronger commitment by both parties to ensure greater opportunities and change.

A final question to pose in an overview of the Haskell educational experience is this: how much did the extra-curricular activities in which students took part allow them the freedom to express themselves, embrace their own visions of Indian past and future, or have an effect upon the tenor or direction of the school? Pupils attending there in the early twentieth century had a whole host of clubs, committees, teams, and organizations to choose from which could occupy their time spent outside of class and work, many of them initiated, run, and shaped by students themselves (with administrative approval

⁵⁹ Anderson, “An Imperfect Education,” 99-100; Trennert, “Educating Indian Girls,” 271-273, 277, 279-80, and 288; and Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 116-117.

⁶⁰ Haverty, *Buildings on the Haskell Campus*, 10-11 and 54-55; O’Brien, “The Evolution of Haskell,” 28; *TIL*, 29 May and 14 July 1902, and 2 January and 24 April 1903; and Vučković, *ibid.*, 117-118.

and over- sight, of course). A brief look at several of these is informative in coming to grips with the character of school life at Haskell and suggests both key continuity with and departures from the past.

One area where Haskell students could devote leisure hours was in the arts. The school had four literary societies by early 1900, as well as glee, guitar, and mandolin clubs. All of them read, composed, or played written and musical works that conformed to white standards of artistic creativity at the time, although we cannot completely rule out the possibility that their members also incorporated ideas, forms, or interpretations drawn from traditional backgrounds or themes. It is noteworthy that one of the most popular literary groups was called The Montezuma Society, named for the Aztec ruler who met his demise in the wake of Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortes' arrival. In so designating their club Indian students did look to the native past as a source of inspiration. The school band, well-known and highly regarded in the Lawrence area for its abilities, had long been a fixture of the campus music scene. First begun under Governor Robinson's years at Haskell, they had entertained President Cleveland in his Kansas City visit of 1887, played intermittently at Lawrence Opera House functions and regularly at school commencements and other gatherings, and under the stewardship of Dennison Wheelock, "recognized as one of the greatest band directors in the country," according to the school paper, were featured performers at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis.⁶¹ Bandleader Wheelock was an Oneida, former Carlisle student, and not beyond using native music in recitals, but only as a counterpoint to showcase the development and accomplishment of his players in the supposedly more advanced techniques of Western music.⁶²

⁶¹ On the literary and musical groups, see, for e.g., *TIL*, January 1898, 12 January 1900, 5 December 1902, 6 and 20 January 1905, and 29 June 1906. On the Haskell band, see *TIL*, for e.g., June 1898, 1 April and 24 June 1904, and 13 October 1905. The quote is taken from the April 1904 issue. See also Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 86, 96-97, and 145-146; and Vučković, *ibid.*, 147-148. The school had sent students to be observed on display in a model classroom highlighting Indian education in the White City at the 1893 Columbian Exposition as well. See also O'Brien, *ibid.*, 31.

⁶² Wheelock later earned a law degree and sent his daughter, Louise, who had been born while he taught at Haskell, to be educated there; see Vučković, *ibid.*, 140-142 and 248-249. The Haskell band and its leader in fact became well known throughout the country for their performances and talents.

Another consistent component of the assimilationist agenda was the strong presence of the Young Men's and Women's Christian Association chapters at Haskell. These, too, had been established early on (the former in 1891, quickly followed by the latter) and supplemented the drive to propagandize and Christianize Native American students that had been an outgrowth of the missionary zeal long connected to Indian education efforts; and could be witnessed in the school chapel each Sunday morning, among the various denominational meetings at local churches the administration allowed pupils to attend, and even the aphorisms and scriptural passages printed regularly in *The Indian Leader*. Of course, by the twentieth century a great many Indians had already converted to Christianity or adopted certain tenets of it in combination with older belief systems so this aspect of Haskell life was likely viewed as being a quite mundane and typical part of the students' spiritual existence and upbringing, albeit now taking place in much different surroundings or in the company of many more whites than would be found in reservation churches or meeting halls.⁶³ Participation in such services and organizations could be a source of comfort for some, as well as the chance to get away from campus and see the sights of town for a change.

In other ways, however, Haskell students pushed for a break with the indoctrination they received as part of the standard government model that encouraged them to forget their history and heritage. A surprising number of articles or notices appear increasingly in the *Leader* by the first years of the twentieth century detailing or drawing attention to Native American cultures, beliefs, customs, and central figures past and present. Again, it is worth pointing out that Indian students only rarely wrote the stories that featured a byline in the paper, but the prevalence of these pieces dealing with issues of ancestry and traditions must suggest that such ideas were much on their minds, represented topics deemed worthy of general and open discussion, and that a sense of native pride was growing up overtly alongside the assimilation ideology the paper (and school generally) upheld in the main. Since there is little to support any major policy shift that could explain why these explorations were now tolerated, or even possible, in

⁶³ See, for e.g., Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," Ch. 3; *TIL*, 29 March 1901, 17 October 1902, 26 June 1903, 18 November 1904, 6 January and 17 and 24 November 1905, 22 June 1906, and 25 January 1907; and Vučković, *ibid.*, 129-135.

an atmosphere that had previously been so stifling and hostile to the notion of any worthiness discernible in indigenous cultural dynamics, I now submit that they had to have been at least in part inspired by a student thirst (demand being probably too strong a term) for more information about the legacies of their peoples and key values they could derive from these.

In fairness, it probably equally true that Miss Ball and the other white editorial board members were the progenitors of this new direction in what the school newspaper saw fit to print, but, again, I believe, this speaks to the need to answer what was already on the minds of many students to whom the very purpose of the periodical was, after all, devoted. These stories began to crop up cautiously at first, but soon snowballed with time and covered a wide range of themes of interest students had on this front. One early (front-page) article detailed the beauty and intricate workmanship of the traditional Indian flute, whose adornments with animal figures “indicate the reverential respect with which the Indian regards these,” and which “is capable of making sweet music in the air, and would greatly puzzle the white musician should he try to play it,” providing an alternative view of indigenous instruments and compositions than the Haskell band usually afforded.⁶⁴

The author, William Pollock, was a Pawnee who had first come to Haskell in 1884 and made a name for himself both there and afterwards. An accomplished artist, Pollock had created a widely-recognized symbol for the Institute in his paintings of “civilized” (i.e., who appeared assimilated in their look and dress) that graced many of the wagons produced in the school shop. Ten years after arriving he designed the commencement booklet for his graduating class; on the cover is an Indian dressed in buckskin and standing outside his tepee, labeled “past”, while looking forward toward the future Haskell offered, represented by another Native American, this one wearing a suit and placing his voting slip in the ballot box. Pollock then enrolled in the Normal program but left soon after to study art at the State University. He went on to serve under Theodore Roosevelt as part of his “Rough Riders” unit in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, taking part in the storming of San Juan Hill and capture of Santiago

⁶⁴ *TIL*, 1 April 1899, 1.

before his early death from pneumonia at age 27 in the late winter of 1899 after returning home. The lengthy obituary run in *The Indian Leader* included Roosevelt's last words to young William after their mission: "Pollock, you are one of the bravest men in my regiment. I could not wish for a better soldier. I would have liked some more Pawnees like you."⁶⁵

Five years later, Roosevelt visited Lawrence, where a large group of Haskell students accompanied Peairs to the train depot as part of the welcoming party for the new president. While the crowd waited Haskell cadets presented formation drills for the assemblage. His appearance delayed by some 40 minutes, aides hurriedly whisked the president away to a waiting carriage full of state and local luminaries. Upon spotting the Indian children, however, Roosevelt demanded the vehicle's halt and motioned their superintendent to his side. He asked Peairs to convey to

the pupils how pleased he was at the great demonstration they had made and said, 'Tell them also that the finest Indian I ever knew, and in fact one of the noblest men I ever knew, was William Pollock of your school, who was with me in Cuba. I shall never forget him as long as I live.' This message of course made the Haskell girls and boys very happy.⁶⁶

Such high praise and a proven commitment to assimilation may have warranted the inclusion of Pollock's musings on the Indian flute as tribute to a fallen comrade, but this piece was no anomaly. In subsequent issues the school newspaper published a flurry of like-minded stories that revealed how a Haskell education was coming to also include respectful (and often unvarnished) treatment of Indian cultural values as a part of the unofficial curriculum. Sometimes the articles dealt with tribes, such as the Huichol Indians of Mexico or Hoopas of Northern California, who were not represented at Haskell and

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 2, and also Dec. 1897, September 1898, 15 March and 6 October 1899; Anderson, "An Imperfect Education," 125 and 137; ARCIA (1892), 638; Blackmar, "Haskell Institute," 558-559; HISR, RG 75, NACPR. See also Mila Capes Altom, "Students at Haskell Institute from 1884 to 1889" (Lawrence: Haskell Indian Nations University Department of Archives, December 2000). Several months after his death the Indians of Pawnee, Oklahoma, commissioned and placed a monument to Pollock and the other Rough Riders in the local cemetery to mark his accomplishments and gravesite.

⁶⁶ *TIL*, 8 May 1903, 2. Charles Curtis was among the political celebrities in Roosevelt's carriage.

were therefore a bit of a curiosity for consideration; other ones, on the Chippewas for instance, spoke to a familiar group who made up part of the school's constituency. Notices on or excerpts from the work of renowned anthropologists also registered some measure of approval regarding their findings which supported the growing acceptance of cultural relativism in the field. The insights provided by Frank Hamilton Cushing's long association with the Zunis or Alice C. Fletcher of Harvard's Peabody Museum writing on the importance of Indian names were, although generated through the lens of white scholarship, nevertheless hardly the kind of material one would expect to encounter in an Indian school predicated on the denigration and dissolution of Native American languages, beliefs, and heritage.⁶⁷

A similar surprise comes in the discovery of a wealth of data presented on Indian rituals, ceremonies, and lore. Featured explorations in this period highlight the pan-Plains Sun Dance, the religious mysticism and cultural revivalism apparent in the Ghost Dance, and even a traditional tobacco ceremony, this last supplying a rather stark opposing viewpoint to Haskell's strict no-usage policy. Even when slanted to undercut the power of these customs or show the supposed superiority of Christianity by contrast (this was clearest in the treatment of the Ghost Dance phenomenon) their very appearance is evidence of a concerted move away from the previous focus on only looking forward, never backward, and must be seen as a sign of some softening of the strictures governing complete ignorance or avoidance of such topics. Moreover it is logical to ask whether students and their supporters helped break down this wall of silence through a steady application of quiet pressure to do so via their own desires or requests to gain more information about specific tribal backgrounds, past relationships with outsiders, or developing streams of thought beginning to reassess Indian cultural norms and values.⁶⁸

Still greater shocks abound and emanate from these pages. In later years students themselves contributed stories underscoring traditional ethics or cosmological beliefs without editorial comments inserted to minimize their power or legitimacy. Anna Carlow of the Sixth Grade Class related the fate of

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 June 1900, 7 November 1902, 27 May and 30 September 1904, and 25 January 1907.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 9 March and 11 May 1900.

a young girl set on disobedience to her mother who fell captive to a supernatural being, the “two-faced man” known to kidnap those who acted badly and hold them in his underwater lair. While the tale was a cautionary one and could be interpreted as reinforcement for the need to obey authority, it also spoke to native morals and gave Indian readers a sense of innate worth derived from their own oral sources and proving learning might be accomplished on more personal terms through attention paid to past wisdom. This could also shine through in the short reckoning given space in the paper on “The Origin of the Sun” which neither disputed nor supported alternative versions of the creation of this life-giving force but merely offered up an ancient indigenous perspective for equal consideration.⁶⁹

Along the same lines, it is almost miraculous to come across news of Haskell’s first powwow, in 1898! The Normal and Commercial Departments jointly sponsored this festivity for 19 November that year. Their invitation “sounded very interesting and mysterious, so no one sent regrets. The feast was held—a very appetizing one—there was a certain amount of noise such as is made by singing, talking and laughing and much lively marching instead of dancing. No conjurer appeared with his magic arts but all were charmed with the program,” the *Leader* reported. While the remarks support a certain level of prejudice and misunderstanding over what such a gathering was all about, the very fact the administration allowed this party to be held, especially under the designation chosen, is testimony to the ability of students to make known their desire for connections to the familiar and to exert force enough to win them. It should be noted, however, that this “powwow” was quite different in character from those most pupils would have attended at home (or as conducted today) as no traditional songs, dances, or costumes were in evidence; but the spirit of the day’s events certainly seems in keeping with older (and doubtless comforting) forms. The celebration included an address by the eloquent Matthew Seattle, a choral quartet of Edward Valley, Allen Morrison, Seattle, and George Bent performing “Ba-Black Sheep,” flute recitals by Morrison and Pearl Mayes, and a mandolin solo by Prudence Eagle Feather, among other attractions.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 12 April 1907 and 1 May 1908. This last issue, dated 10 April 1908 was, apparently, in chronological error.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1 December 1898, 2.

This type of convocation further supports an increasingly-held (and –voiced) notion on the Haskell campus that Indian capabilities were, in some measure, consistent with and framed by associations with the past. In the paper’s inaugural issue, the biased opinion “that Indians are not given to writing poetry” is then quickly belied by the happy report that “some of the advanced pupils seem ready to express their thoughts in rhyme at almost any time.” Of course, the angle taken by the writer here reveals as much about what non-Indians considered to constitute poetic skills. The blurb from this issue goes on to tell how two students “have compiled very neat little volumes containing their choicest efforts. These books are quite complete, including even the glossary in the back.”⁷¹ (The presence of an appended guide tempts one to speculate if the poems contained some traditional terminology requiring elucidation.) One of these chapbooks, written under the pseudonym “Johnnie,” was actually the work of George Shawnee, a Senior in the Normal class who had a long association with Haskell for many years to follow. Advertisements from local businesses, which began to regularly take up space in the back pages of the *Leader* beginning in the fall of 1899 soon hawked “Genuine Indian Pottery” among myriad other services and sundries.⁷² A cynical reading could lead one to see this as simply a case of merchandizing to an untapped demographic but it is possible to also view it as yet more freedom of indigenous expression at the school.

Another key example can be seen in the item on “Indian Woman’s Rights” that was much in keeping with the suffrage crusade of the age and almost stupefying in its tone of fairness and accuracy by comparison to earlier attitudes expressed on the subject. “The rights and privileges of an Indian woman,” said a man who has lived much of in Arizona and New Mexico, ‘compare very favorably with those of her more civilized sisters, notwithstanding the general impression to the contrary,’” the article began. The loaded word choice “civilized” aside, the detail which followed explaining how Indian women enjoyed property rights, “both real and personal,” including the fruits of agricultural harvests, was instructional

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 6 March 1897, 4.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 5 September 1902. See also 21 August 1908, giving notice of “The Indian Store.” Whether this was located at Haskell or elsewhere in Lawrence, and what exactly it offered, is another tantalizing unknown.

(and likely inspirational) both as ballast to old stereotypes of native females as drudges and in terms of what freedoms they possessed still mostly denied their white counterparts.⁷³ That Haskell students could add Sacagawea Day (6 July) to the long list of patriotic celebrations already on their calendar further points up how far the school had come with regard to nods accorded the role native people played in the country's past (and presumably would in its future). The updates carried occasionally on the work and writings (and, in the case of Charles Eastman, health) of Red Progressives including Zitkala-Sa and Carlos Montezuma is additional proof of the inroads such reform efforts were making.⁷⁴

In the June of 1898 James Vandal, in his capacity as student president of the Normal department, made a call to action of his own by seeking the foundation of an alumni association to keep track of pupils past and present, their accomplishments, and future developments at the school. Then-Principal Peairs helped outline the responsibilities of the new organization and George Shawnee (a member of the Indian tribe sharing his surname) became the first chairman of this committee. A decade later, when the Haskell Alumni Association began circulating invitations, correspondence, and other materials in preparation for the approaching "Quarter Centennial and Reunion of Graduates, Former Students, and Employees," Peairs had assumed chairmanship duties but Shawnee remained connected to the efforts of the group as its Treasurer.⁷⁵ Even though the administration obviously maintained a strong presence in student affairs (even of those who were long gone from campus) the work of Indian people to foster pride in themselves as members of the Haskell community (and the Native American one generally) is noteworthy for what it says about their perspective on what they had achieved both during their school days and after. The early creation of an alumni association also suggests how important they believed their work there was in providing service and guidance to their people, and that it would continue to be, signaling their commitment to keep connections alive and improve and influence Indian education for years to come.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 10 August 1900, 1.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 12 and 19 January 1900, 30 May 1902, and 14 April 1904.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, July 1898, 3, and 1 May 1908 (aka 10 April 1908); and HISR, RG 75, Box 8, NACPR. Birch was the first Secretary, Ball its Corresponding Secretary, and Nellie Plake, one of many members of this family to attend Haskell, was Assistant Reporter for the steering committee.

Without question the most popular, widespread, and celebrated extra-curricular activity at Haskell in its earliest days (and that continues to be vibrant even now) was athletics. The Institute's sports teams awed spectators; inspired Indians to be proud of their physical prowess and competitive capabilities, which helped spur them to break not only records on the playing fields but in other ways as well; and provided an outlet for traditionalism administrators likely never anticipated when introducing students to the "all-American" games of baseball, football, and basketball. Any consultation of *The Indian Leader* in its formative period quickly makes apparent the huge role these programs held in the lives of students, and one can hardly peruse any single installment of the newspaper without coming across some mention of these sports and their players.

In the basement of Lawrence's Eldridge Hotel (a key target of the 1856 "Sack" of the city by pro-slavery forces under Sheriff Sam Jones) is the "Big Six Room." Conceived in the late 1920s, its design includes colorful plaster reliefs of the mascots comprising the athletic conference for which it is named (the University of Kansas, Iowa State, Kansas Agricultural College—now the Kansas State University, and the Universities of Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma). In addition to these one finds the emblematic face of the Haskell Indians joining the colleges represented there. By the early twentieth century, the Institute's football club went up against these teams (and many other colleges) numerous times; considered a "powerhouse" force to be reckoned with, William Hutson, who refurbished the hotel and was a huge sports fan, wanted to make certain Haskell enjoyed equal partnership with their athletic peers and rivals. Of course, while not a college itself, Haskell's various sports squads emerged as a visible symbol of the school's work and Indian abilities through their regular play against (and often total annihilation of) white collegiate organizations of the day.⁷⁶

During the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth -centuries Haskell began to develop a focus on sports that was shared by the Carlisle administration (and those of other Indian schools) as a means of

⁷⁶ "A Little History," from menu of Big 6 Sports Club, circa 1993; Keith A. Sculle, "'The New Carlisle of the West': Haskell Institute and Big-Time Sports, 1920-1932," in *KH*, vol. 17, no 3 (Autumn 1994), 192-208; and Warren, "'All Indian Trails Lead to Lawrence,'" 7-9. George Shawnee was a key booster of Haskell athletics.

further inculcating Indians into the life (including its leisure side) of the American mainstream. Team sports also offered an outlet for boys whose anger and confusion over placement in an environment far from home could be channeled into a positive force; furthermore, such activities would, many believed, instill a character-building quality, physical fitness, and sense of belonging to students. Baseball, that quintessential American pastime, was the first to come to Haskell, in 1890. A tireless promoter of Indian citizenship, Superintendent Meserve saw the competitive nature of athletic meets as way to highlight Indian achievements in a way that could be both entertaining for observers and perhaps have some pacifying effects on students. In his first annual report he noted how Kansas Governor Lyman U. Humphrey and a group of visiting state officials “were surprised at the music and skill of the baseball nine” (the Haskell band being linked to sporting events), also mentioning that “during the visit and frequently since, in public and in private, [they] have spoken in high terms of what they saw” while on campus.⁷⁷ A few months earlier, the *Topeka Daily Capital* spoke in glowing terms of the team’s skill, saying, “The school also has a base ball club, which has defeated every club that has met it. The pitcher, Gus Mackey, throws a curve that is equal to the best in the country.”⁷⁸ The lengthy article, entitled “Waifs of the Forest,” while yet exhibiting much bias against Native Americans, also proved that Indians were making some limited inroads into the minds of outsiders as worthy of equal footing and treatment in society. In this respect Haskell sports can be counted as a Progressive reform effort as well.

Before long the baseball team was competing against the University of Kansas, the Olathe School for the Deaf, Missouri’s William Jewell College, and others, on occasion even playing a unit composed of school employees. That Indians were being matched up against whites, and often coming out on top, suggests that sports could offer a breakthrough vehicle for progress toward more general acceptance, via a path for which students were responsible and had some control over, generating a growing pride among them and their supporters which had a long-range impact indeed. It could not only underscore their

⁷⁷ ARCIA (1890), 293. Also see Adams, “More Than a Game: The Carlisle Indians Take to the Gridiron, 1893-1917.” *WHQ* 32 (Spring 2001), 25-53; and Sally Jenkins, *The Real All Americans: The Team that Changed a Game, a People, a Nation* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), esp. 101-102.

⁷⁸ 16 March 1890.

achievements in these areas but others as well. In addition, team sports play reflected the old tensions of warfare and conflict between natives and newcomers and provided an acceptable embrace of the warrior tradition so central to many tribes. By the start of the 1898 school year, in fact, the *Leader* had begun to apply the title of “warriors” to the Haskell Indians’ teams in a nod to the past arising from how Indian students viewed these organizations, ironically created by the administration itself.⁷⁹

Football, then as now, was the most vaunted sport on the Haskell campus. By the late 1890s The Indians were winning contests against their Big Six competitors on a regular basis, as well as Washington University (located in St. Louis) and other far-flung schools. The club was cheered forward by its own “football yell,” invented by students. Although the school newspaper printed its content for the readership (“Rah! Rah! Rah! Rye! Ro! Rel! H-a-s-k-e-l-l—Haskell!) it also explained that the sound of the chant at games was “not easily imitated or described.”⁸⁰ (Perhaps, like the Confederate Rebel Yell, one had to hear it firsthand to appreciate its power and enthusiasm.) Haskell’s success on the gridiron invited questionable tactics by opponents on occasion, as when, preceding an 1899 game, “The K.U. team refused to accept any official suggested by the Haskell team, and would not go on the field at all unless the officials were both selected from the list suggested by them.” In addition,

for some unaccountable reason the K.U. men seemed to understand the Haskell signals as soon as given. Handicapped as they were the boys did not play well and at the end of the first half the score was 18 to 0. Soon after the beginning of the second half [Haskell player] Walter Harris was accused of slugging a man whose weight was some 60 pounds more than his own. Harris denied that he had resorted to slugging.

⁷⁹ *TIL*, August 1898. On these early competitions, see also April and June 1897, 11 and 15 June 1900, and 31 January and 5 December 1902. The Olathe institute was, at that time, called the School for the Deaf and Dumb. Schedules and articles detailing contests against other baseball teams were a regular feature in the paper. One 10 August 1906 feature on “The Origin of Baseball” maintained that it was “one of the greatest educational factors of the times.” On the beginnings and popularity of the game during this period, see Harvey Frommer, *Old-Time Baseball: America’s Pastime in the Gilded Age* (Lanham, MD: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2006); and George Vecsey, *Baseball: A History of America’s Favorite Game* (New York: The Modern Library, 2006), esp. Chs. 1-4. On the warrior idea see Adams, *ibid.*, 28-33; and Blackmar, “Haskell Institute,” 559-560. Pictures of Haskell sports teams are included in the Blackmar piece and *A Souvenir History of Lawrence, Kansas, 1898*.

⁸⁰ *TIL*, January and March 1898

The referee at first thought the same but later concluded that he did slug and ordered him from the field. Angered by this injustice the whole team followed Harris and the game was forfeited to K.U.⁸¹

The Haskell team's show of solidarity is testimony to the pan-Indianism being forged at the school and sports was a key arena for the development of this "us against them" mentality, probably particularly so in instances such as just related. Football and other athletic programs helped create a special bond among the various tribal members that pushed them to look past old internecine hostilities and view the reality that they were all in the same boat together, making for greater single-mindedness of purpose in advancing Indian education and equality generally.⁸² Support for Haskell players ran high among the student body as a whole; one extract from a home letter published in the *Leader* summed up the pride and hope the footballers embodied: "No doubt you have heard a great deal of our foot-ball (sic) team and the wonders it intends to create in the West. If you have not, I must tell you that we have one of the strongest teams in our part of the Union, and although they have suffered some terrible defeats, yet we still have faith in them."⁸³

Haskell's fiercest gridiron competitors of this period were the University of Nebraska and the Carlisle Institute, with match-ups against these schools constituting the strongest rivalries (and sometimes invective) detailed in the school press. With their fellow Indian players the mood was more conciliatory, in keeping with the Pan-Indian theme mentioned above. In early 1900 Haskell hosted the Carlisle team on a stop-over during their tour of the Far West and the occasion (at which Dr. Montezuma was also present and delivered a special address) was one marking great fellowship between students from the two largest government boarding institutions, "the two best schools in the United States," according to Indian

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 3 November 1899, 3.

⁸² Along these lines see Adams, "More than a Game," 44; Lars Anderson, *Carlisle vs. Army: Jim Thorpe, Dwight Eisenhower, Pop Warner, and the Forgotten Story of Football's Greatest Battle* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2007), 92; and Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, Part II.

⁸³ *TIL* 3 November 1899, 1. See also Winnie, *Sah-gan-de-Oh*, 53-55.

school Supervisor A.O. Wright.⁸⁴ When Haskell lost a key exhibition game to Carlisle at the 1904 World's Fair, however, by a score of 38-4, it was "a crushing defeat amidst national publicity."⁸⁵ That same fall Haskell once again hoped to prevail against number-one –ranked Nebraska (to whom they had lost a number of games in previous years; this year they would be victorious) and the school paper exhorted the team to "scalp the Huskers," pointing up the seriousness with which The Indians' supporters took the rivalry and its comparison (if rather stereotypically conceived) to past conflict with whites.⁸⁶

While Haskell football squad did not always prevail, the winning season of 1900 did give them their first championship year, and further reason to be proud of Indian people and their achievements, whether on or off the field. In addition, some of the truly great and nationally-recognized football players of the day had been seasoned at Haskell, including Emil Hauser, his brother Peter, Chauncey Archiquette, and the legendary Jim Thorpe. Although Thorpe is best known for his exploits on the Carlisle team later, he had attended Haskell Institute between 1899 and 1902 where he first cut his athletic teeth in the game of "big football." A number of critics decried football as a violent and inappropriate sport for Indian schools and Commissioner John Collier would eventually ban its play at Haskell in 1935 (a decade after the dedication of the huge stadium), but during the early years (and again later) it provided a key form of recreation and renown for the Institute and its students.⁸⁷

Basketball, track-and-field, and even lacrosse (a game with Native American origins) all joined the sports lineup enjoyed by the close of the era being examined here and Haskell teams played and won contests against many of the same competitors they had in baseball and football (with a key basketball

⁸⁴ *TIL*, 12 January 1900, 2; and Anderson, *Carlisle vs. Army*, 93.

⁸⁵ Sculle, "The New Carlisle of the West," 197. See also *TIL* 18 November and 2 December 1904. The latter piece appeared under the headline "How Did It Happen?"

⁸⁶ *TIL*, 11 November 1904, 2. The paper featured bold type here: "This Looks Well: For Four Years Nebraska Has Won the Championship of the Missouri Valley. Haskell Has Been Second Each Year. Haskell is 25 Per Cent Stronger Than Ever Before and Will Scalp the Huskers With Little Difficulty." What made them so cocksure and better than in the past is not explained. On the nature of scalping, see Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, Ch. 2.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 7 December 1900 and 30 October 1926; Anderson, *Carlisle vs. Army*, 83-99; Jenkins, *The Real All Americans*, 107; O'Brien, "The Evolution of Haskell," 20 and 32; Reyhner and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 193; and Sculle, "The New Carlisle of the West," 197.

rivalry added against the “Terrible Swedes” of Lindsborg, Kansas). When “William Jewell’s heretofore invincible basket ball (sic) team went down to defeat of the Haskell Indians” (the basketball squad was also known as the “Haskell Blues”) it began a long winning streak over the next few years that not only served as a cause for celebration but held out the possibility that this avenue of activity was reforming outsider attitudes by changing hearts and minds about prior prejudices toward native peoples.⁸⁸

Randolph H. Mackey, one of the William Jewell players, wrote a long article about his team’s visit to Haskell that gave voice to how a younger generation of whites was coming to view their former battlefield enemies as excellent and worthy opponents in the mock warfare of athletics. He concluded with the hopeful thought that “Certainly there is a strong feeling of friendship existing between the Indians and students of William Jewell, especially between the basketball teams. We like the Indians and we hope and believe they like us.” Surely true social equity was still an ongoing struggle, both in the social laboratory of American society at large and in microcosm at Haskell (and there among both administrators and students at times and also between the sexes); while Mackey mentions girls playing basketball, they were not allowed to participate in other sports programs of the time.⁸⁹

The friendship of other supporters helped advance the work of Haskell in addition to the pride of ancestry and other concessions accrued during the decade or so discussed in this chapter. Past superintendents Dr. James Marvin (who remained a Lawrence fixture), J.A. Swett (who had given up his career in education and owned a grocery store in Chicago), and especially Charles Meserve (who had taken up the presidency of Shaw University in North Carolina), were frequent visitors to the school and avid boosters of the work going on there. With the march of time, of course, the older leadership at Haskell passed into memory, but often remained hallowed figures. Former Governor Robinson had died in 1894 but his indefatigable work for Indian youth was not soon forgotten; nor was the kindness of Dr. Marvin. When he passed away in the summer of 1901 few students were still in attendance at Haskell who would

⁸⁸ *TIL*, 30 January 1903; see also 16 April 1900, 8 May 1903, 13 and 30 March 1906; and 30 October 1908; and Sculle, *ibid.*, 196.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 13 March 1903. See also Vučković, *Voices from Haskell*, 157-163.

remember that first hard year when he had led the school, but many knew him from the sermons, addresses, and other activities that regularly brought him into to campus and into their sphere. Doubtless the presence of these men both helped to ensure students they had fast friends in white society beyond Haskell's arch and also marked the progress they had made for themselves in the ensuing years since the old leadership's departures.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ See, for e.g., *TIL*, July 1897, August 1898, 1 May 1899, 11 and 15 June 1900, 12 July 1901, 29 May and 25 July 1902, and 4 June 1909.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

“See human beings as though they were in an underground cave-like dwelling with its entrance, a long one, open to the light across the whole width of the cave. They are in it from childhood with their legs and necks in bonds so that they are fixed, seeing only in front of them, unable because of the bond to turn their heads all the way around. Their light is from a fire burning far above and behind them. Between the fire and the prisoners there is a road above, along which see a wall, built like the partitions puppet-handlers set in front of the human beings and over which they show the puppets.”¹

--Plato, *The Republic*, Book VII.

Away with violence and compulsion! There is nothing, in my opinion, that is so debasing and stupefying to a noble nature.²

--Michel de Montaigne, “On the Education of Children” (1580)

Over the twenty-five years of Haskell Institute’s history now surveyed I have tried to lay out several important and recurring themes for consideration that are aimed at helping us understand the direction, meaning, and change versus stasis dynamic of Indian education at work in one key example of the federal government’s off-reservation boarding-school system during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth -centuries. One, of course, is the intricate and often opposing layers of reform efforts taking place in the Progressive Era and the place Indian peoples occupied in this appealing but not always easily understood period. Another is the specific role students (and their familial and tribal support networks) played in gradually tempering the all-out cultural assault and biases against them that they initially experienced (and which would continue to be a feature of such programs well beyond the scope of time examined in this study) in the boarding-school milieu. As the years wore on, they increasingly became partners, although in a quite limited sense, with the Haskell administration and, by extension, policy-

¹ Lines 514a-b, *The Republic of Plato*, Translated, with Notes and an Interpretive Essay, by Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1968), 193.

² *Essays*, Translated with an Introduction by J.M. Cohen (1958; *reprt.*, New York: Penguin Books, 1983), 72.

makers whose directives dictated the activities and operations of the school, and in this way helping to frame, on some distinct and discernible levels, what life was like there and could eventually become.

A third major idea suggested in the preceding pages is how much impact these revealed reformers had on the educational process that confronted them and, conversely, the effects that this schooling had on them in the give-and-take nature of the experiment overall. While it is true that Indian Progressive forces at (or connected to) Haskell were able to win certain critical concessions and push the institution toward new vistas of exploration, tolerance, and acceptance of Indian cultures, heritage, and partnership, there was much about this education for assimilation that remained egregious, off-putting, and tragic in its consequences. Exposure to new knowledge, ideas, and other Native American peoples could be exciting, revelatory, and pave the way for a reformulated sense of identity and cultural revival, but the abuses, attempted erasure of past connections, and “legacy of conquest” historian Limerick has brought into focus in the history of Indian-white relations continued to be a major feature of life at Haskell and a factor in the future outlook native peoples took away from their school days.

That being said, there is much to celebrate in drawing conclusions about the work and sacrifices made by American Indians receiving an education for assimilation in this period. Key pan-tribal values emerged and remained despite the effort to eradicate aboriginal thought, history, and perspectives that was the stated goal of these social-engineering laboratories designed to do away with the last vestiges of the nation’s perceived “Indian problem.” Native American ethnicities were not completely cleansed away in the waves of indoctrination and inculcation viewed at that time as the surest path to a harmonious future meant to get beyond the conflicts and troubles of earlier years, any more than immigrants who arrived on American shores contemporaneously totally abandoned ties to their peoples or countries of origin in subsequent generations. Because this educational approach was predicated on assumptions of Western superiority, the final conquering of “savagery” and “barbarism” by imposing ethnocentric

concepts of what defined proper “civilization,” and, in the final analysis, set goals that were far too simplistic, idealistic, and ill-defined for a realistic application to the circumstances (again, in keeping with much of the long history of missionary work, warfare, and treaty-making that led to bitter divisions over sovereignty and dispossession), native peoples retained an ability to be adaptive, resourceful, and abiding of time in meeting the challenges this new system offered or imposed.³ By maintaining ties to their pasts, just as whites did (even when they considered themselves “friends” and believed sincerely they were only helping their less fortunate fellows) in constructing this “solution,” Indians often acted in accordance with familiar notions they held relating to warrior traditions, respect for ancestry and alternative spiritual philosophies, and service to their people while sometimes simultaneously embracing the newer ideological viewpoints offered in government training schools. In this way they melded various versions of what was valuable for a good life and helped pave the path leading to the creation of a Haskell Indian Nations University that celebrates the cultural ethics and beliefs of Native America today.

In 1971 Sioux scholar and historian Vine Deloria, Sr., offered up an article entitled “The Standing Rock Reservation: A Personal Reminiscence” that has some especial relevance in envisioning what had taken place at Haskell beginning almost a century before. “I’m a good actor in seeming to be perfectly at home in American society,” he wrote, adding, “I have to go off by myself and relive that early culture to get refueled, so to speak, for refreshment, recalling the ways of the Standing Rock People sixty years ago.”⁴ This admission likely was also the way many Haskell students felt after being away from family, friends, and the comforts of home, often for years at a time, seeking a balance in their lives that helped them to reckon with both the new ways and the old that they embodied due to the mixture of experiences they had in their complex lives. Of course, finding balance, too, may be read as an expression of traditionalism, as many tribes’ spiritual beliefs spoke to the need for harmony with the natural world and its inhabitants for human wellness and renewal. Even though, on the surface, many pupils perfectly recited or reflected the lessons they had been taught at school, below the exterior they longed for a deeper under-

³ See Limmerick, *Legacy of Conquest*, 189-200.

⁴ *South Dakota Review* 9 (Summer 1971), 194.

standing of or tethering to their roots. They were, as the last two chapters ought to make clear, in some ways able to achieve a modicum of connectivity, and this blending of ideologies was rather common.

For some students, even after leaving school, this straddling of traditions could be done successfully and afford them a unique position of having a foot in two very different worlds. Eastman, Bonnin, Montezuma, and others in the Red Progressive leadership certainly are fine examples and many Haskellites shared their enthusiasm for a healthy measure of both their Indian and Western knowledge. In 1900 the pupils in the Normal Department issued a collective statement in the wake of Montezuma's visit, summing up their understanding of his achievements and worldview:

Dr. Montezuma is a man. He is possessed of all the mental faculties of the civilized man. He has developed these faculties. I am his brother man. I must be endowed with the same capabilities as he has. I may develop my powers as he has his. I will become his equal in accomplishments.⁵

This positive reading shows both institutional reinforcement of the civilization-versus-savagery paradigm and the potential impact of one regarded as an Indian role model. Still, just as Montezuma (and Zitkala-sa and Eastman as well) would later struggle with issues of identity, heritage, and, in many ways, reject the stripping away of culture that schools such as Haskell put into practice, so too would many of its pupils. Haskell was, with time and building pressure, beginning to offer a greater chance for both a brighter future and growing acquaintance with the Native American past, yet it also left open wounds due to the blunt force trauma of prolonged separation from the familiar, implantation of value judgments that made a questioning of traditional upbringing and life at times painful (either in terms of what had been missed or in the rejection of, or by, relatives who remained part of that older, and sometimes now alien, framework), and the continued bias exhibited by staff and administrators, even as they were becoming more tolerant of "Indian-ness" at Haskell by (slight, and clearly demarcated) degrees. Sioux shaman and healer John

⁵ *TIL*, 19 January 1900, 2.

Lame, writing at about the same time as Deloria had, believed that “The schools leave a scar. . . . We come out half red and half white, not knowing what we are.”⁶

On the other hand, schools such as Haskell, while they could create these kinds of problems for Indians who felt that, while keeping a foot in both worlds, they did not totally belong to either, it is equally true that the complete eradication or destruction of Indian cultures did not result from the boarding-school experience. Most scholars of the period uphold this finding despite the arduous attempt by authorities to maintain the charade of “the Cave” even after school life ended. As historian Peter Iverson concludes, “The federal off-reservation schools . . . failed to deliver what they had pledged to achieve: the assimilation of their students into American society. Too many of their students dropped out. Moreover, upon their return home many of them embraced again the customs and traditions of their communities.”⁷ Writing about the introduction of new forms of music and entertainment introduced at boarding schools that were supposed to supplant older ones, Rayna Green and John Troutman note that “Schools that sought to eradicate the students’ traditions and expressions instead provided many Native students with an unusual training ground” that, instead, allowed them to begin exploring their own backgrounds, if only cautiously at first.⁸ Even those who did not return to the reservations very often found employment in the Indian Service as teachers, disciplinarians, or laborers, a cocoon of sorts that kept them in touch with the type of training they had once received, although one that also allowed them to provide service to their people and a chance to actually change the system from within.⁹

In 1909 Haskell Institute celebrated its twenty-fifth year of operations, that summer sponsoring a reunion of old students. Many returned to see for themselves the campus that had been home to them in their youth, to walk the halls of buildings both familiar and new, and to take stock of what their alma mater offered to subsequent generations of American Indian students. The period leading up to the events

⁶ Lame Deer and Erdoes, *Seeker of Visions*, 25.

⁷ “*We Are Still Here*”, 25. See also Giago in Lobo and Talbot, *Native American Voices*, 254.

⁸ In L’Archuleta, et al., eds, *Away from Home*, 61.

⁹ Along these lines, see Hertzberg, *American Indian Identity*, 18-19.

generated a great deal of excitement about what the alumni hoped to find. Charles Goodeagle wrote that “I will be glad to make a report at the reunion” for others who could not attend. Mary Arkeketah, who had written in her school days of the need for Indians to remember their people, was then working as an assistant matron at the Indian school in Tomah, Wisconsin; she planned to make the trip to Lawrence “as Haskell has done so much for her.” At the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency in Darlington, Oklahoma, one of the early and consistent providers of students for the Institute, “There are so many Haskell pupils employed here that it will be impossible for us all to get off unless we divide the time; some go for the first and some for the last part.”¹⁰

On 9 June, the “Quarter-centennial week” began with a performance of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “Hiawatha,” long the standard-bearer of Haskell commencement exercises in the past. Peairs, Meserve, and other “old friends” were slated to speak that day, and the rest of the week would be taken up with exhibition athletic games, class-room programs (especially highlighting the Commercial Course), and other addresses and festivities.¹¹ Among the honored guests was Russian Count Louis Skarzynski, visiting Lawrence, but who was especially interested in the work of the Indian training school there, proving that Native Americans still commanded a great deal of curiosity across the Atlantic: “he says a London society asked him to found out all possible about the race.”¹² Although, unsurprisingly, much of the work on display that week was devoted to and “given for the public for the purpose of showing the progress of the Indian through a half century of education,”¹³ it is important to consider what drew Indian themselves to the events and what reactions they may have had.

Unfortunately, while *The Indian Leader* offers good coverage of the activities, few Indian voices are included. George Bent and other former students apparently made reports of their lives since leaving Haskell, and Montezuma was on hand deliver another speech, but these are, sadly, not presented in full

¹⁰ *TIL*, 21 May 1909, 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4 June 1909, 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, 11 June 1909, 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 2 July 1909, 5.

for the reader to absorb. Doubtless they, too, did much to promote the work of the school and assure that it was leading young Indians on the right path, but the words (and whatever nuances they might contain) are lost to us now. Later issues of the newspaper do provide some snippets from letters written later, however; most of these allude to happy lives of employment and success in the outside world, along with happy memories of school life or of meeting up with old friends at the reunion. Gertrude Flint wrote “Haskell has helped me by making me independent, teaching me discipline, and above all self-control,” adding that “There is no other Indian school in the United States that has done more good to its students than Haskell.” Leonard Tyler, who had helped recruit students for Superintendent Robinson, did not make the reunion, but the paper reported he was now “a fancy stock raiser and one of the large land owners of this country,”¹⁴ leaving us to speculate what kept him from attending (business or painful associations?) and how much he counted the Haskell education in his success.

In the end, former students likely came back to Haskell to help remember what the school once was, or had meant in their lives, as well as what it could be or *might become*, each of these possible sate representing phases or possibilities for the realization of ultimate Indian goals or needs for a steadily-brightening future. Even if the school’s founding had been during a time of tragic policies built on terrible misunderstandings, the old students had lived through, or to see, a kinder, gentler (or at least more practical) Haskell that held out the potential for an eventual evolution into the kind of school that could offer the best wisdom available from a mingling of traditions, both Indian and white, and strengthen and heal both communities in the process. They also, I believe, remembered their Haskell experiences, to a certain degree, based on the hopefulness they felt in the present moment. While they no doubt all had some happy moments or memories from their time at the Institute (a good teacher; a special friend who made life less onerous and perhaps remained close throughout the years; shared slices of life on the football field, at drill, or in the work shops or classrooms, etc.), they probably yearned for still further

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 30 July 1909, 1.

improvements in Indian education that would bring a time when it was the eradication of negative features, not the past, that would be the primary focus of work at Haskell and similar schools.

At the reunion the newspaper could never capture the type of connections that Haskell had fostered and a sense of duty to future generations for education that met Indian needs it, rather paradoxically, engendered. Perhaps these were goals ex-Haskell-ites had once upon a time discussed (and then again that summer), in some “bull session” over smuggled smokes in a stolen moments away from the rigors of campus life. Maybe they had found them simply in the knowing nod or furtive but friendly smile of fellow students upon their arrival at the school. Such glances and discussion could mean a lot, signaling the sudden bond of random intimates assuring each other they were not alone, and the good fortune of friendship found in the flower of youth would soon began to calcify a whole new outlook on life, not simply the one promoted by administrators, but, more importantly, the one that arose to meet Indian needs, desires, and goals for a stronger, healthier future.

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