

“Reading Cook-Lynn: Anti-Colonialism, Cultural Resistance, and Native Empowerment”

By
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Abstract

This work is an intellectual history and cultural study of Cook-Lynn's scholarship and other writings. Most scholars who discuss United States imperialism often prioritize its overseas activities and reduce the colonization of Indian nations to a non-issue. Cook-Lynn, a Native academic and activist, equates U. S. domestic imperialism with the destruction of Indian lives and cultures, refuting the idea that the United States subdued indigenous nations for their own good. A staunch believer in Indian sovereignty, Cook-Lynn holds that Indian treaties established elementary principles of sovereignty and possessory rights for American tribal nations and opposes U.S. strategy to incorporate Indian treaty rights and land ownership into the ethnic heap of multiculturalism. Seeking to rekindle Indian nationalism and ensure the continuance of Indian nations, Cook-Lynn's activist oeuvre advocates for their cultural, political, and social relevance and challenges claims of Indian irrelevance in American history.

Cook-Lynn deploys a resistance discourse to the U.S. culture of imperialism to strategize Indian empowerment and advocate for the sovereignty of tribal governance. This dissertation examines her political theories on Indian sovereignty and her focus on the effects of U.S. colonialism on land dispossession, oppression, silenced voices, the devaluation of tribal cultures, and the struggle for Indian self-determination. This interdisciplinary study connects American studies with Native American studies; it not only examines Cook-Lynn's empowerment strategies and legitimizes the decolonization theory that informs her work but also confronts the author's dogmas.

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Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.¹

¹ An African proverb, as quoted in Tijan M. Sallah and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, *Chinua Achebe, Teacher of Light: A Biography* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2003), 59.

INTRODUCTION

Why am I interested in Cook-Lynn, American Indians, and the cultures of United States imperialism? Why am I writing a dissertation on this topic in American studies?

First, I accept Henry N. Smith's definition of American studies as "the study of American culture, past and present, as a whole."²

Second, I am an indigenous intellectual from a colonized nation and an aspiring organic intellectual. Stuart Hall, the noted media and Marxist theorist, once remarked: "We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context,' *positioned*."³ I hail from Togo, a West African country. As an indigenous intellectual from a colonized nation, I see a compelling reality in George Lamming's cogent representation of the West Indian colonial experience:

The colonial experience is a matter of historical record. What I am saying is that the colonial experience is a *live* experience in the *consciousness* of these people. And just because the so-called colonial situation is over and its institutions may have been transferred into something else, it is a fallacy to think that the human-lived content of those situations are automatically transferred into something else, too. The experience is a continuing psychic experience that has to be dealt with long after the actual colonial situation formally "ends."⁴

As a student from the Third World, I have been fed on a regular diet of the First/Western World discourse through most of my intellectual life, the imperial undertone of which shapes my perception of the world. I identify with colonized people worldwide. The indigenous people of the United States are such people with whom I share tales of conquest, oppression, silenced voices, and distorted identity. To some degree, then, I am predisposed to analyze issues through a common lens with them.

² Henry N. Smith, "Can 'American Studies' Develop a Method?," in Lucy Maddox, ed., *Locating American Studies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 1.

³ Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in Jonathan Rutherford, ed., *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1996), 446; italics in the original.

⁴ George Lamming, as quoted in Sandra P. Paquet, *The Novels of George Lamming* (London: Heinemann, 1982), 1; italics in the original.

Over the years I have gained some insight into the multi-, trans-, and interdisciplinary study of American society and cultures. My initial orientation in American studies began some years prior to 1995, when I started teaching American literature and civilization courses at Université du Bénin (now Université de Lomé, Togo). A 1998 study visit to the United States put me through an awakening experience. The fortuitous experience, as is detailed below, was an **epiphany**; it marked a turning point in my intellectual life. In retrospect, it remains the most significant event leading to a paradigm shift in my inquisitiveness.

After attending an American Culture Seminar at the University of Delaware, Newark, I spent some time at the University of California, Davis, to finish up my first dissertation. Without any idea of what to expect, I accepted a friend's invitation to attend a powwow being held on the UC-Davis campus one Saturday. I was baffled by this meeting of Indians and non-Indians who danced, socialized, and honored native cultures. "Is it true that America's original inhabitants are still alive in this country, or am I daydreaming?," I asked myself. In total disbelief, I took some photographs to memorialize this event. Once back in Togo, I showed the pictures to my students, a symbolic way to include America's indigenous people in my representation of U.S. history. How shall I interpret this "unsettling" Indian presence? This unique event burst American Indians into my consciousness and made me self-critical of my role as educator.

From the old thread one builds the new one; but mine will be a reversal. Before embarking in the KU American Studies program, I co-authored an American civilization teaching manual: *Students' Notes on American Culture*.⁵ It examines the coming into being of the United States and replicates the dominant discourse on America. Rereading the text makes me realize how I overlooked the roles of American women in the shaping of this nation. Unlike

⁵ Kodjo Afagla and Agbeko Wampah, *Students' Notes on American Culture* (Lomé: United States Information Services, 1996).

Mary B. Norton, for instance, who underscores their roles in the Revolutionary War, I neglected “the daughters of liberty” in *Students’ Notes on American Culture*, while “the sons of liberty” are privileged in its framework.⁶ But there is more.

The erasure of Indians from U.S. history, and the perpetuation of the myth that they have vanished from American soil are contentious themes among scholars of American history and culture. Indian vanishing views permeate American literature, history, popular culture, and museum studies, to be selective. Although a staggering number of studies have examined the pervasiveness of Indian vanishing myths in the American psyche, they have fallen short of showing that Indian invisibility prevails beyond U.S. borders. Well, it is a reality outside the United States. Worse, most outside scholars echo the dominant discourse and thus perpetuate this erasure. Clearly, scores of foreign scholars uncritically buy into the hegemonic, deceptive narration of America. I once was naïve and took that dominant story as gospel. Prior to the UC-Davis event that awakened me to the existence of American Indians, I honestly believed they really had vanished. Before I was drawn, through my studies with Professor Cheryl B. Lester in organic intellectual activism and radical pedagogy, to seek out native academics at KU, my naivety had led me to represent them as relics of the past. In hindsight, the UC-Davis gathering confirms Indian *survivance*, to use Gerald Vizenor’s neologism.

This type of manifestation indicates the existence of Native American cultures. By the same token, it constitutes a powerful counterbalance to wishful vanishing race theories propagandized in anti-Indian scholarship. It celebrates the inventive Indian against the vanishing Indian and asserts the continuing vitality of diverse Indian cultures. It definitely sends a loud and clear message: Native Americans and their cultures **are still here**. This reality summons me to

⁶ Mary B. Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Boston: Little Brown, 1980).

revisit Indian misrepresentation as a vanished race, a mission which entails reading widely in American Indian literatures. Ultimately, the native presence (and voice) that stands out in Cook-Lynn's scholarship makes her body of work a prominent avenue for tracking Indian self-construct. In a way, then, this study underscores the visibility that the so-called "vanished people" are granting themselves, first and foremost. Second, this work privileges Indians to emphasize the native presence in the U.S. multicultural landscape. Third, its concentration on America's indigenous people redeems my initial academic naivety. In that sense, the present study becomes an antidote to my first pieces of scholarship, which occult Indians.

(In)justice is in the eye of the beholder. Over the years I have dedicated my intellectual efforts to advocating for justice for the oppressed. Along those lines, I initially examined (in 1994) the injustice heaped upon African Americans in my M.A. thesis, *A Study of Slavery and Escape in Frederick Douglass' Narrative* and followed suit with a PhD dissertation titled *Justice and Self-Awareness in the Black Diasporan Novel* (1999). While my master's thesis locates slavery as the defining element of the African American experience, my Lomé University dissertation argues the role of slavery and colonialism in denying justice for Africans worldwide and examines how this denial is given political and aesthetic shape in the works of George Lamming and Paule Marshall. The dissertation claims that the African diasporic discourse on racial and cultural identities devolves from the culture of resistance inherited from the practices of slavery and colonialism. Additionally, I take up the oppression of Africans worldwide, in my subsequent peer review publications, to foster an internationalization of their struggles for social justice. But it never dawned on me that American Indians are oppressed people, that is, until I enrolled in the KU American studies program, for the reason stated earlier.

As the previous paragraph indicates, I prioritized Africans in my advocacy for social justice. Although the UC-Davis event burst American Indians into my universe, my naivety had led me to assume that only African Americans experience racism in the United States. Clearly, I had thought that everyone in the United States was living the “American Dream,” except most African Americans. Cook-Lynn opened my eyes to the socio-political situation of Indian nations and the colonial injustice heaped upon them. She altered my initial perception of the United States.

My “discovery” of the living traditions and struggles of Native Americans in her scholarship sparked my interest in the cultures of United States imperialism; it even triggered me to reassess my initial representation of this nation. So far, my intellectual endeavor has yielded three concrete results: a book chapter on some commonalities of African American and American Indian experiences; a shift in my pedagogy; and this dissertation.

First and foremost, reading Cook-Lynn was instrumental in my establishing a **rapprochement** between African Americans and American Indians in the above-mentioned book chapter. In this review essay, I turn to minority and non-minority scholars to understand the ways in which Blacks and Indians have struggled with the dominant culture to establish their own rights and identities, arguing that relationships between them have stemmed from their common histories as minority groups, who often have been displaced or denied equality, and who have demonstrated resistance to the cultural domination of Europeans.⁷

Second, Cook-Lynn transformed my teaching of American culture. My teaching presented the United States as one the greatest democracies in the world, prior to my immersion in Cook-Lynn’s scholarship, where I met a disturbingly troubling representation of the United

⁷ Ruben K. Afagla, “A Divided Horizon in their Common Sky?,” in James N. Leiker et al., eds., *The First and the Forced* [Online] (Lawrence, KS: Hall Center for the Humanities, 2007), 55-88.

States: “[T]he most brash violator of human rights [and] the single global power frighteningly disguised as a benign democracy.”⁸ I paused. This image contradicted the United States democracy I had vaunted in another American civilization teaching manual.⁹ Cook-Lynn’s unwavering advocacy for Indian nations put me through a **second awakening experience** which added another dimension to my initial image of the United States. Humans are not perfect, nor are nations of people. Although I still understand the United States as a nation that stands for its noble values and principles, I equally incorporate its imperial practices in my teaching to reflect a critically balanced view of its culture.

My introduction to my American studies course illustrates this pedagogical shift. I infuse this undergraduate course with the history and life of minority cultures and challenge students to rethink many received ideas. I expose them to the ideas of indigenous scholars who argue, for example, that the U.S. constitution was not simply conceived by the founding fathers but was also inspired by egalitarian ideals they learned from American Indians. My teaching of American culture now foregrounds the diverse cultures, groups, and experiences that struggle for representation in American civilization. Clearly, my pedagogy takes up the daunting challenge to square America’s acclaimed democratic creed with its realities.

Third, the rift between my initial construct of the United States and Cook-Lynn’s combative stance vis-à-vis this nation challenged me in a profound way; so much so that I decided to scrutinize her Indianst perspectives about the United States in this dissertation. In other words, Cook-Lynn’s resistance discourse spurred my investigation into her vision of the United States colonialism in the present study; her discourse led to this dissertation.

⁸ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 83.

⁹ Kodjo Afagla, *Examining American Democracy and Government* (Lomé: United States Information Services, 2000).

This dissertation is an intellectual history and cultural study of Cook-Lynn's scholarship. It investigates her resistance discourse to the U.S. culture of imperialism. Cook-Lynn, a staunch believer in Indian birthrights, holds that Indian treaties established elementary principles of sovereignty and possessory rights for American tribal nations and opposes U.S. strategy to incorporate Indian treaty rights and land ownership into the ethnic heap of multiculturalism. This study, therefore, analyzes her political theories on Indian sovereignty and her focus on the effects of U.S. colonialism on land dispossession, oppression, silenced voices, the devaluation of tribal cultures, and the struggle for Indian self-determination.

I started this project with the assumption that United States domestic imperialism and its neglect trigger Cook-Lynn's advocacy for Indian nations. U. S. domestic imperialism remains the overarching theme of Cook-Lynn's oeuvre because most scholars who engage United States imperialism often prioritize its overseas activities and reduce the colonization of Indian nations to a **non-issue**. Cook-Lynn argues, in seeking to educate the public about this neglect, that U. S. domestic imperialism denies Native Americans their fundamental right to be indigenous people in a meaningful way, given U. S. occupation of the social, physical, and political spaces that these communities need in order to live as indigenous people. She equates U. S. domestic imperialism with the destruction of Indian lives and cultures and refutes the idea that the United States subdued indigenous nations for their own good. Moreover, by claiming that America continues to subjugate people throughout the world, Cook-Lynn positions the United States as a colonizing power and connects its Empire-building practices back to practices by other colonial nations.

The overall argument of this dissertation is: that Cook-Lynn foregrounds the colonization of Indian nations to refute the mainstream's overriding neglect of United States domestic

imperialism; that Cook-Lynn's scholarship uses examples of anti-Indianism and Indian genocide to evidence the colonization of Indian nations and present an imperial view of the United States; that Cook-Lynn's activist oeuvre advocates for the cultural, political, and social relevance of Indian nations and undermines claims of Indian irrelevance in American history; that the creation of second-class citizens out of sovereign tribal people spurs Cook-Lynn's demand that Indian treaties regulate U.S.-Indian relations; that her advocacy for revamping the symbols of social order on Indian Reservations and her urging native scholars to focus on Indian decolonization are part and parcel of her strategy to liberate Indian nations, as is her proposal that American scholars and policymakers connect politics, pedagogy, and ethics for the sake of social justice; that Cook-Lynn's theorizing native empowerment seeks to pull Indians out of an oppressive colonial orbit.¹⁰ In sum, this dissertation argues that her intellectual activism seeks to rekindle Indian nationalism and purports to ensure the continuance of Indian nations.

Cook-Lynn's resistance discourse is worth a dissertation for two reasons. First, she seeks to restore the right and political status of American Indians today. Along those lines, she advances a critical and oppositional view of U.S. domestic imperialism. Second, because the perennial colonization of Indian tribes falls outside the realm of imperialism from the perspective of most American scholars, Cook-Lynn's arguments about U.S. domestic imperialism not only refute the pervasive neglect of the phenomenon, but also integrate the nation's internal colonization with its foreign imperialism.

This study is comprised of five chapters.

The first one, the bio-critical chapter, revolves around Cook-Lynn as an Indianist intellectual and situates her within the continuum of Indian scholars as an organic intellectual, in the Gramscian sense of the word. It examines Cook-Lynn's organic intellectual practices and

¹⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks of Elizabeth Cook-Lynn* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 183-4.

locates her as a nationalist critic, a political writer, a historical revisionist, and an anti-colonial intellectual. Additionally, the chapter investigates the context that shapes Cook-Lynn's organic intellectualism and examines her representations by her detractors and admirers. In the end, this chapter claims that Cook-Lynn uses a nationalist resistance discourse to assume a leadership role in addressing the struggles of Native Americans.

Chapter II argues the uniqueness of *Wicazo Sa Review* in the history of academic journals in Indian studies and probes its role in shaping the debates and conversations in the discipline.¹¹ This chapter underscores *WSR*'s distinctive role in the unfolding of the discipline as well as Cook-Lynn's contributions in setting the discipline in its oppositional course. It argues the unique position of *WSR* in regard to its own mission and the mission of Native studies. Through its anti-colonial or Indianist scholarly articles, curricular proposals, and platforms regarding the proper mission and stakeholders of Native studies, *WSR* defines the discipline in terms of sovereignty, nationalism, and indigeneity. In a way, this chapter is analogous to chapter I, but whereas the previous chapter focuses on Cook-Lynn's individual position as an Indianist, this one shows her collaboration with other Indianists who are working together to articulate an Indianist vision of the broader institutional presence and goals of Native studies.

Chapter III contextualizes Cook-Lynn's urge for a native voice and deploys an analogous scholarship to provide a context that illuminates her specific contribution to the subject. It articulates her conceptualization of a native voice within a decolonization framework and examines Cook-Lynn's content and the goals of a native voice. The chapter finally addresses Cook-Lynn's division of Native studies into native and non-native voices, and critiques her regimes in Indian studies. While I present Cook-Lynn's views on Indian issues in the previous chapters, I challenge her position on Indian voice in this one.

¹¹ Thereafter, I refer to this journal as *WSR* in the text and footnotes.

Chapter IV argues that Cook-Lynn foregrounds United States domestic imperialism to refute its neglect. Because the colonization of Indian tribes is treated as a non-lieu, she advances an oppositional view of U.S. domestic imperialism to counter the scant attention it has received in mainstream scholarship. In addition to the bulk of scholarship on colonialism and imperialism, I use Cook-Lynn's creative writing and essays to examine U.S. imperialism and the denial syndrome associated with its internal imperialism.

Although I share most of Cook-Lynn's contentions in this study, I confront her hyper-racialized assessments of Indian representations and her dismissal of Indian scholarship whose aim is not to seek sovereignty for Indian nations, in chapter V, the conclusion. This chapter suggests the limits of her dogma.

An Indian studies program might be the ideal place to research this topic. However, I engage indigenous resistance discourse in American studies to contribute to its inclusiveness. Are there any shortcomings in locating native scholarship in the discourse of American studies? By its very name, this discipline is inclusive of all people in the United States. Americanists from Henry N. Smith, R. Gordon Kelly, Gene Wise, George Lipsitz, and up to John C. Rowe, have called for "commerce" between humanists and social scientists, variously arguing that collaboration across disciplines is necessary to approach American cultures in refreshing ways.¹² Many Americanists, however, are still reluctant to embrace native scholarship, but how can American studies apprehend the wholeness of U.S. cultures when the discipline excuses itself from native scholarship on the pretense that it uses "nonscholarly indigenous narrative" to

¹² Smith, "Can 'American Studies' Develop a Method?" (1957); Kelly, "Literature and the Historian" (1974); Wise, "'Paradigm Dramas' in American Studies: A Cultural and Institutional History of the Movement" (1979); Lipsitz, "Listening to Learn, Learning to Listen: Popular Culture, Cultural Theory, and American Studies" (1990). These essays are available in Lucy Maddox, ed., *Locating American Studies*. Rowe, *The New American Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); see especially the introduction.

construct its knowledge?¹³ This ideological stance complicates the mission of American studies, i.e., to appreciate the entirety of U.S. cultures. Would Smith et al. limit the “commercial transactions” to exchanges between what might be called “established disciplines,” or would they open up the field to vibrant and rigorous indigenous intellectual disciplines that get represented in the academy as myth and superstition? This segregation among knowledges is detrimental to the discipline.

This dissertation connects American studies with Native American studies. Although Donald E. Pease and Amy Kaplan’s *Cultures of United States Imperialism* represents a major paradigm shift in American studies for unveiling the denial of empire at the heart of American culture, I contend that the discipline still shows its **apathy** for the cultures of U. S. imperialism. This study heeds Indianists’ suggestion that Americanists deploy sovereignty as a category of analysis in engaging U. S. domestic colonialism.

As is apparent in this introduction, I am locating myself as an organic intellectual who represents a people struggling against the status quo of ongoing imperialism and neocolonialism. In my opinion, intellectual work is inherently political; its political nature is crucial to the well-being of oppressed people. I am also aware that intellectual work simultaneously is oppressive and that intellectuals equally serve the interests of ruling elites. Above all, I believe intellectual work is informed by the subject locations of intellectuals who produce it. Like Frantz Fanon and Antonio Gramsci, I want to call attention to the “wretched of the earth,” through this study, which brings into conversation Indian intellectuals with postcolonial African scholars and Marxist thinkers who are already among the mainstream voices of American studies discourse.

¹³ Susan A. Miller, *Coacoochee’s Bones: A Seminole Saga* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2003), xii.

Finally, here is a word on the nomenclature and methodology of this study that examines Cook-Lynn's empowerment strategies and legitimizes the decolonization theory that informs her oeuvre. Throughout this dissertation, I use interchangeably Indians, original Americans, American Indians, America's original inhabitants, Native Americans, America's indigenous people, native people, and original people of the Americas to mean the First People of the United States, using the name "people" in the singular. Except when referring to Native studies, I use lower case for native, indigenous, and original. Methodology-wise, I draw from Cook-Lynn's polemics – fiction and non-fiction – to establish the kind of scholarship she promotes and that defines her status as an Indianist and an organic intellectual. My sources equally include writings by Cook-Lynn's champions and critics, as well as analogous scholarship to provide context and meaning to Cook-Lynn's works and intellectual activism.

CHAPTER ONE:
ELIZABETH COOK-LYNN:
AN INDIANIST AND ORGANIC INTELLECTUAL

This bio-critical chapter revolves around Cook-Lynn as an Indianist intellectual and situates her within the continuum of Indian scholars as an organic intellectual. It demonstrates the methods through which Cook-Lynn develops her practices as an organic intellectual, in the Gramscian sense of the word. The chapter also examines the context that shapes Cook-Lynn's organic intellectualism and her representations by her detractors and admirers.

"I'm called a feminist sometimes, but I don't know exactly what that means," Cook-Lynn muses, before indicating what she wants to be called: "For Mary Wollstonecraft feminism drove her to write and assess the works of others. For me, Indianism (some call it Indigenism) is what moves me, and I want to call myself not a feminist, but rather, an Indianist in the writing world." Just as Wollstonecraft deployed feminist thinking to debunk the pretensions of male dominance, Cook-Lynn maintains that Indianists, writing from an Indian viewpoint, must expose bogus claims that sometimes pass for scholarship on Indians: "[A]s Wollstonecraft wanted to invent feminist thinking that might rid the world of male oppression, I want to invent Indianist thinking to appraise those works that assume primacy concerning the lives of American Indians."¹ Cook-Lynn clearly sees herself as an Indianist. Using a nationalist resistance discourse, she takes up the struggles of Native Americans and assumes a leadership role in advocating for Indian nations, sovereignty, and citizenship.

Cook-Lynn is a poet, novelist, essayist, and activist. She is a fluent speaker of Dakota. Her relatives are Yanktons, Santees, and Hunkpapas. A retired professor emerita of English and Native studies from Eastern Washington University, Cook-Lynn is a member of the Crow Creek Sioux tribe. She was born on November 7, 1930, in a government hospital, Fort Thompson,

¹ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 171-2.

South Dakota, and was raised in the Big Bend and Crow Creek areas along the Missouri River.² Her birth period was marked by uphill battles for both women and American Indians.³ Cook-Lynn suggests the challenges facing Indians during her birth time: “I was living with relatives in a one-room tar-papered house on the Crow Creek Sioux Indian Reservation in South Dakota when I learned to read English. The time was later called the dirty thirties.”⁴ She earned a BA in English and journalism from South Dakota State College (in 1952), received her masters degree in educational psychology and counseling from the University of South Dakota (in 1970), and did doctoral coursework at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.⁵ Her organic intellectualism influenced her decision not to finish her PhD.⁶

I) LOCATING COOK-LYNN AS AN ORGANIC INTELLECTUAL

Cook-Lynn’s bonding to her community, scholarly statements, and advocacy for Indian nations evidence her organic intellectualism. I am using the concept of organic intellectual as a technical term based on Gramsci. Below is its definition by Gramsci and as I see it.

Both Antonio Gramsci and Karl Mannheim are interested in the social location of intellectuals. Mannheim theorizes that modern intellectuals constitute neither a class nor part of a class but are, rather, members of a “relatively classless stratum” which is not too firmly situated

² Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America: A Voice from Tatekeya’s Earth* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 145.

³ Joseph Bruchac, ed., *Survival This Way: Interviews with American Indian Poets* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1987), 71.

⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, xi.

⁵ Barry T. Klein, *Reference Encyclopedia of the American Indian* (7th ed., West Nyack, N.Y.: Todd Publications, 1995), 658-9.

⁶ On Tuesday, December 4, 2007, at Haskell Indian Nations University, I talked with Cook-Lynn about her education. Although she completed her doctoral coursework, Cook-Lynn never earned the doctorate, because she did not want to compromise by accepting the other side of the Indian genocidal story. Consequently, she pursued her journal publication to make more impact. Later, she was awarded an honorary doctorate, which she declined.

in the social order.⁷ Underlying Mannheim's location of the intellectual lies not only the idea that intellectuals act and intervene in the public realm, but also that they do so from a position of relative autonomy.

Gramsci opposes Mannheim's conceptualization, reasoning that traditional intellectuals have always aided ruling elites to carry out hegemonic social functions. In his *Prison Notebooks*, which is widely regarded as a seminal contribution to the sociology of intellectuals, Gramsci theorizes that intellectuals are socially attached, in one way or another. Not only does Gramsci recognize the power of knowledge to influence politics, but he also connects intellectuals back to class.⁸ He clarifies the point that intellectuals always belong to a certain class and categorizes them as either organic or traditional, both of whom carry out organizational functions on behalf of society.

Organic intellectuals are the indigenous products of a social group; they direct the organizing knowledge of their class and defend its particular interests. As those examining ideas within a particular social class, organic intellectuals further the ideas of the class to which they belong. Whether primarily attached to the working class or to a nation, organic intellectuals carry on the task of social critique and of educating the masses.⁹

"Traditional intellectuals," in Gramsci's theorizing, are those who hold established social positions with long traditions, often specific to an earlier social formation. Such a historical location allows them far more latitude in their cultural pronouncement and political

⁷ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge, 1951), 10.

⁸ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*; edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971 [1999]), 3-43; see, also, Carl Boggs, *Intellectuals and the Crisis of Modernity* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1993), xiii; and Robert J. Brym, "The Political Sociology of Intellectuals: A Critique and a Proposal," in Alain G. Gagnon, ed., *Intellectuals in Liberal Democracies* (New York: Praeger, 1987), 204-5.

⁹ Cook-Lynn is primarily attached to her nation; I discuss her organic intellectualism in the context of the Sioux nation (or Indian nations).

identification.¹⁰ Moreover, by carrying out the function of social hegemony and political government on behalf of the dominant culture, traditional intellectuals locate themselves as servants of the status quo.¹¹

If each social class needs its strata of intellectuals to shape its interests, then, Gramsci's significance lies in his functional distinction among intellectuals. Attempts by traditional intellectuals to separate themselves from dominant social forces have proven futile, because intellectuals are not class-free. Like it or not, they are strongly dependent upon the ruling institutions and interests, tied as they are to the class outlook of those exercising power and the state apparatus. Like no one before him, Gramsci repudiates the mythical notion of intellectuals as a distinct social group independent of class and demonstrates the complexity and malleability of intellectuals' social ties and the way they influence their ideological postures.

Besides Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*, Jomo Kenyatta's *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu* and Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* describe the ingredients necessary for intellectuals to become the voices for oppressed people. Organic intellectuals speaking for the oppressed must be bonded to them. This organic bond is based upon personal knowledge of human behavior and shaped by membership in a given community of oppressed people. By virtue of birth and experience with oppression, organic intellectuals have the credentials to speak for their communities. In the preface to *Facing Mount Kenya*, Kenyatta locates residency within one's community as a prerequisite for articulating a message on its behalf:

¹⁰ Geoff Eley, "Intellectuals and the German Labor Movement," in Leon Fink et al., eds., *Intellectuals and Public Life* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 75; see, also, Jane Burbank, "Were the Russian *Intelligenty* Organic Intellectuals?," in Fink, pp. 99-100.

¹¹ Paul Hollander, "American Intellectuals: Producers and Consumers of Social Criticism," in Gagnon, ed., op. cit., 69; John Brademas, "The Role of the Intellectual in Politics: An American View," in H. Malcolm Macdonald, ed., *The Intellectual in Politics* (Austin: Humanity Research Center of the University of Texas, 1966), 106; and Patrick Brantlinger, *Crusoe's Footprints: Cultural Studies in Britain and America* (London: Routledge, 1990), 97.

In the present work I have tried my best to record facts as I know them, mainly through a lifetime of personal experience. My chief objective is not to enter into controversial discussion with those who have attempted, or are attempting, to describe the same things from outside observation, but to let the truth speak for itself. ... The reader will undoubtedly wish to know my credentials for writing the book. Merely to have been born and bred in the Gikuyu country may seem to him [her] a vague qualification, so I will give a more explicit account of the sources of my knowledge.

Thereafter Kenyatta details his upbringing in a traditional African setting. Following the tribal custom, he underwent initiation rites along with his age group and carried out leadership roles. These various stages enable him to speak from first-hand experience on behalf of his people.¹² Kenyatta's case can exemplify Cook-Lynn's bonding to the Crow Creek Sioux nation; she is so connected to her people that her time spent away at Eastern Washington University only reinforced her ties to them. When Cook-Lynn became disillusioned after two decades at EWU, she left her tenured faculty position for the "open hills and prairies of home."¹³

Organic intellectuals are distinguished by their leadership roles for their people. In general, intellectuals are trained to help the ruling elite maintain its social hegemony. Organic intellectuals, however, turn such an expectation upside down and rather take on the cause of the oppressed and constantly fight against their own academic training.¹⁴ These oppositional intellectuals resist the perks of the establishment and its egocentric promise of self-promotion. Along these lines, Cook-Lynn distances herself from American scholars, feeds the public with a tribal nationalist discourse, and therefore assumes the role of a permanent persuader, in a Gramscian sense. The following paragraphs provide some evidence of Cook-Lynn's organic intellectualism.

¹² Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), xvii-xix.

¹³ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), ix.

¹⁴ Raymund A. Paredes, "Autobiography and Ethnic Politics," in James R. Payne, ed., *Multicultural Autobiography: American Lives* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 294.

First, Cook-Lynn's scholarship catapults her into the class of organic intellectuals. She explores the colonization of American Indian tribes as a devastating policy in the United States since its inception. Her fictional and non-fictional writings primarily address U.S. colonization and its adverse effects on the Sioux Reserved Homeland, her nation. She concedes that her body of work concerns "the struggle of the Sioux Nation to survive its colonizers, the U.S. government and the law and American justice."¹⁵ Additionally, her scholarship connects American indigenous people, as it advocates pan-Indianism, i.e, a political philosophy that asserts indigenous common identity and unity across political boundaries and tribal divisions. Therefore, her mingling of Dakota myth, culture, and landscape to convey an age-old relationship between the Sioux and the Northern Plains land should not be construed as a preferential treatment for her tribe.¹⁶ Rather, this microcosm embodies her concerns for all American indigenous nations. To be sure, her scholarship encompasses tribal tribulations and glories and calls for a better future for Indian nations. Although *Aurelia: A Crow Creek Trilogy*, her political novel, underscores the helplessness of the Sioux nation, this novel symbolically illustrates the perseverance of Indians. Their stoic resolve to hold onto their values proves unshakable amid the flooding and its devastation. In a way, *Aurelia* speaks to the adaptability of Native Americans and underscores their sense of humor, regardless of adversity. In the final analysis, this novel suggests that Indian nations will rise against overwhelming odds, provided they keep their stories and traditions. Clearly, Cook-Lynn prescribes resistance and persistence as ingredients for their continuation.

Second, Cook-Lynn's scholarly activism makes her an organic intellectual in the spectrum of native intellectuals in Gramsci's concept of the intellectual realm. Although Cook-Lynn reluctantly admits speaking for her people in an interview with Brian Swann and Arnold

¹⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 22.

¹⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Aurelia: A Crow Creek Trilogy* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1999), 358 & 457.

Krupat, her scholarly activism locates her as an organic intellectual.¹⁷ Cook-Lynn's organic intellectualism stands out when she reveals the driving force behind her writing in the same interview: "Anger is what started me writing. Writing, for me, then, is an act of defiance born of the need to survive. I am me. I exist. I am Dakotah. I write. It is the quintessential act of optimism born of frustration. It is an act of courage, I think. And, in the end, it is an act that defies oppression."¹⁸ Also, in an intimately related way, Cook-Lynn's statement concerning her scholarly goal underscores her organic intellectualism. She foregrounds her status as an organic intellectual in situating her scholarly goal by admitting, for example, that she primarily writes and teaches for the cultural, historical, and political survival of Indian nations, because she believes these nations are omitted from the pages of American history. To be sure, her writing and teaching support the legacy of her ancestors.¹⁹ In the final analysis, Cook-Lynn's scholarly activism and goals make her an organic intellectual.

Third, her view on Indian identity equally underscores her organic intellectualism. Cook-Lynn's high stake in tribal identity lends credence to an organic claim for her scholarship. Disconnection from one's tribe is not an option for Cook-Lynn. She has urged Indian scholars to follow in the footsteps of D'Arcy W. McNickle (1904-1977) by grounding their works in the tribal world. McNickle was a professor of anthropology, a writer, a historian, an activist, and the first director of the Center for American Indian History at the Newberry Library in Chicago, which was later renamed in his honor. Despite his tremendous achievement, Cook-Lynn contends that he remained a tribally oriented scholar throughout his lifetime. In her words, McNickle "refused the imagination of the exile position and remained, in his own image, a tribal

¹⁷ Cook-Lynn, "You May Consider Speaking about Your Art," in Brian Swann and Arnold Krupat, eds., *Tell You Now: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 55-63.

¹⁸ Ibid., 57-8.

¹⁹ Ibid., 63.

person in touch with his tribal compatriots. It is my contention, also, that many of the sophisticated native writers who came after McNickle, have not.”²⁰

Although native scholars are physically rooted in the United States, Cook-Lynn contends that their behaviors rather conform to those who endure enforced removal from their native country. Indeed, Cook-Lynn strongly feels that most indigenous scholars are in exile in American culture, their roots damaged, their maps lost, and their vision clouded. She believes that indigenous scholars are accountable “to the tribal nations that have survived terrible wars, that have signed solemn treaties with our enemies, that possess vast resources [and] the lands where our relatives are buried.” Moreover, she has urged Indian scholars to utilize their power to develop tribal nations in ways appropriate to their histories, cultures, and beliefs. For Cook-Lynn, they must acquire power and use it exclusively for the benefit of Indian nations located in “one of the most greedy, exploitive capitalistic systems ever devised. America.”²¹

Fourth, Cook-Lynn’s prescriptive role for Indian scholars demonstrates her organic intellectualism, as can be inferred from the above paragraph. She believes that native scholars should avoid shaping a dysconscious worldview, i.e., an impaired consciousness or distorted way of thinking about one’s situation.²² Chasing the American Dream should not be a priority for Indian intellectuals, in Cook-Lynn’s theorizing. She has urged native intellectuals to be aware of their uniqueness in America. Cook-Lynn once invited Indian academics and scholars to ask themselves this crucial question: “*Is what I am teaching and writing and researching of value to*

²⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 89. For detailed information on McNickle’s books and awards, visit “Native American Authors Project,” at <http://www.ipl.org/div/natam/bin/browse.pl/A49> (consulted on 9/28/07).

²¹ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 154.

²² Joyce E. King, “Dysconscious Racism: Ideology, Identity, and the Miseducation of Teachers,” *Journal of Negro Education* 60:2 (1991), 133-146.

the continuation of the Indian Nations of America?”²³ Clearly, she mandates a synergy between the priorities of Indian nations and those of native intellectuals in her representation of a dignified native scholar. Their priorities must coalesce absolutely. By all available evidence, Cook-Lynn advances a nation-building agenda and her stance on the legacies of tribal nations fits into the role of organic intellectuals. In the wake of Gramsci, a plethora of scholars have theorized the role of intellectuals. Edward Shils, for instance, divides intellectuals into those who work to maintain order and continuity in public life and those who oppose prevailing norms, while Martin Hollis holds that they must unmask the vested interests upon which power relies to keep in subjection society.²⁴ Cook-Lynn fits into the category of oppositional intellectuals; her scholarship unravels the essence of power relations, offers practical steps for change in U.S.-Indian relations, and elucidates the meaning of U.S.-Indian history from an Indigenist perspective.

Finally, her advocacy for Indian nations underscores her organic intellectualism. Cook-Lynn is a critical thinker; she examines, criticizes, and evaluates the conditions of American Indians. She denounces entrenched forms of domination in the United States and strategizes empowerment of Indian communities. She focuses on their collective agency to revitalize Indian nations. In so doing, Cook-Lynn fits into the Foucauldian concept of the intellectual’s task, that of “performing analyses in his or her own fields, of interrogating anew the evidence and the postulates, of shaking up habits, ways of acting and thinking, of dispelling commonplace beliefs,

²³ Cook-Lynn, “The Radical Conscience in Native American Studies,” *WSR* 7:2 (1991), 13; italics in the original.

²⁴ Edward Shils, *The Intellectuals and the Powers, and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 3-22; Martin Hollis, “What Truth? For Whom and Where?,” in Jennings and Kemp-Welch, eds., *Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to the Salman Rushdie Affair* (London: Routledge, 1997), 290.

of taking a new measure of rules and institutions.”²⁵ I could not conceive of a better way to pinpoint her position than to borrow Paul Baran’s representation of an intellectual. An intellectual is ideally a social critic “whose concern is to identify, analyze, and in this way to help overcome the obstacles barring the way to the attainment of a better, more humane, and more rational social order.”²⁶ Cook-Lynn engages the socio-political situation of Indian nations and addresses the injustice heaped upon them. She defends their legal status and seeks their decolonization. Clearly, Cook-Lynn’s conceptualization of her role as an organic intellectual triggers her advocacy for tribal nationhood. She uses three methods to achieve that end.

II) COOK-LYNN’S PRACTICES AS AN ORGANIC INTELLECTUAL: HER ORGANIC FUNCTIONS

Cook-Lynn carries out her organic intellectualism through three functions. She assumes the role of a nationalist and political advocate, historical revisionist, and anti-colonial writer.

a) NATIONALIST AND POLITICAL ADVOCATE

Cook-Lynn is an advocate for Indian nations, sovereignty, government, and indigenusness. Her unapologetic advocacy for Indian nations mandates a brief definition of the concepts of nation and sovereignty, in the first place.

²⁵ Michel Foucault, as quoted in Janet Hart, “Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation,” in Ronald G. Suny and Michael D. Kennedy, eds., *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 176.

²⁶ Paul Baran, as quoted in M. Rajeshwar, *The Intellectual and Society in the Novels of Wole Soyinka* (New Dehli: Prestige Books, 1990), 7.

– NATION DEFINED

Vine Deloria, Jr. explains that in common parlance and in the law of nations, the terms state and nation are used to import the same thing. A nation is a body of people united together to procure their mutual safety and advantage; it has “its affairs and interests to manage; it deliberates, and takes resolutions in common, and thus having an understanding and a will peculiar to itself, and is susceptible of obligations and laws.”²⁷ Anthony D. Smith, one of the contemporary scholars concerned with theorizing nationalism and identity, defines modern nations as larger and more developed communities with their own sovereign territorial republics, party organizations, languages, and cultures.²⁸ Generally, indigenous people use the term nation to connote a group of people who share a common heritage, language, geography, culture, political system, and desire for common association.²⁹

Modern nations are internationally recognized by other nations as sovereign states. Besides possessing their territories wherein they exercise sovereign prerogatives, worldwide nations have flags, anthems, and other national symbols of their own. But as Vine Deloria, Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle argue in *The Nations Within*, though Indian tribes have some of the ingredients it takes to make a nation, some tribes lack the crowd of people, the well-developed lands, the military and economic power. In spite of this reality, they still claim sovereign nation status.

²⁷ Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 115.

²⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 147.

²⁹ Bernard Nietschmann, as adapted from Donna Dwiggin, “Ancient Symbols/Contemporary Tools: Forging Counterhegemonic Coalitions in Ecuador,” *WSR* 14:1 (1999), 30.

The concept of sovereignty has been debated in modern history for its political currency. It dominates much contemporary discourse within tribal nations. Sovereignty is either wielded as a sword, in demands for rights of self-determination consistent with their status as independent nations, or as a shield against federal or state abrogation of tribal immunity from lawsuits. Dan Philpott clarifies two points in his discourse on sovereignty. First, it is a modern notion of political authority; second, despite its fluctuations in time, the term has preserved a consistent core meaning, i.e., “a supreme authority within a territory.” Besides providing some historical variants of the concept, he points out that it can be understood along three dimensions – the holder of sovereignty, the internal and external dimensions of sovereignty, and the absoluteness of sovereignty. Although Philpott is correct in locating the state as its embodiment, his Eurocentric elaboration on its history leaves out indigenous practices of government:

[Sovereignty] can be understood through two broad movements, manifested in both practical institutions and political thought. The first is the development of a system of sovereign states, culminating at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Contemporaneously, sovereignty became prominent in political thought through the writings of Machiavelli, Luther, Bodin, and Hobbes. The second movement is the circumscription of the sovereign state, which began in practice after World War II and has since continued through European integration and the growth and strengthening of laws and practices to protect human rights.³⁰

This European monopoly on the concept might have led some scholars to charge that European states were sovereign and equal among themselves, an observation which prompts Antony Anghie to theorize that the colonial confrontation was not a confrontation between two sovereign states; it was, rather, between a sovereign European nation and a non-European society

³⁰ Dan Philpott, “Sovereignty,” in Edward N. Zalta, ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2003 edition), available at <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2003/entries/sovereignty> (consulted on 12/21/2003).

that Europeans deemed to be lacking in sovereignty.³¹ However, Justice Smith Thompson's dissenting opinion in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* locates sovereignty as inherent in every state that governs itself by its own authority and laws: "Every nation that governs itself, under what form soever, without any dependence on a foreign power, is a sovereign state. Its rights are naturally the same as those of any other state."³² In this vein, the right to cheat a less powerful nation with impunity is a misleading definition of sovereignty.³³

Sovereignty derives from the Latin word *superanus* and denotes a state of being rather than a process of becoming. In common parlance, it means the ability to make one's own rules; sovereignty implies a complete independence and entails a supreme power over a body politic. Samuel R. Cook suggests that a true sovereignty is the capacity of any community to be free from external control; from his theoretical perspective, sovereignty must come from within, not from any outside forces.³⁴ In their contributions to the debate on sovereignty, some Indian scholars move that the concept be applied to tribes and individuals alike.³⁵

The term "sovereign" refers to a royal power, which the United States, as a nation, neglected. Instead, Americans substituted the sovereignty in the person of King George III with the sovereignty of "the people." In a study of the early history of American constitutionalism, historian and law scholar Christian G. Fritz notes that the application of the doctrine of popular

³¹ Antony Anghie, *Colonialism, Sovereignty, and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5.

³² Justice Thompson, as quoted in Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties*, 116. I give the facts of *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* in chapter IV.

³³ Judge S. Russell, "Sovereign Decisions: A Plan for Defeating Federal Review of Tribal Law Applications," *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 69.

³⁴ Samuel R. Cook, "The Monacan Indian Nation: Asserting Tribal Sovereignty in the Absence of Federal Recognition," *WSR* 17:2 (2002), 106-7.

³⁵ Warrior, "Intellectual Sovereignty and the Struggle for an American Indian Future," *WSR* 8:1 (1992), 18; Jack D. Forbes, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty: Implications for Native Studies and for Native Intellectuals," *WSR* 13:1 (1998), 14-5.

sovereignty has received particular emphasis in the United States. Political scientist Donald S. Lutz provides various American applications of this doctrine prior to the Civil War:

To speak of popular sovereignty is to place ultimate authority in the people. There are a variety of ways in which sovereignty may be expressed. It may be immediate in the sense that the people make the law themselves, or mediated through representatives who are subject to election and recall; it may be ultimate in the sense that the people have a negative or veto over legislation, or it may be something much less dramatic. In short, popular sovereignty covers a multitude of institutional possibilities. In each case, however, popular sovereignty assumes the existence of some form of popular consent, and it is for this reason that every definition of republican government implies a theory of consent.³⁶

The central tenet of popular sovereignty is that legitimacy of the state is based on the consent its people, who are the source of all political power. The American constitution draws its authority, in theory, from the people, not from the divine rights of kings; it defines the people as the collective sovereign whose written constitution grants the legitimate exercise of government authority.³⁷ From the start, then, there was no “supreme power;” the constitution limited sovereignty both in its federal system and in the Bill of Rights. In sum, the doctrine of popular sovereignty holds that the will of the people is the only right standard of political action in a society organized for political action. Thus, acting collectively as the sovereign, the people create a government, select and replace those who hold public office, and change their political institutions through constitutional revision procedures.

³⁶ Donald S. Lutz, *Popular Consent and Popular Control: Whig Political Theory in the Early State Constitutions* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 38.

³⁷ Christian G. Fritz, *American Sovereigns: The People and America's Constitutional Tradition Before the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-10.

Characterizing the status of Indian nations is a complex exercise, because these nations are simultaneously sovereign and dependent nations.³⁸ Among others, certification of tribal membership is an instance of American involvement in matters sovereign to Indian nations. The federal government has historically used a minimum blood quantum standard to determine eligibility to receive treaty rights. However, tribes have the exclusive right to set their own legal definitions of identity and to do so in any way they choose.³⁹

Though the United States is disputing this principle, many legal scholars concur that the power to determine tribal membership is a sovereign power that incontrovertibly belongs to tribal nations, a fundamental theory that informs Cook-Lynn's scholarship. There is no evidence suggesting that any of the American indigenous nations have given up their right to claim who their citizens are, Cook-Lynn hammers home this point, anticipating that nothing will change this in the future: "Citizenship in Indian/tribal specific nationhood is a national right retained by native nations in America."⁴⁰ Cook-Lynn disputes U.S. legal theories that confer a semi-sovereign status on tribal nations, and instead claims their full sovereignty. Her conviction that native intellectuals must protect tribal sovereignty against U.S. assaults motivates her choice of

³⁸ See, particularly, the following works: Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties*; Deloria and Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice*; Deloria and Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998); David E. Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U.S. Supreme Court: The Masking of Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997); David E. Wilkins and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *Uneven Ground: American Indian Sovereignty and Federal Law* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001); Deloria and Wilkins, *Tribes, Treaties, and Constitutional Tribulations* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).

³⁹ Eva M. Garrouette, *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1-60.

⁴⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 79.

Indian nations as the constituencies of Native studies.⁴¹ Cook-Lynn's political socialization can help explain this ideological stance.

Robert J. Brym theorizes the political identity of intellectuals and contends that intellectuals receive their first dose of political socialization from their families. As they grow older, however, they experience a secondary political socialization that could sway their initial political views. Little change occurs in their initial political orientations if they have travelled a short distance. However, if they have come a long way, they form new political values and forget the old ones.⁴²

Pinpointing any drastic change in Cook-Lynn's initial political socialization is a daunting challenge; she has remained a Dakota native in her unflinching advocacy for Indian nations. For instance, her strong conviction that Indian scholars must advocate for Indian nations dictates her functionalist conceptualization of Indian art, which must primarily defend Indian nationhood, besides serving its aesthetic function.⁴³ Her own body of work articulates a nation centered theory, with Indian nationhood crisscrossing it.

Early exposure to Indian nationhood has profoundly influenced Cook-Lynn's worldviews; so much so that nationalism becomes the central theme of her scholarship:

As a writer, I am one of the few who does not rail against Nationalism. I do not think Nationalism is a human defect. On the contrary, Nationalism is a vital component of Civilization. I do not deny the inchoate United States or any other entity its right to become a nation in support of its people. In that same context, I defend the right of the Great Sioux Nation, the Oceti Shakowan, the same privilege. We occupy hundreds of thousands of acres of land in the Northern Plains and *we are a nation of people*.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Cook-Lynn, "Reclaiming American Indian Studies," *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 172; "American Indian Studies: An Overview," 20.

⁴² Robert J. Brym, *Intellectuals and Politics* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1980), 62.

⁴³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 43.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, xi; italics in the original.

Moreover, she cites the advocacy for native nationhood as a prime reason behind her scholarship, an additional element to support claim of her organic intellectualism:

In my lifetime the inexorable logic of Indian life in America has undergone deliberate diminishment. In my lifetime hundreds of thousands of acres of treaty protected indigenous lands have been lost to Sioux Nation title, thousands of Lakotas and Dakotas have been forced away from their home because of anti-Indian legislation and poverty and federal Indian policy. It is because of these losses that I write. Today, America's tongue is cloaked in ignorance and racism and imperialism as much as it was during the westward-movement era; and "removal" is still the infuriating thrust of Indian/white relations. The tribal tongue of Nativism, by contrast, struggles to foretell a future filled with uncertainty. It is because of this reality that I write.⁴⁵

Despite the treaties, the Indian nations are enduring a colonial system in many respects similar to those that Europeans established in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Indian subjugation and dispossession compel Cook-Lynn to consider writing as a question of survival, an existential issue. Thus, she devotes substantial intellectual labor to the Black Hills land case to demand change in the federal laws that dispossess Indians of their treaty-protected lands. She articulates the ways in which the Sioux (real or fictional) cling stubbornly onto their last bit of land. Her fictional depiction of the flooding of treaty-protected lands along the Missouri River – in *From the River's Edge* – illustrates the importance of land to worldwide native people. In all, Cook-Lynn argues that U.S.-Indian policies violate the basic principles of justice and that federal Indian law principles are racist.⁴⁶

Cook-Lynn's narrative about Indian land is shared by two theorists on imperialism, Frantz Fanon and Edward W. Said, both of whom hold that the experienced materiality of colonialism is grounded in the dispossession and repossession of land. Cook-Lynn takes the fight over Indian land very seriously, because a main battle in imperialism is over land. Fanon expresses the need for endless battle to keep indigenous land from the colonizer's grab: "For a

⁴⁵ Ibid., ix.

⁴⁶ Cook-Lynn, "Editor's Commentary," *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 7; *Notebooks*, 60-66.

colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity.” Said equally locates the land as the epicenter of colonialism: “To think about distant places, to colonize them, to populate or depopulate them: all of this occurs on, about, or because of land. The actual geographical possession of land is what empire in the final analysis is all about.”⁴⁷ And, as I demonstrate shortly before concluding chapter IV, Cook-Lynn’s advocacy for Indian land is grounded in a land-nation relationship. A nation does not exist without land, according to Cook-Lynn; they are two sides of the same coin. This intimate relationship between them spurs her defense of Indian land.

Cook-Lynn’s defense of Indian nations moves her writing into the category of nationalist resistance discourse, a reminder that resistance always accompanies all forms of domination.⁴⁸ However, her absolute belief in the supremacy of Indian sovereignty and subsequent nationalistic views alienate other native intellectuals. For instance, Cook-Lynn states that Indians avoid talking about encroachments on their sovereign rights. She even makes a sweeping accusation, exaggerating that most Indians will walk away once treaty-related discussions are brought up. They would not concern themselves with improving tribal governments, she charges, contending that trivialities hold center stage in their conversations: “All they want to talk about is Leonard Peltier. They don’t want to talk about how to make tribal government work. They want to talk about the hairdo on James Brown the last time he was picked up for domestic violence. And

⁴⁷ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*; trans. Constance Farrington (Middlesex, U. K.: Penguin, 1967), 44; Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 78.

⁴⁸ See Fanon, “On National Culture,” (pp. 36-52) and Amilcar Cabral, “National Liberation and Resistance,” (pp. 53-65), in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

when you try to talk with them about treaty matters, there's no one to talk to.”⁴⁹ Apparently, she seems to imply that she is among the few people interested in Indian treaties.

Cook-Lynn's nationalistic ideology sustains her critique of American assaults on tribal nations and propels her advocacy for tribal nationalism, sovereignty, government, and indigenism; it equally prompts her denunciation of the plenary power the United States claims over Indian nations, a legal theory which holds them in tight grip.⁵⁰ And, as Cook-Lynn sees it, this claim has no end in sight: “A sad postscript to this dismal history is that it is still true that there is not much of a track record in America that tells us this great democracy wants to uphold Indian Treaty Rights and acknowledge Tribal Sovereignty.”⁵¹

Although I rely on Cook-Lynn's essays to underscore her preoccupation with the erosion of Indian sovereignty in the previous paragraphs, her creative writing equally takes up its gradual decline. For instance, *Aurelia* critiques U.S. colonization of a sovereign people, the Sioux nation. The story concerns the trial of a white man who is accused of rustling cattle from John Tatekeya, a respected Sioux Indian rancher. On its surface, then, this novel deals with Tatekeya's legal tribulations to secure the return of his stolen cattle but its underlying concern is the economic and environmental impacts of the Missouri Dam Project on the Sioux nation.⁵² For the record, Congress violated treaty provisions that required the consent of the Sioux and authorized its construction (in 1944) before informing them. The legal nightmare that accompanied the Project, as James Stripes and Kathleen Danker point out, are paralleled by Tatekeya's legal battles over

⁴⁹ Cook-Lynn, “Keynote Address: Indian Studies – How It Looks Back at Us after Twenty Years,” *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 180.

⁵⁰ Cook-Lynn, “Editor's Commentary,” *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 5-6; “Land Reform,” *WSR* 14:1 (1999), 103-112. Above all, *Aurelia* epitomizes her criticism of this claim.

⁵¹ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 60-1.

⁵² Michael L. Lawson details the impacts of the flooding on Indian communities in *Dammed Indians: The Pick-Sloan Plan and the Missouri River Sioux, 1944-1980* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982).

his stolen cattle. In a miscarriage of justice, the victim is made to look like the guilty party. Tatekeya's personal story of a court case "won," with no real victory but with significant personal loss, metaphorically stands for the Sioux's treatment by the United States and symbolizes the socio-political situation of Indian nations in North America.⁵³ Also, Tatekeya's Euro-American attorney's ignorance of the irony in the "justice" he "wins" in court represents America's ignorance of First Nation status and sovereignty.⁵⁴ Cook-Lynn unveils this ignorance by detailing the impositions of mainstream values on Indian cultures. In the final analysis, *Aurelia* advances a political agenda for the recognition of Indian sovereignty.⁵⁵

Cook-Lynn's other books provide evidence of her nationalist viewpoint. She penetrates political and intellectual issues that persist among Indian academics, in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*. Her collaboration with an Ogala Sioux attorney, Mario Gonzalez, yields *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, a book that chronicles the Sioux's legal struggles to obtain a formal apology from the federal government for the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre. Her most recent books underscore her commitment to defending Indian nations. While Cook-Lynn advocates radical pedagogy in Native studies as a way to empower Indian nations in *New Indians, Old Wars*, she advances some concrete proposals to solve their socio-political imbroglio in her *Notebooks*. She holds that poverty is eroding tribal nations and proposes that a type of Marshall Plan be put in place so that Indians can collect on their assets and revamp vital institutions on Indian Reservations. She calls on American scholars and policymakers to connect

⁵³ James Stripes, "'We Think in Terms of What Is Fair': Justice Versus 'Just Compensation' in Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's *From the River's Edge*," *WSR* 2: 1 (1997), 165-187; Kathleen Danker, "'The Violation of the Earth': Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's *From the River's Edge* in the Historical Context of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Dam Project," *WSR* 12: 2 (1997), 85-93.

⁵⁴ Page Rozelle, "The Teller and the Tale: History and the Oral Tradition in Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's *Aurelia: A Crow Creek Trilogy*," *American Indian Quarterly* 25:2 (2001), 204.

⁵⁵ See http://voices.cla.umn.edu/vg/Bios/entries/cooklynn_elizabeth.html (consulted on 1/26/07).

politics, pedagogy, and ethics for the sake of social justice.⁵⁶ In fairness, Cook-Lynn's advocacy for Indian nations prompts me to speculate on the significance of her scholarship for these nations.

Scholars on nationalism have long appreciated the centrality of intellectuals to national consciousness and political mobilization. For instance, Edward Shils suggests in *The Intellectuals and the Powers* that intellectuals link people, power, and territory to notions of representation, self-determination, and sovereignty. While Kwame Nkrumah, Anthony D. Smith, and Partha Chatterjee underscore the roles of the intellectuals in nationalist movements, Benedict Anderson theorizes the nation as an imagined political community and underlines the instrumentality of intellectuals in its imagining.⁵⁷ Michael D. Kennedy and Ronald G. Suny corroborate this thesis, arguing that intellectuals deploy the very language and universe of meaning in which a nation becomes possible:

For those who have thought of the nation as always with us, a real, natural given of social existence, intellectuals were those who articulated what was actually there but has remained hidden, the pervasive submerged presence of the national in conditions of unfreedom and unconsciousness. Intellectuals were enlighteners, liberators, the articulators of the national spirit that had to be revived, reborn, resurrected.⁵⁸

At the end of the day, intellectuals cannot be underestimated in the emergence of a nation, because nations *are* narrations, in the first place. Michael Keren's case study of the Israeli nation

⁵⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 183-4.

⁵⁷ Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970); Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995); Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁵⁸ Suny and Kennedy, eds., op. cit., 2-3.

definitely epitomizes the creative roles of intellectuals in the forming of modern nations. Intellectuals are, in the final analysis, one of the important forces behind nation formation.⁵⁹

An organic intellectual and activist, Cook-Lynn advocates the resurgence of tribal nationalism as essential to the continuance of Indian nations. She does not shy away from seeing Indian communities as sovereign nations located inside the mightiest military power on the face of the earth. Cook-Lynn's scholarship bursts Indian nations into the American consciousness; she keeps up the guard for Indian nations and definitely remains their lighthouse in the sea.

Cook-Lynn is not only the lightning rod regarding the defense of Indian nations; she equally remains the prime defender of the indigenoussness of Native Americans. Indigenoussness is defined as "living naturally in an area; not introduced; native." Her defense of Indian nations is closely tied to her views on the indigenoussness of native people in the Northern Hemisphere; so much so that she refutes any theories on Indian migration to this continent:

[W]hat scientists are trying to prove and document for posterity is that Indians are migrants, like everyone else, to this continent, that they came here like pioneers looking for a place to settle, and they did that and now their time is gone and so are they. Most of the work of these scientists is based upon the "empty continent" idea so dear to American and European colonists, and the Bering Strait Theory of migration so acceptable to everyone except most Indians.⁶⁰

Cook-Lynn's works – both fiction and essays – defend the indigeneity of Indians, whom she hails as the "landlords and citizens of the First Nations." Her fictional characters in *Aurelia* are vocal about their indigenoussness to the land and apparently share an intimate connection with the landscape; they claim to be "recognized by the land and the rivers as relatives in a primordial and unforgettable journey that told them who they were."⁶¹ At other moments, they mock the foreignness of European settlers to assert their indigenous identity: "The Sioux must find our

⁵⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Michael Keren, "Intellectuals and the Open Society in Israel," in Gagnon, ed., op. cit., 143-153.

⁶⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 105.

⁶¹ Cook-Lynn, *Aurelia*, 459.

origins by looking ahead, not behind us. We know who our mothers and our fathers are. We're not like some who claim not to know who their fathers are. Like the colonists who are looking at England. Europe. Or Spain. For their fathers." Cook-Lynn's characters are absolutely convinced of their indigeneity: one of them even sarcastically states, "To know your father in the native world is to know you are not an immigrant. Not a colonist. Us Sioux know that we are not just some obscure tribe in the wilderness, fatherless seekers of a colonist's definition in the New World."⁶² In the end, they are definitely positive about their indigeneity: "They know this land in terms of relationships long standing, they claim to know the stars of the universe as their relatives, as well as the rocks and natural creatures." Like her fictional characters, Cook-Lynn defends Indian indigeneity in her essays and rejects any Indian migration theories. Indians are forever indigenous to North America, Cook-Lynn asserts, working furiously to disprove that Indians came to this continent across the Bering Strait from Asia.⁶³ As one might suspect, her defense of Indian nationhood and indigenesness is closely linked to her views on tribal legacies.

b) HISTORICAL REVISIONIST AND DEFENDER OF TRIBAL LEGACIES

In stating the core tenet of her scholarship, Cook-Lynn locates herself as a historical revisionist and defender of Indian legacies: "A people's national history cannot simply be stamped out or ignored or relegated to obscurity. A nation does not cease to exist simply because another nation wishes it so."⁶⁴ The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main

⁶² Ibid., 402-3.

⁶³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 54-61; "In the American Imagination, the Land and Its Original Inhabitants: An Indian Viewpoint," *WSR* 6:2 (1990), 42-47.

⁶⁴ Cook-Lynn and Mario Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground: Wounded Knee and the Struggle for Indian Sovereignty* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 7.

connections between them.⁶⁵ Resistance to ideologies of dominance takes many forms other than just the violent insurrection that Fanon advocates in his anti-colonial manifesto, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Colonized people can gain agency by offering and establishing a counter ideological narrative to the dominant one and move from fatal histories to empowering ones. Cook-Lynn writes back to counter the mainstream renderings of Indian history, for that matter.⁶⁶

Cook-Lynn's oeuvre is an antidote to American imperialistic history. The American imperialistic history has been written in terms that are acceptable to American society as a whole, according to Cook-Lynn. And, as I argue in chapter III, it is a one-sided narration. The subordinate role of Indians in U.S.-Indian history prompts Cook-Lynn to examine it from an Indianist perspective. She starts off her quarrel with the dominant history by critiquing the omnipresence and omnipotence of the mainstream voice in the narration of the United States. During the early years of the republic, Cook-Lynn comments, "the individual white voice was ubiquitous while the individual Indian voice was rarely heard, even suppressed. Indian history is often informed by notions of Indian inferiority and failures, racial hatred, degrading stereotypes, and convenient rationalizations for imperialism."⁶⁷ Moreover, Cook-Lynn argues that American history ignores Indian treaties and undervalues the legacies of Indian nations. This situation drives her systematic account of U.S.-Indian history from an Indianist viewpoint. Seemingly, her counter-hegemonic narration vindicates Indian history and rehabilitates the legacies of Indian nations.

⁶⁵ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 8.

⁶⁶ Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688-1804* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Bill Ashcroft et al., *The Empire Writes Back* (New York: Routledge, 1989); Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin, *Decolonising Fictions* (New South Wales, Australia: Dangaroo Press, 1993).

⁶⁷ Cook-Lynn, "The Lewis and Clark Story, the Captive Narrative, and the Pitfalls of Indian History," *WSR* 19:1 (2004), 22-3.

Cook-Lynn, at times, proves innovative in her defense of Indian legacies. For instance, mainstream scholars traditionally turn to James F. Cooper, William Faulkner, and Wallace Stegner to study the American imagination about the land and its indigenous people. Deliberately, Cook-Lynn goes to the other side of the fence which is far less likely to make Americans proud. So her essays highlight the plight of Indian communities, conflict with the master narrative about the land and its indigenous populations, and underscore Indians' quarrels with the adulteration of their histories. American Indians, Cook-Lynn maintains, "want their own histories as the indigenes to be contextualized in the land they have claimed from time immemorial."⁶⁸ Clearly, she advocates a new era in understanding the Indian and American past and seeks to validate Indian viewpoints in her essays, as she does in her creative writing.

Because Cook-Lynn's scholarship purports to examine "the dichotomy between the stories that Indian America tells and the stories that White America tells," her fiction takes up inaccuracies pertaining to U.S.-Indian history as well.⁶⁹ For instance, *Aurelia* connects political history with everyday tribal stories and traditional myths and shows certain discrepancies between the stories narrated by settlers and American Indians. Cook-Lynn calls the U.S. narrative arrogant, and unleashes a thunderous criticism about the narrative of American history.⁷⁰ To some extent, the virulence of her criticism of the subordinate history of Indians entails her seriousness about revising it. Her tenacious rebuttals of U.S. historical fallacies establish her revisionist credentials.

Cook-Lynn employs three methods of conceiving a U.S.-Indian history that makes room for Indian legacies: dissection of U.S. colonial history, language analysis, and critiquing existing scholarship. She generally examines United States and Indian narratives of history in order to

⁶⁸ Cook-Lynn, "In the American Imagination," 42; *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 54.

⁶⁹ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 64.

⁷⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 10-14.

evaluate the type of language used in their renderings. This process generates an intertextual weave rife with conflicting interpretations of the same event. Her review makes U.S. colonial history a prime site of inaccuracies, at best, and a terrain of propaganda, for certain.⁷¹

Through a critical analysis of the language used in U.S. colonial history, then, Cook-Lynn confronts the dominant story and challenges the stereotypes of Indians that have passed into mainstream culture. She notes, for example, that word choices in the mainstream version of U.S.-Indian history downplay warfare. “During wartime, opposing armies take prisoners, usually under a variety of conditions. In ‘uprisings,’ ‘breakouts,’ or ‘conflicts,’ using not the language of warfare but that of dominant propaganda, colonial historians tell us that marauding, savage Indians take captives for evil intent.” This illustration helps explain her heavy investment in language analysis as a stepping stone to critiquing U.S. colonial historians: “language has been used in Indian-white histories to develop and sustain an ideology that denigrates Indians without questioning the culpability of U.S. expansionism.” This careful choice of words, Cook-Lynn argues, excuses “the stealing of America and the killing of its Indigenous peoples.” Consequently, she charges that such an inaccurate rendering of the past neglects criminal acts and denies justice for the victims.⁷²

Likewise, Cook-Lynn tackles the issue of conquest, another contentious point infused with a double language: “The point that is often neglected, when the discussion of ‘conquest’ is undertaken in American history, is that ‘conquest’ everywhere in the world including America has meant genocide, deicide, and theft of lands.” Though this entails criminality, the United

⁷¹ Cook-Lynn provides context and analysis of U.S.-Indian treaties to prove that mainstream scholarship distorts U.S.-Indian history. See, for instance, her guide to *Aurelia*, in *Notebooks* (pp. 48-52); her article on the Black Hills case, in *WSR* 5:1 (1988), 1-17; and “The Lewis and Clark Story,” 21-33.

⁷² Cook-Lynn, “The Lewis and Clark Story,” 24.

States grants itself immunity in its attempt to rid itself of Indians.⁷³ In no uncertain terms, then, Cook-Lynn holds that the written tradition abuses words for propagandistic goals. This view drives her to denounce the epic of the Lewis and Clark journey, a colonial odyssey which was the first step in the destruction of Indian nations.⁷⁴ It equally triggers her long fulmination over the raising of Valentine T. McGillicuddy, the head of the Pine Ridge Agency and one of the most controversial figures on the American frontier, to heroic status:

During the McGillicuddy years, Indian leaders were assassinated, an occupational police force was settled on all of the Indian homelands, U.S. Armies roamed the countryside killing natives at will, spiteful and self-serving stories by whites born of racist theories harbored for generations were raised to the stature of Historiography, and dozens of laws were passed to disenfranchise natives. At a time when native peoples had no access to the U.S. court systems, Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull and hundreds of other leaders were assassinated by federal troops; the Major Crimes Act went into effect, eliminating traditional native law and order structures, causing endemic chaos; the Allotment Act was passed in violation of treaty rights, bringing a loss of land and economic survival; native children were stolen from their homes and sent to boarding schools, sometimes never to return. A disturbingly large number of people in the Midwest now believe that Indians, made homeless and poverty-stricken by these policies, are simply to accept their fate and accept McGillicuddy not as an anti-Indian bureaucrat, but as a hero of the people.⁷⁵

Unlike the oral tradition (which ascribes specific functions to language), the written world manipulates language for propagandistic goals. Indianists accuse U.S. colonial historians of whitewashing the awful deeds of colonialism by means of language manipulation. N. Scott Momaday, for instance, argues that Indians have been silenced by the oral tradition and imputes the iniquities which inform the history of U.S.-Indian relations to the complexities of language in written and oral traditions. Because languages are slow to change in the oral tradition and represent a greater investment on the part of society, its use of words requires a moral consideration:

⁷³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 93.

⁷⁴ Cook-Lynn, "The Lewis and Clark Story," 21-33; *Notebooks*, 99.

⁷⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 164.

My words exist at the level of my voice. If I do not speak with care, my words are wasted. If I do not listen with care, words are lost. If I do not remember carefully, the very purpose of words is frustrated. This respect for words suggests an inherent morality in man's understanding and use of language. Moreover, that moral comprehension is everywhere evident in American Indian speech. On the other hand, the written tradition tends to encourage indifference to language. That is to say, writing produces a false security where our attitudes toward language are concerned. We take liberties with words; we become blind to their sacred aspect.⁷⁶

The written tradition, some indigenous scholars argue, trivializes words; it establishes a cosmic disconnect between colonial actions and their renderings.⁷⁷ Cook-Lynn lashes out at most mainstream scholars for perpetuating historical untruths. Her speech at a conference held at the Gulch Convention Center, Deadwood, South Dakota, illustrates her confrontational method.

Cook-Lynn was among the poets and historians to present their stories at this conference. Prior to the event she stated her dislike of the venue: Deadwood is an "ugly town based in an ugly history and populated by an ugly people." She expressed her amazement that none of the guests mentioned the "theft and genocide that is at the heart of the town's history and present condition" during the entire event; rather, they were rationalizing its history of killing and land dispossession. Cook-Lynn narrated her version of Deadwood's story and indicted her fellow guests: "Historians and poets and writers have spent the last hundred years telling us lies: that the invasion by whites was a success, the battlefield victory of the Indians was not, and the future is for those who claim it whichever way they can."⁷⁸ For Cook-Lynn, the neglect of genocide by most writers and historians is not surprising, because they mislead the public. Without mincing

⁷⁶ N. Scott Momaday, "Personal Reflections," in Calvin Martin, ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of Indian History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 160.

⁷⁷ See, for example, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1986) and Lois J. Einhorn, *The Native American Oral Tradition: Voices of the Spirit and Soul* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000).

⁷⁸ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 128. For instance, Cook-Lynn reprimands Paiute poet Adrian C. Louis for his fraudulent "interpretation of the act of shooting Sitting Bull as an internecine act, rather than as the colonial extermination event that it probably was." See her full diatribe in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* (pp. 8-18).

her words, she accuses them of telling white lies to the general public.⁷⁹ For Cook-Lynn, it is troubling that scholars are taking liberties with history, while lay persons of the Wounded Knee Association demand an accurate account of the Wounded Knee Massacre. Under these circumstances, reconciliation between Indian nations and the United States seems impossible by Cook-Lynn's standard; she poses a revision of fallacies in U.S.-Indian history as a *sine qua non* condition for that matter.⁸⁰

U.S.-Indian history is replete with blatant inaccuracies but only a handful of scholars interrogate them for a balanced story's sake. Cook-Lynn takes up the challenge of revisioning it and claims this dissenting narrative as her turf. Her critique of the American narrative falls into the category of resistance literature, i.e., a scholarship which participates in an organized struggle for national liberation.⁸¹ I see commonalities between the scholarly productions by Cook-Lynn and George Lamming, because of my previous work on Lamming and Paule Marshall. Her scholarship parallels Lamming's oeuvre in that it seeks to delegitimize the colonial rule. Cook-Lynn warrants examination as an anti-colonial intellectual in this context.

c) ANTI-COLONIAL WRITER

In spite of the fact that general public or scholarly talk about "colonization" as it applies to American Indians has been absent from much of the historical discourse because of the national obsession with "assimilation" in the first part of this century, and "multiculturalism" or "diversity" in the latter decades, anticolonial forces have

⁷⁹ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 127. Although it permeates her scholarship and other writings, here are a few examples. Cook-Lynn critiques James Michener, an "activist historian," and David Miller, a history professor at Black Hills State University, who opposes any legislation for the return of the Black Hills to the Sioux Nation. Her critique of Stegner equally comes to mind. And, as I indicated earlier, she is critical of every scholar who entertains the idea of Indian migration to America: see *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* (pp. 56-61).

⁸⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 41-59 and 159-170; Cook-Lynn and Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, 39.

⁸¹ Stephen Slemon, "Unsettling the Empire: Resistance Theory for the Second World," in Bill Ashcroft et al., eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (1st ed., New York: Routledge, 1995), 107.

always been at work on the native homelands of the United States and in Sioux Country in particular.⁸²

Discourses of resistance dominate the critical intellectual traditions of colonial societies. Cook-Lynn's critique of colonialism is reminiscent of Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Aimé Césaire, George Lamming, Edward Said, Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, Amílcar Cabral, and others. She defends the survival of Indian nations against popular theses in anti-Indian scholarship that Indian had vanished. An anti-Indian scholarship is any work "which treats Indians and their tribes as though they don't exist," in Cook-Lynn's definition.⁸³ Cook-Lynn may have understood very little about the colonial world of her childhood, but her family fostered her political identity. Her anti-colonial stance continues the opposition of previous generations of Indians who may not have used the pen as a weapon of choice.

The title of her recent book, *New Indians, Old Wars*, suggests the continuation of the Indian resistance tradition. She carries on its new mode by critiquing the colonial rule foisted on Indian nations. Her anti-colonial stance embodies the resistance at the heart of discourses in colonial societies:

The literatures of colonial societies are marked by a peculiar economy that sustains a high degree of mobilization around certain social issues. Consequently, these literatures have seldom known the luxury of art for art's sake or the difficulties of exploring the more elusive metaphysical foundations of everyday life. Rather, from birth, the production of discourses in colonial societies is deeply enmeshed in a particular social conflict: the attempts of the colonizers to establish and legitimate their rule, and the attempts of the native population to resist and delegitimize this external imposition.⁸⁴

⁸² Cook-Lynn and Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, 27-8.

⁸³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, x.

⁸⁴ Paget Henry and Paul Buhle, "Caliban as Deconstructionist: C. L. R. James and Post-Colonial Discourse," in Henry and Buhle, eds., *C. L. R. James's Caribbean* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 111.

Cook-Lynn's scholarly production belongs to a body of resistance culture. She routinely objects to the assumption that Indian communities are unable to govern themselves and to the corresponding notions of them being a domestic dependent nation and that the United States was motivated by a mission in colonizing Indian nations. She exposes broken treaties, land thefts, tribal murders, and U.S. government malfeasances in her body of work. Reminiscent of Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism*, one of the virulent anti-colonial literary pieces produced during the post World War II period, Cook-Lynn's scholarship puts the colonial question front and center. Her critique of U.S. avarice and her determination to decolonize Indian nations recall the anti-colonial revolution in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean from the late thirties to the early seventies.

Cook-Lynn is a confirmed anti-colonial scholar; she dissects the colonial system in a Césairean fashion and examines its barbaric instruments. Césaire, a Martiniquean poet and politician, postulates that colonialism works to undo the civilization of the colonizers. He determines that colonizers employ violent methods – torture, intimidation, assassination, race hatred, and religious persecution – to achieve their objectives. Cook-Lynn argues, like Césaire, that colonialism generates material and spiritual havoc. Moreover, Césaire's contention that colonialism sees the world through the lenses of forced labor, intimidation, theft, exploitation, and murder parallels Cook-Lynn's description of the Siouxan colonial experience:

Sioux Indians were forced to beat and kill and otherwise menace their own people on their own lands in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Compulsory service of one kind or another was forced upon the Sioux on their own treaty lands during this period of extermination and genocide.⁸⁵

Cook-Lynn adamantly holds that colonialism plays havoc with the colonized. This view grounds her anti-colonial posture and explains her bashing of colonialism's self-proclaimed benefits. She utilizes a caustic anti-colonial rhetoric to deconstruct and delegitimize the system:

⁸⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 10-11; Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (rprt. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000).

The recent re-creation of the Lewis and Clark Journal, as a literary and historical manifestation of the American epic to be honored in our collective memories is told and retold not as a colonial event resulting in the death of thousands of Indians and the theft of a continent from peoples who had lived here for thousands of years; rather, it is told as an event of grand achievement. Much of what American Indian literary works have been doing has been to dispute that legacy of colonial intrusion.⁸⁶

As a participant in disputing the legacy of colonial invasion, Cook-Lynn paints a bleak picture of the Lewis and Clark expedition. This is her latest criticism of U.S. colonization of Indian nations in which she squarely refutes the idea that the United States subdued indigenous nations for their own good. One of the sharp-tongued speakers against American imperialism, Cook-Lynn neither holds the colonial intrusion in Indian nations to be a glorious achievement in the history of the United States nor does she consider it a civilizing mission. Rather, she ridicules colonialism for destroying indigenous civilizations:

In Mexico, the invaders built Christian cathedrals on top of ancient native temples and obliterated the physical traits of civilized Mayan, Olmec, Zapotec, Mixtec, Toltec, and even later Aztec civilizations. It was the attempted and many times successful obliteration of native peoples' ways, customs that had predated the invaders by many, many centuries. Surely that's what foreign sculptors like Ziolkowski and Borglum had in mind when they began blowing up mountains to create Mount Rushmore and Crazy Horse Mountain in the sacred Black Hills of what is now called South Dakota, that essential place of Lakota/Dakota civilization.⁸⁷

In her diatribe against American Empire, then, Cook-Lynn rebuts the redundant arguments generally marshaled to defend the practice and takes the view from the receiving end of colonialism: the killing of indigenous people is the fundamental accomplishment of colonialism. She excavates and publicizes the history of the Indian holocaust in her entire oeuvre to prove her claim. "The repression of American native peoples during the last century is one of the least known genocidal stories of our time," Cook-Lynn argues, stating that the colonization

⁸⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 11.

⁸⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 127.

of Indian nations means genocide and theft of lands.⁸⁸ Her exposition of the Indian holocaust legitimates claims that the spilling of blood of innocent victims lurks behind the colonial enterprise. Cook-Lynn quotes unspecified sources that estimate “eighty million Indians were killed on this continent in less than a hundred years.”⁸⁹ Moreover, to generate a sensitive understanding of the Indian case, she compares anti-Indianism to anti-Semitism and establishes similarities between both holocausts.⁹⁰ Other scholars have relied on archaeological sources to substantiate claim that American Indians suffered a holocaust comparable to Nazi Germany’s extermination of “inferior races.” Citing a number of new archaeological studies conducted in eastern North America, for instance, Scott W. Hoefle estimates that 2.5 to 5 million Native Americans were in the continental United States at the time of European contact and that only 237,196 were left at the time of the 1900 census.⁹¹ In my view, arguing about discrepancies between the above-mentioned figures (2.5 to 5 million or 80 million) is a puerile exercise; unless it is critically deployed, such an argument can mask the diabolic nature of colonialism. After all, the sad truth beyond those estimates is that the system sacrifices countless humans whose personal names would never be known. Indeed, colonialism reduces human beings to numbers.

Cook-Lynn’s critique of U.S. colonial practices fits the function of an anti-colonial intellectual and underscores her anti-imperial credentials. She takes issue with the role of the

⁸⁸ Ibid., 188.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 79.

⁹⁰ See, particularly, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 1-23 and 101-103. For aspects of the Jewish Holocaust, see: Elie Wiesel, *Night* (New York: Bantam Book, 1982); Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity* (New York: A Touchtone Book, 1996); Livia Bitton-Jackson, *I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing up in the Holocaust* (New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1997); Debórah Dwork, *Children with a Star: Jewish Youth in Nazi Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); Saul Friedländer, *When Memory Comes* (New York: Farr, Strass and Giroux, 1979); Winfried G. Sebald, *The Emigrants* (London: Harvill Press, 1996); Nechama Tec, *Dry Tears: The Story of a Lost Childhood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Naomi and Alan L. Berger, eds., *Second Generation Voices: Reflections by Children of Holocaust Survivors and Perpetrators* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2001).

⁹¹ Scott W. Hoefle, “Bitter Harvest: The Frontier Legacy of US Internal Violence and Belligerent Imperialism,” *Critique of Anthropology* 24:3 (2004), 281-282.

U.S. government, explores the perverse effects of U.S. colonization on Indian nations, and decries the implementation of the American brand of democracy in Indian Country. She condemns U.S. interference in matters sovereign to Indian nations and denounces America's token governments in native homelands.⁹²

Here lies the bottom line: Cook-Lynn believes that Indian nations are for Indians to save or destroy. This conviction drives her proposal to revamp tribal governments and informs her political demand for Indian self-determination. She strategizes Indian decolonization, advocates sovereign indigenous governance, and devises means to jump-start dysfunctional tribal governments on the ground that Indian nations will be better off if they govern themselves and do not "have to go to the U.S. government and beg for everything." In fact, Cook-Lynn is convinced that the main objective of the United States is to destroy the Sioux nation.⁹³ This conviction reinforces her belief in the forming of decent tribal governments as the only hope for Indian nations in America.⁹⁴ Besides her repeated calls for responsible tribal governments, she constantly admonishes Indian nations to act audaciously, for example, by using "sovereignty instead of just defining and defending it."⁹⁵

As one fundamental theory of international law goes, a weak state may place itself under the protection of a more powerful one without stripping itself of the right of sovereignty and government. In other words, weak states do not "cease to be sovereign and independent states, so long as self-government, and sovereign and independent authority, is left in the administration of the state."⁹⁶ Cook-Lynn's pleas for Indian self-governance find legitimacy in this theory, a

⁹² Cook-Lynn and Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, 219; Cook-Lynn, "Keynote Address: Native Studies," 180; *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 50-63; *Notebooks*, 49.

⁹³ Cook-Lynn and Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, 180.

⁹⁴ Cook-Lynn, "Keynote Address: Native Studies," 184; *Notebooks*, 179-85.

⁹⁵ Cook-Lynn, "Who Stole Native American Studies?," *WSR* 12:1(1997), 20-1.

⁹⁶ Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties*, 116.

grounding force behind her lashing out at “anti-Indians” who are calling for the termination of Indian nations:

[Adrian] Louis’s denigration of tribal politicians seems to give credibility to those white Anti-Indianists who want to abolish tribal government and the sovereign immunity held since time immemorial in tribal enclaves. His Anti-Indianisms are political statements that may be seen as indistinguishable from those expressed by the non-Siouxan residents of the state of South Dakota who want to be rid of tribal enclaves, the “let’s get rid of Indian reservations” or “let’s abrogate Indian treaties” voices.⁹⁷

Cook-Lynn is a hard edge anti-colonial writer; her exploration of anti-Indian themes and denunciation of U.S. colonialism are part of a strategy to liberate Indian nations from America’s tight grip.

The texts of this section indicate Cook-Lynn’s reliance on both fiction and essays to demonstrate her anti-colonial credentials. To show off her anti-imperial stance, Cook-Lynn singularly employs a distinctive subgenre of critical writing as a preferred method: book reviewing. This choice casts her out of step with regard to Lamming’s assignment to anti-colonial scholars. Lamming, a prominent scholar on colonialism and decolonization, holds that an anti-colonial intellectual should engage defining texts of European colonization – such as *The Tempest*, for instance.⁹⁸

The Tempest has received considerable scrutiny from postcolonial theorists.⁹⁹ Lamming’s theory seems credible, given the growing number of anti-colonial scholars who have produced

⁹⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 13.

⁹⁸ Supriya Nair, *Caliban’s Curse: George Lamming and the Revisioning of History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 19; Raphael Dalleo, “Authority and the Occasion for Speaking in the Caribbean Literary Field: Martin Carter and George Lamming,” *Small Axe* 10:2 (2006), 21. Lamming sets the example in his books: *The Pleasures of Exile* (rppt. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992) and *Natives of My Person* (rppt. London: Alison and Busby, 1986).

⁹⁹ Here is a summary of William Shakespeare’s play, *The Tempest*. Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, and his daughter, Miranda, have been stranded for twelve years on an island after Prospero’s jealous brother, Antonio, deposed him and set him adrift with the then three-year-old Miranda. The King’s adviser, Gonzalo, had secretly supplied their boat with plenty of food, water, clothes, and books of

artistic works of allegorical, allusive and/or meta-critical nature based on the narrative of European colonization. In fact, scores of anti-colonial intellectuals have taken issue with European cultural narratives which construct the colonized. *The Empire Writes Back* and *Decolonising Fictions*, for example, provide a stream of anti-imperial critics who have challenged the fiction of Empire and interrogated the ideological bases upon which such imperial texts are grounded.¹⁰⁰ As is detailed in chapter III, Cook-Lynn uses book reviewing to strike at colonialism; she employs this method to shoot back at anti-Indian scholars and to support the legacy and sovereignty of Indian nations.¹⁰¹

Frankly, I was at first baffled by Cook-Lynn's unwavering defense of Indian causes. My assumption that she is living in one of the best nations on the face of the earth caused my puzzlement. In fact, prior to reading Cook-Lynn, my teaching and writing presented the United States as one the greatest democracies in the world. It is needless to say that the rift between my initial representation of, and her scholarly stance on, the United States prompted me to probe the origin of her organic intellectualism. The following section recapitulates the results of my inquiry into her dissenting textual practices.

magic from Prospero's library. Upon arriving on the island, Prospero freed Ariel, a spirit, but bound him to his service. Prospero maintained Ariel's loyalty by repeatedly promising to release him from servitude. He also adopted and raised Caliban, the heir of the island. While Prospero and Miranda taught Caliban religion and their own language, Caliban taught them how to survive on the island. Prospero enslaved Caliban, following his attempted rape of Miranda. But as the rightful ruler of the island, Caliban has come to view Prospero as a usurper and has grown to resent him and his daughter. In turn, Prospero and Miranda viewed Caliban with contempt and disgust.

¹⁰⁰ Though not exhaustive, the list includes, among others: Jean Rhys, Margaret Atwood, Chinua Achebe, V. S. Naipaul, George Lamming, Wilson Harris, and John M. Coetzee.

¹⁰¹ Select examples include her reviews of four books (*Wounded Knee*; *The Broken Cord*; *Black Eagle Child*; and *Black Hills, White Justice*) in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner* (pp. 3-20). In addition, Cook-Lynn has reviewed the following works: Ruth Beebe Hill's *Hanta Yo*, *WSR* 2:1(1986), 38-9; Fergus M. Bordewich's *Killing the White Man's Indian*, *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 228; Maureen Konkle's *Writing Indian Nations*, *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 198-199; and Jeffrey Ostler's *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee*, *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 199-201. Her *Notebooks* (pp. 80-90) provides additional information on her anti-colonial practice.

III) ACCOUNTING FOR COOK-LYNN'S ORGANIC INTELLECTUALISM

If a context influences the production of any given discourse, what elements can account for Cook-Lynn's resistance writing? Cook-Lynn's scholarship leads me to attribute her organic intellectualism to a combination of response to federal Indian policies, family history, and the influence of two Indian intellectuals, in particular, Vine Deloria, Jr. and N. Scott Momaday. The following paragraphs expand on this statement.

Cook-Lynn's response to Indian policies contributed to her organic intellectualism. Generally characterized by colonial domination, Indian policies resulted in abject poverty on Indian reservations. Allotment and assimilation were their cornerstones from 1887 to 1928. Long before Cook-Lynn's birth, the effective implementation of allotment policies which divided tribal lands into individually held plots crippled life on Indian reservations. Because individual allotments were generally too small to be productive, the policies led to severe poverty. With its emphasis on individual families, along with federal Indian education policies and the conferral of U.S. citizenship on American Indians, it was designed to promote assimilation and disrupt Indians' communal life-style. The allotment policies also resulted in the loss of Indian lands, because any tribal land not allotted was made available to non-Indians and eventually Indian-held land could be sold. Studies show that by 1934, when allotment ended, Indians had lost about 180 million acres of their treaty-protected lands after the passage of the Dawes Act.¹⁰² Vine Deloria, Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle, citing John Collier, state that "Indian landholdings were reduced from 138 million acres in 1887 to 48 million in 1934."¹⁰³ Whatever the figure, one thing remains certain: loss of Indian lands meant increased poverty on the reservations. As a result,

¹⁰² Connie F. Erickson, "Many Nations in One: A History of Federal Indian Policy" (Helena, MT: Montana Legislative Council, September 1993), available at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/TitleI/fedIndianhist.pdf>, pages 14-15 (consulted on 10/3/2007).

¹⁰³ Vine Deloria, Jr., and Clifford M. Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 10.

Cook-Lynn has experienced the poverty affecting her Homeland Reservation. She offers this image: “There was little to share except our lives in those early days because great holes of poverty and preferred silence were all around.”¹⁰⁴

Because the allotment and assimilation policies failed dismally, critics called for reforms in Indian policies. So at the request of Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, the Bureau of Indian Affairs commissioned a study in June 1926 to examine the impacts of federal Indian policies on Indians. The study was conducted by the Institute for Government Research, a non-governmental agency located in Washington, D. C. The Institute for Government Research is an association of citizens for cooperating with public officials in the scientific study of government in order to promote efficiency and economy in its operations and advance the science of administration. It claims “to bring into existence such information and materials as will aid in the formation of public opinion and will assist officials, particularly those of the national government in their efforts to put the public administration upon a more efficient basis.”¹⁰⁵ Titled “The Problem of Indian Administration,” the study documented the failure of Indian policies during the allotment period. Its conclusion was reflected in the 1928 Meriam Report. The Meriam Report not only criticized the paternalistic, inefficient administration of Indian policies that neither encouraged nor supported Indian self-sufficiency but also deplored the living conditions of Indians by singling out disease, poverty, and general discontent as common currencies on Indian Reserved Homelands. The passage of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) in 1934 implemented the drastic change called for in the Meriam Report. Also known as the Wheeler-Howard Act, the IRA encouraged tribal reorganization and preservation. Its purpose

¹⁰⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, xi.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted from the Meriam Report “letter of transmittal;” available at www.narf.org/nill/merriam/b_merriam_letter.pdf (consulted on 11/18/2010).

was to promote self-determination, economic development, and tribal nationalism.¹⁰⁶ Cook-Lynn's virulent criticism of the federal Indian policy, which basically colonized the Sioux nation, indicates its influence on her shaping as an organic intellectual.

It is generally believed that the United States government began to create federal and state agencies to impose the mainstream model of education on American Indians soon after independence from Britain. Some scholars demarcate the period starting in the early 1800s and extending to the late 1950s.¹⁰⁷ Since Cook-Lynn was born in 1930 and earned a BA in 1952, she attended school when education was a means of alienating Native Americans from their traditions and force them into American culture.¹⁰⁸ Indian Bureau personnel and missionaries placed great faith in the power of education as a civilizing device; they endowed it with a transformational possibility in matters of civilizing American Indians.¹⁰⁹ In order to disintegrate the tribes, schooling in English with a heavy emphasis on Anglo-American culture became mandatory, while all tribal history and traditions were to be suppressed:

The original intent of Indian education was to wean the child away from his or her family, community, relatives, clan, band, and tribe. People seriously believed that if an Indian child was brought within the purview of non-Indian education at an early age, the corruptive influences of Indian people would not affect them and they would grow

¹⁰⁶ Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties*, 185-206; Getches, Williams and Wilkinson, *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law* (5th ed., St. Paul, MN: Thomson, 2005), 186-199; Erickson, "Many Nations in One," pp. 1-29; Felix S. Cohen, *Handbook of Federal Indian Law* (Charlottesville, Virginia: Michie Company, 1982); Francis P. Prucha, *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

¹⁰⁷ See Francis P. Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indian* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973); and Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

¹⁰⁸ Morgan Otis, "Indian Education: A Cultural Dilemma," in Jeannette Henry, ed., *The American Indian Reader* (San Francisco: American Indian Educational Publishers, 1972), 66-73; Michael C. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1980* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993).

¹⁰⁹ Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Graham D. Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980); Ronald N. Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 253-54.

up to be “normal.” That is to say, they would naturally adopt and exemplify all the values and perspectives of the non-Indian society.¹¹⁰

Thus, early off-reservation boarding schools and on-reservation mission schools actively encouraged assimilation of American Indians.¹¹¹ Emulating the Carlisle model set up by Richard H. Pratt, a confirmed believer in assimilation and progress, many boarding schools worked tirelessly in the hope of turning young Indians against the traditions of their communities by any means necessary, including beating and forced separation from family. In fact, a large body of work traces the history of institutionalized violence – both physical and symbolic – within Indian education.¹¹² Some scholars use the term *ethnocide* when referring to these policies.¹¹³

Cook-Lynn received her formal education when education was the centerpiece of the government’s forced assimilation policy. She is one of the few Indians of her generation who have achieved higher education, for the process was distasteful, given its assimilation goal. As an example, Indian schoolchildren were exposed to anti-Indian attitudes during the time period of her formal education. Recollecting one of Robert L. Stevenson’s racially insensitive poems (Little Indian, Sioux, or Crow; O! don’t you wish that you were me?), Cook-Lynn writes: “I was told of my inadequate and heathen background every day and that I should aspire to be

¹¹⁰ Deloria and Daniel Wildcat, *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2001), 155-56.

¹¹¹ Clyde Ellis, “‘A Remedy for Barbarism’: Indian Schools, the Civilizing Program, and the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation, 1871-1915,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal/AICRJ* 18:3 (1994), 85-120; Irving G. Henrick, “The Federal Campaign for the Admission of Indian Children into Public Schools, 1890-1934,” *AICRJ* 5:3 (1981), 13-32; Andrew Cowell, “Bilingual Curriculum among the Northern Arapaho: Oral Tradition, Literacy, and Performance,” *American Indian Quarterly* 26:1 (2002), 24-43.

¹¹² Wilbert Ahern, “‘To Kill the Indian and Save the Man’: The Boarding School and American Indian Education,” in Larry Remele, ed., *Fort Totten: Military Post and Indian School, 1867-1959* (Bismark: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1986), 23-59; Scott Laderman, “‘It Is Cheaper and Better to Teach a Young Indian Than to Fight an Old One’: Thaddeus Pound and the Logic of Assimilation,” *AICRJ* 26:3 (2002), 85-111; Caskey Russell, “Language, Violence, and Indian Mis-education,” *AICRJ* 26:4 (2002), 97-112; Robert A. Warrior, *Tribal Secrets* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 7.

¹¹³ Donald A. Grinde, Jr., “Taking the Indian out of the Indian: U.S. Policies of Ethnocide through Education,” *WSR* 19:2 (2004), 25-32.

something other than Indian. This, I am astonished to say, was one of the first poems I ever learned.”¹¹⁴ This statement alone underscores an indelible influence of assimilationist education on Cook-Lynn. It is beyond my capacity to fathom how the suppression of Indian cultures and traditions, the hallmark of assimilation policy and assimilationist education, shaped her.

Although the federal government sought to suppress Indian language, culture, and religion, Cook-Lynn’s family grounded her in the tribal world. She comes from a family of Dakota/Sioux literati and politicians whose influence shaped her organic intellectualism. She confides to readers of her most recent book how she could share her “grand thoughts” with her grandmother, Eliza Grey Shawl Renville, a figure who exerted a powerful influence on her.¹¹⁵ As the wife of an Indian politician and a woman whose relatives had assisted in the publication of the first dictionary of the Dakota language long before Cook-Lynn’s birth, Eliza wrote in Dakota and English for the missionaries, even though she never attended any school. From this grandmother, Cook-Lynn learned that words have consequences – a lesson that shapes her criticism of the United States.¹¹⁶ Moreover, in light of her text in the next paragraph, it is fair to say that both grandparents kindled her interest in Dakota and English languages and were an antidote to assimilation.

Cook-Lynn’s family has been influential in her involvement with language, Indian affairs, and politics, as is evidenced in her presentation of her grandfather:

My grandpa, a grand-nephew of Bowed Head, who they say fought at the Little Big Horn with Sitting Bull and Gall, rode a bay mare to the Agency almost every day, a distance of about fourteen miles, sometimes even in winter snowstorms. He was a politician, a great “bull shitter,” my father used to say, but I prefer to think of him as an Orator, a bilingual keeper of history. From him and others like him, I learned to value and honor words in two languages.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Cook-Lynn, “In the American Imagination,” 43.

¹¹⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, xi.

¹¹⁶ Cook-Lynn, “An Origin Story,” *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 17-19; Bruchac, ed., *Survival This Way*, 62-3.

¹¹⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, xii.

Cook-Lynn's grandfather and great-grandfather served on the Crow Creek Tribal Council for years.¹¹⁸ Additionally, her father was, in her own words, "a long-time politician from the Crow Creek Sioux Reservation."¹¹⁹ Understandably, Cook-Lynn proudly refers to herself as a daughter of tribal politicians.¹²⁰

This family has shaped her political views; so much so that politics remains Cook-Lynn's favorite topic. Recently, she complained to a group of Indianists that Indians shun political discussions: "Have you noticed how difficult it is getting people to talk about what you want to talk about?" she inquires, before characterizing political affairs as taboo topics in American Indian circles. "It's a little like bringing up herpes; they look at you like you have some kind of terrible disease if you want to talk about Indian affairs. Or politics, which is one of my favorite subjects."¹²¹ Specifically, Cook-Lynn is dismayed at how the majority of Indians in the Black Hills, South Dakota, is more interested in civil rights issues than their treaty rights. From her perspective, along with discussing their treaty rights, Indians should be concerned, for instance, with how American political institutions are gradually diminishing their inherent and sovereign rights, or they should be scrutinizing the policies of their tribal government, or goad this body into activity.¹²²

Contemporary Indian writers are also influenced by tradition. In addition to Indian policies and family, Vine Deloria, Jr. and N. Scott Momaday have influenced Cook-Lynn's scholarship.

¹¹⁸ Cook-Lynn, "American Indian Studies: An Overview," 22.

¹¹⁹ Cook-Lynn, "Land Reform," 104.

¹²⁰ Cook-Lynn, "The American Indian Fiction Writer: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, the Third World, and First Nation Sovereignty," *WSR* 9:2 (1993), 30.

¹²¹ Cook-Lynn, "Keynote Address: Native Studies," 179-80.

¹²² Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 7-8.

Cook-Lynn admires Vine Deloria, Jr. the most outspoken figure in Indian affairs: I am “a writer who has been enormously influenced by Deloria,” Cook-Lynn writes in her tribute to Deloria.¹²³ Moreover, she presents him as the foremost native scholar “who introduced Indians to the political language of genocide, theft, paternalism, invasion, and colonialism [:] a language we immediately recognized as our own.”¹²⁴ Also, she is impressed by Kiowa writer, N. Scott Momaday who started the Native Writer’s Renaissance. “Momaday’s canonization of the sacred word made integral to a sacred landscape in *Way to Rainy Mountain* gave Native writers the only hope for the revivification of the tribal storytelling we’d known in several oppressive generations.”¹²⁵ Cook-Lynn regards N. Scott Momaday as the foremost native intellectual who has exerted a tremendous influence on the Indian intelligentsia and definitely identifies him as one of the main influences on her writing.¹²⁶ Like N. Scott Momaday and Vine Deloria, Jr., Cook-Lynn advances Indian nationalism and promotes Indian history and philosophy. She equally takes up the struggles and living traditions of Native Americans in her scholarship that has drawn detractors and admirers, both of whom have their convenient images of her, besides Cook-Lynn’s self-representation.

IV) COOK-LYNN’S REPRESENTATIONS

a) HER SELF-REPRESENTATION: A TRIBALIST AND NATIONALIST WOMAN

I have gleaned three basic self-representations from Cook-Lynn’s scholarship: she is an Indianist, a keeper of Sioux tradition, and an intrepid critic.

¹²³ Cook-Lynn, “Comments for Vine Deloria Jr. upon His Early and Untimely Death, 2005,” *WSR* 21:2 (2006), 150.

¹²⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 153.

¹²⁵ Cook-Lynn, “Meeting of Indian Professors Takes Up Issues of ‘Ethnic Fraud,’ Sovereignty and Research Needs,” *WSR* 9:1 (1993), 63.

¹²⁶ Bruchac, ed., *Survival This Way*, 68-9.

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, Cook-Lynn sees herself as an Indianist. In addition, she presents herself as a keeper of Indian tradition, an intellectual whose worldview is shaped by Dakota culture: “I see everything in the world through the prism of my tribal experiences. I see everything through the prism of native language.”¹²⁷ Her immersion in tribal values shapes her aesthetic view on Indian (auto)biography as an oxymoron. She is critical of the genre, because the autonomous individual upon which it is based does not exist in traditional indigenous ideas of selfhood. Stories based on the **self** are marginal in Indian history; tribal nations rather value a **communal** literature which provides meaning to indigenous people, Cook-Lynn argues. From her perspective, a tribal autobiography has the potential to distort the sacred meaning of a communal people and endanger the existence of native nations.¹²⁸ Apparently, Cook-Lynn’s tribal identity dictates her admiration for myth keepers and carriers of Indian tradition. Thus, her role models remain native women who perpetuate an Indian worldview.¹²⁹ And, as the next paragraph shows, Cook-Lynn validates such an ideological view in her fiction by making, for example, a woman who promotes an Indian worldview the heroine of her novel.

Words shape nations as much as guns do. Since Cook-Lynn contends that nations are narrations, native women who tell stories of tribal survival are her heroines. This conviction might have guided her aesthetic decision to end *Aurelia* by telling its readers that the novel is “a story about myth, a story that Aurelia Blue has told to others and that has become the stuff of

¹²⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 15.

¹²⁸ See: Cook-Lynn, “Some Thoughts about Biography,” *WSR* 10:1 (1994), 73; “Life and Death in the Mainstream of American Indian Biography,” *WSR* 11:2 (1995), 92; and “Meeting of Indian Professors,” 63. Her take on tribal autobiography is shared by other Native scholars; see, for instance: J. Browdy de Hernandez, “Writing (for) Survival: Continuity and Change in Four Contemporary Native American Women’s Autobiographies,” *WSR* 10:2 (1994), 57, and Sam Pack, “Constructing ‘the Navajo’ Visual and Literary Representation from Inside and Out,” *WSR* 15:1 (2000), 146.

¹²⁹ Cook-Lynn, *Then Badger Said This* (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1983); and *Notebooks*, 14-16.

history, an ingredient of the oral narrative poetry transmitted by word of mouth from one singer, one teller of tales, to another.”¹³⁰ Living with her grandparents and hearing a lot of the old tales, Aurelia not only becomes familiar with the tribal history and genealogies but also understands this as valuable knowledge to her people. In the end, even if reluctantly, Aurelia becomes a storyteller herself by recollecting and rehearsing the same tribal stories she learned in her upbringing. Just the way Aurelia fulfills her role as a storyteller and a transmitter of hope for the continuation of her nation, Cook-Lynn’s role models are the promoters of indigenous culture and consolidators of tribal nations.¹³¹ Aurelia’s characterization definitely underscores Cook-Lynn’s rootedness in Dakota tradition.

Lastly, as she matures intellectually, Cook-Lynn portrays herself as an intrepid critic:

Years ago when I was twenty and I first started sending out my poems, an editor wrote on an acceptance letter a question that has haunted me for the rest of my so-called career as a poet. She asked: “WHY is Native American poetry so incredibly sad?” Now I recognize it as a tactless question asked out of astounding ignorance. It reflects the general American attitude that American Indians should have been happy to have been robbed of their land and murdered. I am no longer intimidated, as I once was, by that question, and I make no excuses for the sorrow I feel in my heart concerning recent history. I do not apologize for returning to those historical themes, for that is part of the ceremonial aspect of being a Dakotah poet.¹³²

A courageous person for whom no worldly power is too big to be criticized and pointedly taken to task, an intellectual is ideally a guardian of moral standards and possessor of independent judgment who owes loyalty to truth alone.¹³³ Cook-Lynn executes her role of tribalist and organic intellectual by confronting the United States with a rhetoric of accusation,

¹³⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Aurelia*, 455.

¹³¹ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, 100-101; *Notebooks*, 60.

¹³² Cook-Lynn, “You May Consider Speaking about Your Art,” 61.

¹³³ See Julien Benda, “The Treason of the Intellectuals,” in George B. de Huszar, ed., *The Intellectuals: A Controversial Portrait* (Illinois: Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), 217-232; Seymour M. Lipset and Richard B. Dobson, “The Intellectual as Critic and Rebel,” in Shmuel N. Eisenstadt and Stephen R. Graubard, eds., *Intellectuals and Tradition* (New York: Humanity Press, 1973), 138; Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994).

exposure, whistle-blowing, and muckraking. However, such a confrontation with the United States, as can be inferred from the following section, has resulted in negative reactions.

b) HER REPRESENTATION BY HER DETRACTORS: A PROPAGANDIST

Intellectuals write public interpretations of social, cultural, political, and personal realities; Cook-Lynn carries out her ceremonial function of criticism and interpretation of social issues. However, her ideological position of defending Indian nations makes her scholarship prone to blistering criticisms, raising the question of reception of her works. As numerous scathing reviews of her scholarship show, Cook-Lynn is unpopular among mainstream critics. By the same token, her negative reviews illustrate the deep-seated animosity between mainstream and indigenous scholarships.

Ironically, Cook-Lynn's substantive commentary on Vine Deloria, Jr.'s body of work applies to her own scholarship as well. Vine Deloria, Jr. in defiance of the scientific community, declares that the Bering Strait theory "exists and existed only in the minds of scientists" and calls it "scientific folklore."¹³⁴ In Cook-Lynn's opinion, this demystification is "a story that America, the great invader and colonizer, does not want to hear, because to accept indigenesness as a principle of origin makes the invader forever an alien and the colonization of the last 500 years a crime against humanity."¹³⁵ Like Vine Deloria, Jr., Cook-Lynn addresses issues the United States would like to put behind itself: "I write that Wallace Stegner was wrong to honor yet regret the corrupt western myth, and I write about the destruction of the Missouri River and 550 square miles of treaty-protected lands for hydro power.... **I write about things people don't want to**

¹³⁴ Deloria, *Red Earth, White Lies: Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact* (New York: Scribner, 1995), 107.

¹³⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 87.

hear.”¹³⁶ Cook-Lynn is castigated, her text seems to suggest, for reviving issues America has put to rest. In her view, she is scorned for resurrecting the ghosts of American imperialism that haunt all Indian nations.¹³⁷

Examples of this virulent criticism include Jackson J. Benson’s charge that Cook-Lynn is “very, very angry, hard-hearted, unaware, and not well read in the Stegner oeuvre, hateful, self-righteous, wrong, and simplistic.”¹³⁸ Another reviewer, Forrest G. Robinson of the University of California, Santa Cruz, says that *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner* is an absurd polemic. Most readers, he writes, will not be comfortable with the author’s “hopelessly one-sided account of American History.”¹³⁹ Overall, mainstream scholars have been blunt in their criticism of Cook-Lynn’s works. She once wrote, “I think I am getting the reputation of being a slash-and-burn kind of critic. I have had nothing good to say about politicians, anthropologists, white people who muck around in Indian Country. So, I’ve gotten this bad reputation as a mean-spirited writer of bad reviews.”¹⁴⁰

I think Cook-Lynn’s hyperboles have drawn criticisms. For instance, while Benson, Wallace Stegner’s biographer, states that “Cook-Lynn is angry, very angry, with a host of grievances” in “Why I Can’t Read Elizabeth Cook-Lynn,” he argues that the “Sioux woman” misdirects her rage when she chooses Stegner as “her straw man and makes him into an icon of the white ignorance and persecution.” While contending that Cook-Lynn’s hostility may be justified because “the Indian has been victimized over the centuries,” Benson points to Cook-Lynn’s exaggerations, claiming that she has taken Stegner’s phrase, “The Plains Indians were

¹³⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 63; my emphasis.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 65.

¹³⁸ Benson, as quoted in Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 173.

¹³⁹ Robinson, as quoted in Cook-Lynn, “American Indian Studies: An Overview – Keynote Address at the Native Studies Conference, at Yale University, February 5, 1998,” *WSR* 14:2 (1999), 18.

¹⁴⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 56.

done,” out of context. Benson argues that Cook-Lynn goes beyond what the evidence could support in order to support her convictions. In the end, Stegner’s biographer rejects the victims-villains picture that Cook-Lynn draws, accusing her of perpetuating her own myth of the West, “a fantasy of perpetual victimization and guilt, of a continuing nineteenth-century conflict of Indians versus settlers that can only inflame relations.”¹⁴¹

Cook-Lynn advocates for Indian nations, but her hyperboles enrage most critics. Her scholarship advances the sovereignty and self-determination of indigenous governance. She is centrally concerned with theorizing indigeness and the dialectics of colonization and decolonization with the goal of empowering Indian nations. “What America wants in its race relations with American Indians,” Cook-Lynn writes in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, “is to steal and occupy the land, to kill and otherwise destroy the land’s inhabitants, and yet provide an ethical example throughout the world of a democratic and ‘good’ society developed for the purpose of profiting from that activity.”¹⁴² How is it possible to ever say, for example, “What America wants in its race relations with American Indians”? This is an example of exaggeration that doesn’t fly with critics, because such a statement does not imply a majority but an absolute consensus; it suggests Cook-Lynn’s imagining a homogenous America. Views like these set off a firestorm in mainstream circles, where Cook-Lynn is represented as a propagandist. In any case, Cook-Lynn’s challenge to mainstream views has earned her the title of rebel and potential or actual opponent of the established order. Cook-Lynn’s standing tall to America has drawn praisesongs from her admirers, as is shown below.

¹⁴¹ Jackson J. Benson, *Down by the Lemonade Springs: Essays on Wallace Stegner* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2001), 60-72.

¹⁴² Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 52.

c) HER REPRESENTATION BY HER ADMIRERS: A TRAILBLAZER AND LUMINARY

If her hyperboles have caused controversies in mainstream circles, Cook-Lynn remains a key figure in Indian studies circles, where her scholarship is lauded.

Indian scholars generally present Cook-Lynn as a trailblazer. Most native critics portray her as one of the authentic tribal voices in the United States. Robert A. Warrior identifies her as one of the luminaries who initiates and fosters discussions of native intellectualism.¹⁴³ James Stripes corroborates this view, suggesting that Cook-Lynn generates interest in native intellectualism by constantly asking “whether Indigenous writers and critics of indigenous literatures are perpetuating and reinforcing the structures of colonialism, or are challenging this legacy.” In assessing Cook-Lynn’s tribally oriented scholarship, critic Elaine A. Jahner claims she assumes the role of public intellectual.¹⁴⁴ Cook-Lynn addresses issues of interest to native nations and thus falls into a social and cultural category of people who intervene in public life. Page Rozelle contends that the author of *Aurelia* executes the roles of tribal storyteller, carrier of culture, and political advocate, while Jace Weaver suggests that *New Indians, Old Wars* locates Cook-Lynn as one of the seasoned scholars of Native studies and one of its important voices.¹⁴⁵ Even prior to the publication of her latest books, Cook-Lynn had earned the reputation of being the “dean,” or the “conscience” of Indian studies.¹⁴⁶ Definitely, her mainstream xenophobic portrait doesn’t stand up to scrutiny in Indian circles, where Cook-Lynn is praised for her audacious works.

¹⁴³ Robert A. Warrior, “The Native American Scholar: Toward a New Intellectual Agenda,” *WSR* 14:2 (1999), 51.

¹⁴⁴ Stripes, “Beyond the Cameo School: Decolonizing the Academy in a World of Post Modern Multiculturalism,” *WSR* 11:1 (1995), 27-8; Jahner, “A Review of *Aurelia: A Crow Creek Trilogy*,” *WSR* 15:2 (2000), 138. Stripes and Jahner are not Indian scholars.

¹⁴⁵ Page Rozelle, “The Teller and the Tale,” 203; Jace Weaver’s review is available on the back cover of the book and at <http://www.press.uillinois.edu/s07/cook-lynn2.html> (consulted on 1/26/07).

¹⁴⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, xi; James Riding In, “Editor’s Commentary,” *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 5.

Neither Cook-Lynn's detractors nor her admirers claim her as an organic intellectual. However, her practices as an organic intellectual triggers their representations of her as a separatist critic, tribal storyteller, carrier of Sioux culture, keeper of tradition, political advocate, seasoned scholar, and conscience of Indian studies. It is debatable whether these terms accurately represent Cook-Lynn, but they certainly reveal the location of her critics, as is apparent in my representation of her.

d) HOW I SEE COOK-LYNN: ANOTHER TRIBALIST REPRESENTATION

Cook-Lynn's scholarship positions her as a hardcore fighter for indigenous rights, a stubborn advocate for Indian well-being, a ferocious activist for tribal nationalism, an unflinching treaty rights proponent, and a trumpeter of U.S.-Indian treaty obligations. Additionally, Cook-Lynn is a literary chronicler of Sioux history. Were we in the African (and African American) context, I would suggest this native scholar has taken on the role of a *griot*. In West Africa, where written history is something new, *griots* have kept the history of their people in memory for generations. They rely on singing and poetry to transmit the history of the tribe from one generation to the next. In sum, the *griots* are historians, genealogists, entertainers, praise singers, advisers to nobility, messengers, etc. Cook-Lynn values oral tradition, just as the *griots* memorize the history of their people.

CONCLUSION

My drawing from Cook-Lynn's polemics – fiction and non-fiction – establishes the kind of scholarship she promotes and that defines her status as an organic intellectual. Cook-Lynn uses a nationalist resistance discourse and assumes a leadership role in addressing the struggles

of Native Americans. Her family and the socio-political situation of Indian nations have shaped her absolutist views on tribal nationalism. Therefore, she does not apologize for defending Indian nationhood and sees no room for negotiating Indian sovereignty and indigenesness. These elements essentially define Indian individuals and nations: compromising them equals treason, in her view. They are non-negotiable.

Only few writers rise to fame during their lifetime; a writer's canonization is usually a posthumous event. Cook-Lynn will be recognized, somewhere along the way, as a native intellectual who denounces an occupying empire and articulates the experiences of a sovereign people under the yoke of domestic imperialism. Along with her sheer determination to uncover the truth concerning the Indian genocide, Cook-Lynn's compelling analysis of the colonial system and advocacy for Indian self-determination make her a stakeholder in the decolonization process of tribal nations. In sum, her scholarly pursuit and political activism purport to undo U.S. colonial practices. And, as the following chapter shows, her huge investment in *WSR* and Native studies locates her as an unswervingly committed anti-colonial and nationalist intellectual.

Cook-Lynn is definitely an organic intellectual. Her roles are enmeshed and blurred, making it difficult to distinguish Cook-Lynn, the political and nationalist writer, from Cook-Lynn, the historical revisionist, or Cook-Lynn, the anti-colonial intellectual. These roles all contribute to her organic and public intellectual role.

CHAPTER TWO:
SHAPING THE DISCIPLINE: COOK-LYNN AND WSR

This chapter is structured around the twin roles of *WSR* and Cook-Lynn in shaping the debates and conversations in American Indian studies. It primarily reviews the many years of the journal and situates it in the context of efforts to establish the mission and secure the future of Native studies in the university. The chapter argues the unique position of *WSR* about its own mission and the mission of Native studies. Through its anti-colonial or Indianist scholarly articles, curricular proposals, and platforms regarding the proper mission and stakeholders of Native studies, *WSR* defines the discipline in terms of sovereignty, nationalism, and indigeneity. This chapter is analogous to chapter I, but whereas the previous chapter focuses on Cook-Lynn's individual position as an Indianist, this one shows her collaboration with other Indianists who are working together to articulate an Indianist vision of the broader institutional presence and goals of Native studies.

Although the first issue of *WSR* was released almost a quarter of a century after the emergence of Native studies programs throughout the United States, *WSR* and American Indian studies can be envisioned as two sides of the same coin. If American Indian studies is centrally focused on the First People of the United States, *WSR* remains a major voice in the discourse of American Indians and research on/about them. Cook-Lynn is a founder and a long time editor of this academic journal; she is one of its major contributing scholars. The roles of *WSR* and Cook-Lynn are entangled when it comes to defining an Indianist vision of the broader institutional presence and goals of Native studies. Intersecting Native studies and *WSR*, this chapter locates *WSR* as it accompanies the unfolding movement of Indian studies over time and gauges Cook-Lynn's role in the discipline.

Since the unfolding of academic American Indian studies and the contributions of *WSR* to the growth of the discipline are the main foci of this chapter, Cook-Lynn's catch-all text dealing with the principles of Indian studies serves as an appropriate entry point:

[American Indian studies] rejects assimilation in favor of tribal nationhood. It rejects mainstream American conservatism in favor of a new history that acknowledges a horrific period of greed and empire building in America during which genocide and deicide was legalized. It marginalizes equal rights and civil rights in favor of treaty and indigenous rights. It rejects colonization as much as Black Americans rejected slavery. Its principles are indigenoussness and sovereignty rather than cultural contact (or colonialism), pluralism, diversity, and immigration.¹

Cook-Lynn and *WSR* are instrumental in shaping the Indianist vision of Native studies. To demonstrate their importance to the field, this chapter analyzes a few areas of interest in the discipline. First, I present an overview of the beginning story of the discipline and its multiple appellations, followed by a discussion of its working definitions and goals. Next, I examine its core assumptions and merging challenges. The chapter underscores *WSR*'s distinctive role in the unfolding of the discipline as well as Cook-Lynn's contributions in setting the discipline in its oppositional course.

It is important to remember that Cook-Lynn declined completing her doctorate on the ground that writing a dissertation would require her to rationalize the other side of the Indian genocidal story. This was her way of protesting against the establishment. She sensed, instead, that pursuing a journal publication could more positively impact Indian nations than would a compromised position articulated in a dissertation that would have a limited influence, if any. Her financial commitment to *WSR* during its burgeoning years and her long editorship speak volumes to such an ideological conviction. For the record, this journal was funded at its beginning stage with a \$3,000 check Cook-Lynn got from the settlement of a land case involving

¹ Cook-Lynn, "Who Stole Native American Studies?," 25.

her grandmother, Eliza.² Also, Cook-Lynn has been its editor, beginning in 1985, when she co-founded the journal, until 2004, when James Riding In took over as editor. Literally translated as *Red Pencil Journal* in Dakota, Cook-Lynn's native language, *WSR* has been supportive of Indian causes. In light of its invaluable service to the discipline, it can be theorized that *WSR*, modern Native American studies, and Cook-Lynn constitute three interconnected entities; they are intertwined in numerous ways to empower Indian nations.

I) INDIAN STUDIES

a) ITS VARIOUS NAMES

It is important to clarify the variation in the naming of the discipline centrally concerned with America's original inhabitants in the first place. The disagreement over the names of Indian studies programs throughout the United States is reflexive of the misnomer of America's indigenous people from the beginning of colonial times.

Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., Gerald Vizenor, Jack D. Forbes, Winona Stevenson, Arturo J. Aldama, David E. Wilkins, Cornel Pewewardy, and Michael Yellow-Bird, among others, have addressed the misnomer of American Indians. American First Nations people, we learned from Forbes's astute analysis, were the only people called Americans from the early 1500s until the mid-1700s. However, for historical and anti-colonial reasons, original Americans are now using a variety of names to refer to themselves. These include, among others, Aboriginal, Indigenous, Native, Indigenes, First Nations People, Sovereign American Nations People, First Americans, Early Americans, and Native Americans. The list equally comprises national names – Dakota,

² Cook-Lynn, "An Origin Story," 17.

Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Comanche, Hidatsa, Chickasaw, Seminole, etc. – and language family names such as Mayan, Algonkian, etc.³

From the time of the original mistaken appellation due to a geographical error to the present day, colonial discourse has labeled the original people of the Americas “Indians.” In his now classic study *The White Man’s Indian*, Berkhofer argues that the term Indian “does not square with how those people called Indians lived and saw themselves.” For Wilkins, the name Indian is an “inaccurate but persistent term” that allows the federal government to elaborate a coherent body of legal doctrines to deal with American indigenous nations. This legalization of American Indians allows the U.S. law to reach the lives of indigenous peoples who were in existence prior to that law.⁴ Stevenson’s flat rejection of “Indian” and reclamation of tribal names echo Vizenor’s refutation of the collective designation of Indian as a “perverse misnomer.” “Indians,” Vizenor writes in *Fugitive Poses*, “are cultural narratives of an absence, the absolute misnomer of a native presence, and the originary. Natives are the curvature of presence, an eternal trace of presence.” The name “Indian,” Vizenor insists, is a “simulation with no referent and with the absence of natives.”⁵ In any case, neither the Bureau of Labor Statistics poll nor Yellow-Bird’s survey of the indigenous people in the United States provided a definite statement on how they want to be called: the debate over naming continues.⁶ Little wonder that

³ Jack D. Forbes, “The Use of Racial and Ethnic Terms in America: Management by Manipulation,” *WSR* 11:2 (1995), 53-65.

⁴ Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man’s Indian* (New York: Knopf, 1978), 1; David E. Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U.S. Supreme Court*, 1.

⁵ Winona Stevenson, “‘Ethnic’ Assimilates ‘Indigenous,’” *WSR* 13:1 (1998), 49; Gerald Vizenor, *The People Named the Chippewa* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 4 and *Fugitive Poses: Native American Scenes of Presence and Absence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 27-28 & 41.

⁶ A 1995 survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 49.8 percent of the Indigenous People in the United States preferred “American Indian” and 37.5 percent preferred “Native American.” Michael Yellow-Bird, “What We Want to Be Called,” *American Indian Quarterly* 23:2 (1999), 1-21; Cornel Pewewardy, “Renaming Ourselves On Our Own Terms,” *Indigenous Nations Studies Journal* 1:1 (2000), 11-28; Arturo J. Aldama, *Disrupting Savagism: Intersecting Chicana/o*,

the discipline centrally concerned with the original populations of the United States is labeled under different headings: Native studies / Indian studies / Native American studies / American Indian studies / First Nations studies, and Indigenous Nations studies, to mention the most common ones.

These appellations occupy a prominent place in this chapter, because the politics of assigning different names to the same discipline has affected the content of Indian studies programs throughout the nation. Robert M. Nelson's comprehensive guide to Native studies programs underscores their specific core concerns.⁷ The name of each program defines its micro-mission. In general, every organization – academic disciplines included – has a mission and a purpose. The mission is why the organization was first created. The purpose is to promote its vision, which is why mission statements are often called vision statements. Sometimes, the same problems that the organization initially tried to address continue to haunt it after years, as is the case with Native studies; its purpose shouldn't change. However, the variation in the naming of the programs mandates some necessary shifts in priorities.

Since the nomenclature affects the missions of Indian studies programs across the nation, these programs spend portions of their resources defending their names and framing contents that resonate with their vision statements. Some programs are immersed in this game to the point of losing sight of the main mission of the discipline: to defend Indian nations. The Indigenous studies discipline could deliver more if uniformity in its multiple appellations could be established. Nothing indicates, however, that the field will move in that direction soon, as it remains fashionable to operate a name change within the same program from time to time. For

Mexican Immigrant, and Native American Struggles for Self-Representation (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 3.

⁷ Robert M. Nelson, "A Guide to Native American Studies Programs in the United States and Canada," at <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/faculty/ASAIL/guide/guide.html> (consulted on 5/1/2009).

instance, the University of Kansas Indigenous Nations Studies (INS) recently changed its name to Global Indigenous Nations Studies (GINS). With this change in name comes a change in its mission statement. The GINS currently fosters and promotes scholarship essential to understanding the experiences and improving the lives of indigenous people around the world.⁸ This is one example of how the naming of Native studies programs has impacted curricular design in the discipline.

b) ITS FORMATION

Vine Deloria, Jr. has written about the opposition to the creation of minority studies programs in the academy, not because these programs were seen as an attack on Western civilization or against its traditions, but the initial opposition was allegedly due to their lack of genuine contribution to human knowledge:

Minorities were believed to have little to contribute to human knowledge and the idea that they might have some history or culture worth knowing was regarded as the greatest insanity. No one ever believed that racial minorities might have their own point of view. Whatever was said about them was regarded as highly accurate scientific information because it had been compiled by white scholars and their status in academia, plus their sincerity, guaranteed the validity of the work.⁹

In addition, Indian studies faced three specific oppositions: (a) competition over resources led other emerging ethnic studies programs to oppose it; (b) those who feared that Indian studies would not be academic but advocacy programs opposed it; and (c) Indian termination advocates opposed it. But Native studies became a reality, after all. Until recently most scholars who have explored the beginning and evolution of American Indian studies have

⁸ See <http://www.indigenous.ku.edu/> (consulted on 5/3/2009).

⁹ Deloria, "Indian Studies: The Orphan of Academia," *WSR* 2:2 (1986), 1.

pinpointed its origin to the turbulent period of the 1960s, when Native studies programs began to assert themselves as worthy of independent intellectual status.¹⁰

Besides Roger W. Buffalohead and Carter B. Clark's assessment of "America's First Discipline," the fall 1986 issue of *WSR* examines the genesis of academic Native studies.¹¹ From Cook-Lynn's editorial note to David Warren's review article dealing with the various issues at stake in this discipline believed to be "the orphan of academia," it is the contention of Indian scholars that academic Native studies emerged in the 1960s in response to political initiatives from Indian students, community leaders, and activists.¹² Many scholarly papers that were published in the intervening years have come up with similar conclusions. Clearly, Indian studies programs emerged in response to the growing political activism of the 1960s and 1970s.¹³

However, pinpointing the precise origin of the discipline remains debatable among Indianists and others. Cook-Lynn and Cherokee demographer Russell Thornton demarcate its formative period as early as the 1930s. After scrutinizing works by D'Arcy W. McNickle and Luther S. Bear, two earlier Indian scholars who grounded their scholarship in the tribal world,

¹⁰ William Willard and Mary K. Downing review the origin story and the evolution of the discipline in: "American Indian Studies and Inter-Cultural Education," *WSR* 7:1 (1991), 1-8; see, also, Mary K. Duffié and Ben Chavis, "American Indian Studies and Its Evolution in Academia," *The Social Science Journal* 34: 4 (1997), 435-445.

¹¹ Roger W. Buffalohead, "Native American Studies Programs: Review and Evaluation," in Rupert Costo, ed., *First Convocation of Indian Scholars* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1970) and Carter B. Clark, "America's First Discipline: American Indian Studies," in Clifford E. Trafzer, ed., *American Indian Identity* (Sacramento: Sierra Oaks, 1985).

¹² See: David Warren's introductory essay to *WSR* 2:2 (1986), iii-v; Deloria, "Indian Studies: The Orphan of Academia," 1-7; and Patrick C. Morris, "Native American Studies: A Personal Overview," *WSR* 2:2 (1986), 9-16.

¹³ See: M. Annette Jaimes, "American Indian Studies: An Overview and Prospectus," *WSR* 1:2 (1985), 19; Duffié and Chavis, "American Indian Studies and Its Evolution in Academia," 435-445; Forbes, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 13; Robert A. Warrior and Jace Weaver, "Introduction," *WSR* 14:2 (1999), 7; Donald L. Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 105-123; Duane Champagne, "From Sovereignty to Minority: As American as Apple Pie," *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 21-36; James R. In and Chris Pexa, "Editors' Commentary," *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 8; James R. In, "Introduction to the First Panel: Reclaiming American Indian Studies," *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 170.

Cook-Lynn and Thornton identify them as the founding fathers of the discipline. While Cook-Lynn's choice of McNickle (a Salishan scholar) is based on his 1930s classics on Indians, Thornton's selection of Bear (a Dakota intellectual) is dictated by his contention that every reservation should be supplied with Indian professionals attending to the needs of Indians. Bear further urges native scholars to take the lead in the study of their communities. By the very sense of duty, he contends, Indians should become their own historians, giving "fairer and fewer accounts of the wars and more of statecraft, legends, languages, oratory, and philosophical conceptions."¹⁴

Arguably, nineteenth-century Indian pioneers, whose writings criticized Indian land thefts and called for Indian rights, laid down the foundational ground of the discipline, as long as the major goals of Native studies remain the defense of Indian land and sovereignty.¹⁵

Most scholars locate the 1960s as the beginning of modern Indian studies because the first indigenous-controlled colleges and Native studies programs were created during this time period. In my judgment, this periodization is incorrect. For instance, Franz Boas (1858–1942) and his students, in particular, Clark Wissler, Frederica de Laguna, Alfred L. Kroeber, Robert Lowie, and William Jones contributed to its founding in the 1910s. The prominence of Indian studies during the 1960s should not overshadow efforts by pioneers to study Indian people. Before native-controlled colleges and Indian studies programs were established in the 1960s, the idea of Indian studies had been around since the 1910s, if not earlier. Native studies trailblazers deserve credit for their pioneering roles in envisioning the discipline as a possibility. Future research should uncover the first generation of native scholars who endeavored to set up the

¹⁴ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 30; Russell Thornton, ed., *Studying Native America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 4. Luther S. Bear (1933), as quoted in Warrior, "A Room of One's Own at the ASA: An Indigenous Provocation," *American Quarterly* 55:4 (2003), 682.

¹⁵ Craig S. Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 3.

discipline. They demonstrated true imagination in laying down the disciplinary groundwork. Imagination is essential to any enterprise.

c) ITS DEFINITION AND GOALS

Jon Reyhner of Northern Arizona University sums up Indian education prior to Columbus' advent:

Before Columbus and the invasion of Europeans, North American Indian education was geared to teaching children how to survive. Social education taught children their responsibilities to their extended family and the group, the clan, band, or tribe. Vocational education taught children about child rearing, home management, farming, hunting, gathering, fishing, and so forth. Each tribe had its own religion that told the children their place in the cosmos through stories and ceremonies. Members of the extended family taught their children by example, and children copied adult activities as they played.¹⁶

In the wake of European colonization of Indian nations, this native model of education morphed into an Anglo-American one which basically sought to assimilate Indian tribes. As chapter I details, Native Americans were once targeted by the most radical form of assimilation policy that forced them to jettison their cultural identities.¹⁷

Taking their cue from this assimilation policy, Indianists have incorporated an indigenous perspective in their definition of Indian studies in order to reclaim their systems of knowledge that have been repressed since colonial invasion. William Willard, Mary K. Downing, and Cook-Lynn are in agreement that Thornton provided the earliest definition of the discipline: Indian studies is an endogenous study of traditional and contemporary indigenous communities in the

¹⁶ Jon Reyhner, "American Indian/Alaska Native Education: An Overview," available at <http://www2.nau.edu/~jar/AIE/Ind Ed.html> (consulted on 3/29/2008).

¹⁷ Deloria and Wildcat, *Power and Place*; Deloria and Sandra Cadwalader, eds., *The Aggressions of Civilization* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984); Brewton Berry, "The Histories of American Indian Education," in Jeannette Henry, ed., *The American Indian Reader*, 29-37; Francis P. Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indian*; and Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise*.

Western Hemisphere.¹⁸ Elaborating on this statement, Cook-Lynn offers a series of definitions of the discipline in which she emphasizes its endogenous nature. Native studies is: (1) an endogenous study of Indian cultures and history; (2) an ethno-endogenous epistemological empowerment model of education in the United States; and (3) a strategy for problem solving in Indian affairs. She further underscores the same term as a catch-all word in defining the goals of the discipline.¹⁹ The term endogenous means: “originating from within;” or “growing from within.” An endogenous study of Indian people implies that the curricular models of the discipline must be developed from inside of Indian cultures.

Additionally, Terry Wilson, Patrick Morris, Duane Champagne, and Vine Deloria, Jr. articulate the general rationale for an autonomous academic Native studies: Indian studies must coordinate the scholarly concerns surrounding the study of American Indians and offer an integrated research and teaching program from a uniquely Native American perspective.²⁰ Specifically, while Vine Deloria, Jr. proposes that Indian studies encompasses all relevant knowledge about the relationships between Native Americans and the rest of the world, Morris and Champagne suggest that the discipline should deal with native communities and work within their interests, instead of solely serving native academics.²¹ In sum, these native scholars envision Indian studies as a discipline geared to addressing issues affecting indigenous populations in the Western Hemisphere.

¹⁸ Willard and Downing, “American Indian Studies and Inter-Cultural Education,” 1.

¹⁹ Cook-Lynn, “Who Stole Native American Studies?,” 11; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 11 & 116; *Notebooks*, 150.

²⁰ Terry Wilson, “Custer Never Would Have Believed It: Native American Studies in Academia,” *American Indian Quarterly* 5:3 (1979), 225; Willard and Downing, “American Indian Studies and Inter-Cultural Education,” 2.

²¹ Deloria, “Indian Studies: The Orphan of Academia,” 6; Morris, “Native American Studies,” 10; Champagne, “From Sovereignty to Minority,” 21-23.

These various statements underscore an Indian independence for knowledge production; they postulate that thoughtful Indian studies programs will not only bring about self-determination and foster economic development of Indian communities but also can preserve tribal cultures as well.²² Speaking about curriculum effectiveness in the discipline, for instance, Cook-Lynn maintains that a critically designed Indian studies program will serve as a defensive mechanism for tribal nations. For her, implementing appropriate curricular models in Native studies can empower Indian nations.²³

However, the discipline can never attain these goals unless the native academic press is a reliable vehicle that disseminates curricular models and the research and thought of native intellectuals and leaders on Indian issues. In this respect, *WSR* has proven a militant journal among native presses. I examine its role, after addressing the instability of the native press during the formative years of the discipline.

II) THE INSTABILITY OF THE NATIVE PRESS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DISCIPLINE

Since academic Indian studies emerged in the 1960s, while the first volume of *WSR* was printed in 1985, the key question this chapter examines is: What were the accomplishments of Indian studies as a disciplinary field without this journal entirely devoted to its cause? The obvious answer is “not much,” given *WSR*’s role in the development of Indian studies. An overview of the fledgling native press during the formative years of the discipline will provide the background necessary to understanding *WSR*’s unique contributions to Native studies.

²² Deloria and Wildcat, *Power and Place*, 7; Forbes, “Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty,” 13; Wayne J. Stein, “Indian/Tribal Studies Programs in the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges,” *WSR* 2:2 (1986), 31; Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 179-189; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 12-16; 20-26.

²³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 154-177; “American Indian Studies: An Overview,” 14-24.

Two types of Indian presses were in existence at the beginning of the discipline: a native press and a native academic press.

The staggering number of native periodicals (more than six hundred) that crowded the native mass media landscape in the 1960s and 1970s was essentially focused on the daily struggles of tribal nations; they probed Indian poverty, poor education, health problems, etc. According to Daniel Littlefield, these native publications were, in general, either community-oriented or professionally-focused journals.²⁴

On the other hand, native academic journals were primarily concerned with some long-term goals such as cultural preservation of Indian communities and were rather scarce. A dearth of academic Indian studies journals marked the burgeoning years of the discipline.

Given this absence of Indian studies journals in the academy during the 1960s and 1970s, journals in anthropology and history served as an alternative publication outlet for Indian intellectuals.²⁵ Particularly, *The Indian Historian* became the surrogate journal where indigenous scholars found a place to publish their works on Indians. The first native journal of its kind to probe the Indian past, *The Indian Historian* was a journal of history and literature about Indian nations. Edited and published by Indians, this publication of the American Indian Historical Society released its first volume in October 1964 but went out of business in 1979.²⁶

The creation of *American Indian Quarterly (AIQ)* and *American Indian Culture and Research Journal (AICRJ)* offered publication sites to scholars who were producing and consuming Indian research. Established in 1974, the *AIQ* is an interdisciplinary journal of anthropology, history, literature, religion, and arts of Native Americans. It claims to present the

²⁴ Daniel Littlefield, Jr., "The American Native Press and American Indian Studies," *WSR* 2:2 (1986), 51-54.

²⁵ In and Pexa, "Editors' Commentary," 6; Littlefield, "The American Native Press," 53.

²⁶ See <http://www.americanindian.ucr.edu/references/historian/IH-Vol1Num1.pdf> (consulted on 3/1/2008).

diverse voices and perspectives that contribute to the sovereignty and continuance of Indian nations and cultures.²⁷ Simultaneously, the *AICRJ* was created at UCLA in the 1970s, a publication which has dubbed itself the “premier journal” in Native studies. Published quarterly by the UCLA American Indian Studies Center, this journal covers a wide range of issues in history, geography, anthropology, sociology, political science, health, literature, law, education, and the arts.²⁸

Prior to *WSR*’s emergence in the academic landscape, these three scholarly journals published interdisciplinary studies about Indian issues, along with a few other academic journals dealing with education and law. Examples include: *American Indian Education Journal*, *American Indian Law Review*, and *American Indian Law Journal*.²⁹

Although they have delved into Indian issues, the *AIQ* and *AICRJ* have had production problems, at least at their beginning.³⁰ *The Indian Historian* is defunct altogether, as is the *Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures Newsletter*. Founded in 1971, the ASAIL published at least five issues of an *ASAIL Newsletter* between 1973 and 1975, before discontinuing its publications for two years. It resumed regular publication with its *New Series* in

²⁷ See http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/American-Indian_Quarterly,673174.aspx (consulted on 4/22/2009).

²⁸ While In and Pexa disclose 1977 as the birth date of the *AICRJ* [“Editors’ Commentary,” *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 6], the home page of this journal maintains that it has been in print since 1971; its first issue circulated in 1974, according to its home page. In any case, it came into being in the 1970s. See <http://www.books.aisc.ucla.edu/aicrj.html> (consulted on 1/10/ 2008).

²⁹ The Center for Indian Education at Arizona State University published the first issue of *American Indian Education Journal* in 1961; the University of Oklahoma released the first issue of *American Indian Law Review* in 1973; and the Institute for the Development of Indian Law in Washington, D.C., published the first issue of *American Indian Law Journal* in 1975.

³⁰ Although they are still in existence, the *AICRJ* and *AIQ* have appeared erratically since their beginning; for instance, *AICRJ* has no publication record for 1977.

spring 1977 but closed down in 1987.³¹ Currently a quarterly journal known as *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, it resumed, once more, regular publication since spring 1989.

Basically, an erratic publication record characterized these academic journals. Most of them had production problems; worse still, others have been short-lived. Myriad reasons can account for their inability to sustain themselves. Besides the scarcity of submissions due to departmental pressure on faculty to publish in the “recognized” academic journals, the lack of institutional support and dedicated editors can be seen as factors in their untimely closures.

In view of this unstable situation of native academic journals, some legitimate questions need to be brought up: How could academic journals that have published erratically guarantee the viability of Indian studies in the academy? How could this discipline establish its credibility with unstable publication outlets? Given their levels of production dysrhythmia, how could they consistently examine aspects of contemporary Indian life and serve as a reliable resource for the study of Indian issues? Finally, since these journals were notorious for their irregular publishing cycles, how could they realistically facilitate the promotion and retention of Indian studies faculty?

These rhetorical questions underscore *WSR*’s key role in the unfolding of the discipline and stress the fragility of the field without this militant journal. In other words, providing honest answers to these questions will prove the importance of *WSR* to Indian studies. In my view, the state of Indian studies before *WSR* generated some serious concerns for Indianists. The more the viability of a discipline-focused journal is at stake, the shakier the fate of its discipline. A reliable Indian studies journal can inject buzzing life into the discipline and assist with the retention of

³¹ See the ASAIL home page at <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/faculty/ASAIL/sail-hp.html> (consulted on 2/1/2008).

Indian studies faculty. This, in turn, will establish Native studies as a respectable discipline. Here lies the militant role of *WSR*, a unique journal in the field.

III) THE ROLE OF *WSR* IN THE UNFOLDING OF THE DISCIPLINE

a) FEATURES OF THE JOURNAL

The instability of native academic journals during the formative years of the discipline frustrated many Indianists. Because a viable native press is crucial to Indian studies, a group of four native intellectuals, namely, William Willard, Beatrice Medicine, Roger Buffalohead, and Cook-Lynn saw the need for a dependable academic journal where Native studies faculty could publish their research on Indian issues. To revamp Indian studies and provide a support network for its faculty, this quartet created *WSR*, a militant academic journal, in 1985.³² *WSR* is a biannual publication; it can be commended for honoring its publication cycle. Since its creation, this journal has consistently published quality materials that have contributed to the body of knowledge about Indian nations and their struggles.

The import of an academic journal to its discipline shapes the vision of this quartet. An academic journal reflects the theories, methods, and concepts frequently employed in a discipline. It serves as a forum for the introduction and presentation for scrutiny of new research, and a critique of existing research. An academic journal helps consolidate the status of its focus-discipline by promoting cutting edge research in the field. Its editorial board, its publication cycle, and the overall scholarly quality of its articles give the credibility to the discipline. In sum, an academic journal projects an image of the discipline.

³² Cook-Lynn, "An Origin Story," 17; *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, xi. The tribal affiliation of the four founding members of *WSR* is as follows: Willard (Cherokee), Medicine (Lakota) Buffalohead (Ponca), and Cook-Lynn (Dakota Santee).

The founding of *WSR* has proven critical to the discipline. *WSR* is devoted to the needs of Native studies; it has spared its contributors from “the scrutiny of the ‘old guard’ gatekeepers, who jealously guarded the canons and ‘acceptable’ parameters of their disciplines.”³³ In fact, since its inception, *WSR* has been a forum where Indianists have published according to the autonomous scholarly criteria of Native studies rather than by the standards established by other disciplinary fields.³⁴ Indeed, minority views are oftentimes screened out by gatekeepers of academic journals. As Cook-Lynn has learned the hard way through rejection of her manuscripts by anonymous reviewers (who refer to her defense of Indian sovereignty as a dogmatic and stupid idea), minority scholarship has little or no chance to get published in the American mainstream: “The consistent references to tribal-nation sovereignty are often called silly, such manuscripts are said to lack scholarly purpose and substance, and native arguments concerning nationalism are said to be narrow in focus.”³⁵ Her awareness of this dangerous silencing of minority scholars mainly motivated her founding of *WSR*, a support network for Indianists. Ironically, and as I argue in Cook-Lynn’s compartmentalization of Native studies in chapter III, essays that are **not** in ideological alignment with her concept of native voice are equally censored from *WSR*. These essays don’t appear in this journal because Cook-Lynn positions them as “minority views.” As Toni Morrison has written, “definitions belong to the definers – not the defined.”³⁶ Minority and majority are tricky concepts; they shift over time.

³³ In and Pexa, “Editors’ Commentary,” 5.

³⁴ Jaimes, “American Indian Studies,” 17-8.

³⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 25. For Cook-Lynn’s view on the business of publishing academic books and articles, see “Editor’s Commentary,” *WSR* 13:1 (1998), 5-7.

³⁶ Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 190.

b) PARTNER OF NATIVE STUDIES

The *AICRJ* and *AIQ* are interdisciplinary journals; they cover a wide range of Indian issues. While both are Indian-oriented, none has pledged any allegiance to Native studies as has *WSR*, the only journal which is committed to publishing research associated with the development of academic Native studies. From its very beginning, *WSR* has partnered with Indian studies to consolidate its disciplinary status. The editorial note of its first issue clearly stressed such an ideological orientation: “*Wicazo Sa Review* is a journal which has as its main focus the scholarship which accompanies the development of Native American studies as an academic discipline.”³⁷

There are at least two nagging questions at this point: 1) Why was this ideological declaration not made until a quarter of a century after the emergence of the discipline? 2) Was the discipline losing some ground without a committed journal on its side? It might be pretentious to claim to provide definite answers to these questions, but *WSR* has filled an important void, considering its crucial role in navigating the discipline toward its goals. By literally stumping for Native studies and publicizing its goals, *WSR* has moved the discipline in the right direction and enabled it to carry out its mission of defending Indian nations. It has motivated Indianists to engage in scholarly research for the sake of tribal nations. *WSR* definitely anchors the discipline.

At least two factors account for *WSR*'s success in this matter. First, its circulation across the globe speaks volumes to its impact. Its audience is scattered throughout the world and comprises students, instructors, and policymakers.³⁸ Thanks to *WSR*, this heterogeneous group of readers is aware of issues that are important to the discipline and tribal nations. Second, and

³⁷ See the front page of *WSR* 1:1 (1985).

³⁸ Cook-Lynn, “Editor’s Commentary,” *WSR* 11:1 (1995), iv; *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, xi.

more important, *WSR* is a thriving curricular trading center; it has motivated Indianists to tackle the curricular hurdle.

This journal has played a significant role in curricular development. Since its inception, *WSR* has been a forum where curricular models are regularly published and it is a reliable source of information about curricular evolution in the discipline. For instance, *WSR* remains the source of most of the information I have gleaned about curricular evolution in the discipline.³⁹ *WSR* is dedicated to the scholarship which accompanies the development of academic Native studies and remains a forum where Native studies practitioners have raised, discussed, and exchanged curriculum-related issues. This journal is unique in offering its pages to exploring pilot curricular projects in the emerging discipline. In this capacity, *WSR* has assisted in the experimentation and assessment of various curricular models. And, as the following synopsis of Indian studies history illustrates, this journal has been instrumental in mending curricular inadequacies.

Prior to *WSR*'s founding, Indian studies had two serious shortcomings: its adoption first of Eurocentric and then of minority centered curricular models. Isolated from its cultural roots, the discipline initially emulated the Anglo-American academic curricular models. Vine Deloria, Jr. and Marlys Duchene observe that the process of developing Indian studies programs took a traditional Euro-American mode that produced an objectification of Indian cultures. Both concur that the initial conceptualization of Indian studies curricula embodied Euro-American beliefs and routines.⁴⁰ Clearly, the discipline adopted an exogenous approach at its beginning.

While the discipline initially privileged western European heritage, its next move showed an unwarranted liaison with ethnic studies. In its search for identity, the field intoxicated itself

³⁹ It is important to note Cook-Lynn's foray into the area. Her curricular texts include, among others, "Defensive, Regulatory, and Transformative Functions of Indian Studies," in *New Indians, Old Wars*, 114-153; "Who Stole Native American Studies?," 9-28 and "American Indian Studies: An Overview," 14-24.

⁴⁰ Deloria and Duchene are adapted from Jaimes, "American Indian Studies," 16.

with ethnic studies curricular models, another incongruity, considering the incompatibility between the goals of ethnic and indigenous models of disciplines. In emulating ethnic studies programs at the beginning stage, most Native studies programs morphed into collections of courses.⁴¹

The initial lack of a dependable Native studies journal in the field partially caused this roving. Had such a dedicated journal been available from the very beginning, this situation could have been averted. Unfortunately, such a committed public forum where scholars can tackle curricular issues and revitalize the discipline was uncommon. The discipline couldn't thrive and meet its goals under those initial conditions.

The birth of *WSR* allowed Indianists to principally address curriculum-related issues in the discipline. As *WSR*'s editor and its major contributing scholar, Cook-Lynn has invested herself in various topics that involve Indian scholarship, including the area of curriculum. Her scholarship examines the negative impact of ethnic studies on Indian studies, rejects its adoption of minority studies curricular models, and calls for a discipline that distinguishes itself from ethnic studies programs, because she believes that implementing an ethnic studies curricular model in Native studies will consolidate the colonial status quo. Thus, Cook-Lynn maintains that adopting ethnic studies courses in Native studies will weaken Indian nations. In fact, examining immigrant histories actually disempowers Native studies. Immigrant histories are incapable of engaging the challenges facing Indian nations, for while immigrant minorities are struggling to "get in" the American mainstream, those indigenous to this land are determined to "get out" of it. As Cook-Lynn sees it, the implementation of Indian studies curricular models from outside Indian cultures, which hallmarked the beginning of Native studies, hampered the objectives of the discipline, since it failed to defend the sovereignty and indigeness of America's original

⁴¹ Willard and Downing, "American Indian Studies and Inter-Cultural Education," 3.

inhabitants.⁴² Because this subservient model of discipline was irresponsive to Indian needs, breaking away from it became inevitable.

Disciplines grow and mature. Annette Jaimes predicts that the initial Eurocentric orientation of Native studies programs will give way to an endogenous one, with curriculum contents reflecting contemporary Indian life and will become more responsive to modern Indian needs, as the discipline matures.⁴³ In this respect, Indianists have been revising curricular inadequacies. *WSR*, a marketplace of ideas, has been coordinating work done by Indianists for a unified intellectual, political, or social agenda in the discipline. Through exploration of concepts such as indigeness, nationalism, colonialism, genocide, survival, and mythology, they are addressing both the Eurocentric and ethnic models of programs that have been grafted onto the discipline.⁴⁴ This move offers some redemptive alternatives to the inadequate 1960s models of Native studies that Indianists view as a deplorable situation.

Indianists are shifting the initial Eurocentric and ethnic foci of the discipline. They are pushing for a paradigm shift in the field by privileging the interests of tribal nations. Unlike the past, Indian intellectuals are taking the lead in identifying and proposing solutions to issues affecting native communities.⁴⁵ As a Nez Perce woman sizes it up, Indians used “to be doormats and lie down and take whatever comes to them. But now we’ve got very well-educated people that are not going to be like that. They are not going to be the passive Indians any more; they’re going to speak out!”⁴⁶ This newfound attitude explains the prominence of a tribally centered paradigm in the field nowadays: Indian land, tribal sovereignty and governance, colonization and

⁴² Cook-Lynn, “Who Stole Native American Studies?,” 20.

⁴³ Jaimes, “American Indian Studies,” 19.

⁴⁴ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 118.

⁴⁵ Stevenson, “‘Ethnic’ Assimilates ‘Indigenous,’” 49.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Darcy James, “The Continuing Impact of Manifest Destiny in a Small Town,” *WSR* 14:1 (1999), 161.

decolonization of Indian nations, Indian health issues, and Indian representation in the mass media, to name a few instances where Indianists are refurbishing the paradigm. Their bottom line is to create a pan-Indian model of discipline and revitalize tribal nations.⁴⁷ *WSR* has been synchronizing their efforts to build a discipline more responsive to Indian needs. While reflecting these constructive debates within the discipline, the journal equally appraises Native studies and monitors its direction.

In fact, *WSR* offers an insight into how Indianists are strategizing the defense of Indian rights, lands, resources, and cultures. Their proposed curricular models prioritize courses in U.S.-Indian treaties, indigenous languages, federal Indian policy, tribal government, land reform, economics, and native philosophy. Moreover, their tribally centered curricula mandate a sweeping teaching of the Indian holocaust and indigenous creation myths that counter the Western/biblical creation stories. In sum, most curricular discussions from *WSR* publications focus on the sovereignty, cultures, and rights of indigenous nations.

After engaging in curricular debates for years, Cook-Lynn has recently detailed the features of a model Indian studies program capable of defending tribal nationhood. For Cook-Lynn, it is not enough for a Native studies program to incorporate the body of Indian knowledge into its curriculum; she further prescribes that the program must: (1) internally organize it (i.e., Indianists must direct the disciplinary work); (2) normatively regulate it (i.e., the native directors must come to some agreement); and (3) consensually communicate it (i.e., undergraduates must take a core curriculum). In her model, native intellectuals are enjoined to direct research toward the decolonization of Indian nations and contribute to the knowledge base of the world.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 116.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

Basically characterized by a relevance to Indian needs, this emerging Indian centered curricular trend testifies to an evolution in the discipline – from its Eurocentric characteristics to ethnic centered priorities to tribally centered concerns. In tandem with this reshaping, *WSR* has recently tightened its focus to support the research meant to define the cultural, legal, and historical parameters of scholarship essential to the decolonization of Indian nations.⁴⁹ This latest ideological move speaks to the journal's strong commitment to helping the discipline grow and mature. If anything, *WSR* publications underscore its activist nature, militant role, and pedagogical orientation. *WSR* must be commended for its role in curricular proposals in the field.

It is important to recognize that current Indianists are pursuing the tradition set up by their predecessors. Change did not occur overnight; these pioneers struggled to define the boundaries of the discipline, despite the colonial control that marked its beginning stage. They did the preliminary detailed work, rounded up the faculty, sat on the committees, and chased down the funds for the discipline. In a sense, the curriculum refinement by Indianists nowadays is a continuation of that work. Their sheer determination to map the discipline prolongs the efforts undertaken decades ago by its movers and shakers.⁵⁰

c) LOYALTY TO INDIAN NATIONS: COUNTERING MAINSTREAM DISCOURSE

Completely in the hands of native intellectuals, *WSR* remains a forum that counters mainstream theories on Indians. Besides encouraging scholarship that empowers Indian communities, *WSR* prizes rebuttals to mainstream cultural and political misconceptions about Indians. Indeed, the Native studies discourse available in *WSR* mainly opposes American mainstream views on Indians and reflects what I call Waziyatawin Wilson's manifesto of

⁴⁹ In and Pexa, "Editors' Commentary," 7-8.

⁵⁰ Willard and Downing, "American Indian Studies and Inter-Cultural Education," 3.

indigenous intellectuals. Wilson mandates native scholars to bring to their communities useful ways of thinking about their experiences and urges them to co-create “a culture of resistance based both on the recovery of Indigenous knowledge and traditional means of resistance as well as the useful theoretical frameworks and language from outside of our cultures that can assist us in our struggle.”⁵¹ Rife with this resistance culture, *WSR* publications are in war against an imperial power.

WSR has reshaped the discipline in certain important ways; it has enabled Indianists to explore issues of importance to tribal nations. For instance, different issues of this journal have delved into topics central to the field: Indians and American history, indigenous resistance and persistence, Indians and U.S. colonialism, research on/about Indians, indigenesness, nationalism, sovereignty, Indian political and intellectual self-determination, counterfeiting in Native studies, Indian religious freedom, Indian health issues, etc. Exploring these key themes has energized the discipline over the years. In a sense, this journal is not only guiding the discipline but is monitoring its progress by probing these topics.

Additionally, thanks to its book reviewing activities, *WSR* is aggressively pushing the discipline to reach its target goals. An academic journal usually has sections on original scholarly articles, review articles, and book reviews. In general, each issue of *WSR* contains essays, interviews, book reviews, literary criticism, and scholarly research articles pertinent to Native studies and related fields. Its book review section is of particular interest here.

Reviews of scholarly books are checks upon the research books published by scholars; they also offer and further a broader discourse. Students in a given field typically rely upon them for knowledge acquisition, while they provide current information to seasoned scholars in the

⁵¹ Waziyatawin A. Wilson, *Remember This! Dakota Decolonization and Eli Taylor Narratives* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 14.

field. Unlike original research articles, book reviews are solicited submissions, sometimes planned years ahead. Journal editors determine which new books to review and by whom. Cook-Lynn, the longtime editor of *WSR*, is famous for her anti-colonial stance; she has never relented in attacks upon American imperialism. In addition, she has a clear-cut position on book reviewing and never makes any secret of its importance to tribal nations.⁵² Therefore, it is not coincidental that this journal is the site par excellence where books that promote inaccurate representations of American Indians are countered and rebutted.

For instance, Cook-Lynn lately reviewed two books concerned with Indian-White conflict in South Dakota: *Deadliest Enemies*, by Thomas Biolsi, a non-tribal professor of Native studies, and *Not without Our Consent*, by Edward C. Valandra, a Sicangu Lakota scholar. Her review underscores the dichotomy between a mainstream and an Indianist view on the conflict. While Biolsi's historical review identifies "bad faith" and "things beyond their control" as the primary causes of the conflict, Valandra's assessment reveals the viciousness of land grabbing and the deep-seated racist attitude of South Dakota settlers toward their indigenous neighbors.⁵³

Cook-Lynn publicizes Valandra's more aggressive alternative narration of American history, which the discipline upholds as a classic defense of Indian nations. In selecting which new books to review based on the principle of empowering Indian communities, the journal (its editor included) has rendered a vital service to Indian nations. In either giving hope to tribal nations, or talking back to the authors who denigrate American Indians, the countless reviews have moved the field closer to its mission of defending the rights and sovereignty of Indian nations. *WSR*, it seems, is the voice of the Indian scholar. Not only are we immersed in a

⁵² See "Thoughts on the Art of Reviewing Books," in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 3-26.

⁵³ See *WSR* 23:1 (2008), 155-158. The full titles of both books are: *Deadliest Enemies: Law and the Making of Race Relations on and off Rosebud Reservation* (The University of California Press, 2001) and *Not without Our Consent: Lakota Resistance to Termination, 1950-59* (The University of Illinois Press, 2006).

different story in its pages, but its alternative narration of American history initiates a constructive dialogue.

Everything considered, it is fair to say that *WSR* has raised issues that the discipline would not otherwise have examined. In my view, not only has *WSR* mobilized Native studies to incrementally achieve its target goals, but it has gradually positioned the discipline as a force to reckon with. Pending further research, I suspect *WSR* has some bearing on current calls to indigenize the academy.⁵⁴ As the following paragraphs show, many native scholars concur that *WSR* has advanced Indian causes.

In her editorial commentary to the volume commemorating its 10th anniversary, Cook-Lynn was unsure about the future role of *WSR* but recalled the basic mission envisioned by its founders:

The role such a journal will play in the academic future is unknown but, with the appropriate support, it could provide an example of a publication which might be described as a major Indian Studies intellectual journal. The *WSR* has been a major component in the Indian infrastructure for intellectual discourse and dialogue since its inception in 1985. The founders feel that if there are to be public intellectuals speaking for an Indian public then the *Wicazo Sa Review* can become an important instrument through which that role is expressed.⁵⁵

WSR remains a milestone in the life of Native studies. This journal has a pivotal role in assisting indigenous people of the Americas to take possession of their own intellectual and creative pursuits by providing inquiries into the Indian past and its relationship to the present and future. In this respect and since its founding, *WSR* has served as the key publication outlet for articles with native themes. The fundamental mission of this journal, to be sure, is the revitalization of tribal nations through its critical service to Indian studies, a discipline which is

⁵⁴ See Mihesuah and Angela C. Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

⁵⁵ Cook-Lynn, "Editor's Commentary," *WSR* 11:1 (1995), iv.

deeply concerned with the well-being of native people in the United States. In Cook-Lynn's own words, "the development of Native studies as an autonomous academic discipline [will] function as a defensive mechanism for the empowerment of tribal nationhood." In other words, Native studies can advance Indian sovereignty through its calls for reforms in fiscal and land policies, and by defending and/or resurrecting the seemingly "dead" treaties linking the United States and Indian nations as the law of the land.⁵⁶ *WSR* becomes an important channel by means of which radical publications in favor of treaty obligations are made known to the public.

In line with its mission statement, articles published in this intellectual journal which, until recently, Cook-Lynn edited, are in ideological alignment with what most mainstream scholars will label "dissenting views." As is summed up in the following rhetorical questions, Indianist discourse is rife with history-based claims that are oftentimes dismissed by most mainstream academics and scholars. "Would the academic world accept us, our contentions and ideas, in a scholarly publication dedicated to the idea that Indian First Nations are sovereign nations with long, arduous, and difficult histories embodying the 'alternative' story of America?," Cook-Lynn wonders, before inquiring whether the academic community would comprehend "that our futures are held in the principles of sovereignty and indigenouness, not assimilation and colonization."⁵⁷

Equally, in the issue commemorating its 20th anniversary, In and Pexa underline *WSR*'s importance to the discipline:

When *Wicazo Sa Review* entered the scene during the next decade, it differed from the other AIS journals in that it was devoted to the principle of publishing research associated with the development of AIS as a discipline. *Wicazo Sa Review* serves as an important venue where scholars have published an array of articles with Native themes that have enriched the body of historical, cultural, and contemporary literature about American Indians. It has in fact contributed significantly to the notion that the study of

⁵⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 25.

⁵⁷ Cook-Lynn, "An Origin Story," 17.

Indigenous peoples of the United States merits a disciplinary approach within academia.⁵⁸

This passage, which assesses *WSR*'s legacy within the context of the Indian studies movement, spells out the benefits of this journal to Native studies. In general, Indianists have adopted a celebratory stance when appraising *WSR*'s contributions to the unfolding of Indian studies. By all available evidence, this journal has proven essential to the discipline and its goals. Given *WSR*'s overall satisfactory performance in the field, other subtasks have been added to its initial workload. It is hoped that this journal will radically transform every Indian studies program across the nation "into an academic discipline that seeks to protect the sovereignty, integrity, rights, cultures, and identities of the indigenous populations of North America."⁵⁹ In all likelihood, this latest move indicates a positive outcome and underscores *WSR*'s success in the field.

In many respects, *WSR* is a weapon in the hands of native intellectuals and Indian studies, from a particular viewpoint; this instrument has filled in whenever and wherever need be, including playing the role of substitute for a professional association. A stable academic association boosts its discipline. Among other examples, the history of American Studies Association (ASA) can illustrate this claim. The ASA is the nation's oldest and largest association devoted to the interdisciplinary study of American culture and history. It was chartered in 1951 and currently counts about 5,000 individual members along with 2,200 library and other institutional subscribers.⁶⁰ Its stability vitalizes American studies.

An academic organization is the rock of any discipline; it usually takes up disciplinary issues. However, despite the need, establishing a stable one in Indian studies remains a daunting

⁵⁸ In and Pexa, "Editors' Commentary," 6.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶⁰ See <http://www.theasa.net/> (consulted on 4/29/2009).

task. A decade ago, Robert A. Warrior and Jean M. O'Brien complained about it as an elusive hope. They correctly made the point that, like any discipline, Native studies should draw together scholars in a forum where a conversation on its evolution can take place.⁶¹ And in fact, there have been many attempts to form associations through the years. Like its journals, Native studies has known many defunct professional organizations but still creates them. As recently as May of 2007, for instance, the University of Oklahoma Native American Studies program hosted an international scholarly meeting to explore the possibility of creating an academic association for scholars working in Indigenous studies. Two follow-up meetings and numerous in-between discussions finally gave birth to the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA), a professional organization dedicated to supporting individuals working both inside and outside academic Indian studies. Founded in 2008, the NAISA's first annual meeting was held at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, 21-23 May 2009.⁶² Another organization was chartered in 2004: the American Indian Studies Consortium (AISC). Seeking to bring together the Native American professoriat from all sections of Indian education, the AISC is working to codify standards for the discipline. Cook-Lynn threw her energies behind this work.⁶³ Whether these latest associations will stand the test of time remains to be seen.

Like most native academic journals, professional associations in the field are unstable. *WSR*, however, has raised awareness about the importance of an indigenous studies association and has relayed calls for its creation. Moreover, in the absence of a dependable association, *WSR* has played a surrogate role by pushing for an endogenous approach in the discipline. Everything considered, *WSR* actively participates in the defensive mechanism of Native studies and anchors

⁶¹ Warrior and Weaver, "Introduction," 11.

⁶² See <http://faculty-staff.ou.edu/W/Robert.A.Warrior-1/ISAindex.html> (consulted on 3/27/2008; revisited on 4/28/2009 and 10/28/2009).

⁶³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 118.

its oppositional discourse. The following section, which probes the fundamental features of the discipline, intersects *WSR* and Cook-Lynn to further underscore their importance to Native studies.

IV) INDIAN STUDIES: AN OPPOSITIONAL MODEL OF DISCIPLINE

a) SETTING THE DISCIPLINE IN ITS OPPOSITIONAL COURSE

Academic disciplines are defined by their core assumptions and underpinning principles. American Indian studies is an oppositional field of inquiry, given its anti-colonial and anti-mainstream postures. The anti-colonial rise of the discipline became obvious in 1980, when its imperial built-in compelled the now defunct Native American Studies Association (NASA) to spell out its oppositional stance and require the discipline to challenge the colonial status quo.⁶⁴ The NASA's ground-shattering declaration, which happened after years of reflection, signaled both a radical break from an Indian studies swamped by issues outside Indian communities and a fresh start of a Native studies discipline devoted to Indian needs. Cook-Lynn moves the NASA's proclamation to a new height, using a Foucauldian knowledge-power linkage model.

Michel Foucault has written extensively about the relationship between knowledge, power, and discourse. Along with other social theorists, Foucault believes that knowledge is always a form of power and forever connected to it: "We should admit that power produces knowledge; that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Cook-Lynn, "The Rise of the Academic 'Chiefs,'" *WSR* 2:1(1986), 40.

⁶⁵ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*; trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1977), 27.

College is a knowledge production plant and power player. Cook-Lynn chides college for being instrumental in the knowledge-power nexus which is still detrimental to tribal nations. She attributes to it a vicious role in disempowering Indian nations and maintains that a Western-manufactured knowledge/power is not geared to serving tribal nations but rather furthers their colonization. Consequently, Cook-Lynn urges native academics to militant actions, admonishing them to challenge the corrupt university leadership that distorts the historical and cultural legacies of Indian nations.⁶⁶ She enjoins them to adopt an adversarial stand and “expose the lies of the self-serving colonial academic institutions of America, bolster the right and obligation to disobedience, and resist the tyranny of the U.S. fantasies concerning history and justice and morality.”⁶⁷ Cook-Lynn definitely holds that the entire history of America’s indigenous populations has to be rewritten and that the nation’s institutions of higher education are the appropriate venues to do so.⁶⁸ An unequivocal call to Indianists to act against the establishment from within: a classic Du Boisian trope.

Cook-Lynn has played a pivotal role in setting the discipline in its oppositional course; her chosen disciplinary principles ground the radical discourse circulating therein. In the absence of a reliable academic organization in Native studies, Cook-Lynn stepped up her commitment and put nationalism, sovereignty, and indigenesness at the forefront of curricular development. Moreover, the instability of a Native studies organization has compelled her to confront disciplinary issues. For instance, the trivialization of indigenous rights and the hijacking of the discipline prompted Cook-Lynn to engage marginalization, domination, irrelevance, tokenism, and co-optation in the discipline.⁶⁹ Definitely, in the absence of a viable Native studies

⁶⁶ Cook-Lynn, “The Rise of the Academic ‘Chiefs,’” 39-40.

⁶⁷ Cook-Lynn, “American Indian Studies: An Overview,” 16.

⁶⁸ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, ix.

⁶⁹ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 11; “Who Stole Native American Studies?,” 9-28.

association, Cook-Lynn dedicates herself to the construction of the discipline, an instrument of Indian agency and capacity building.

Her input, however, posits the field in a sharp opposition to other academic disciplines and shields it from them. The discipline seems irreconcilable with other fields of inquiry, as Cook-Lynn envisions it. How realistic is it for an academic discipline to thrive in autarky, shunning methods and perspectives from other disciplines? Cook-Lynn's ideological vision for the discipline may encompass Indian specifics but has its shortcoming. Heated debates on disciplinary method(s) followed the radical departure of Native studies from its initial stages. It is nevertheless remarkable that Indian studies still implements methods from related disciplines, long after this extreme move. Despite its claim of autonomy, the discipline has yet to construct a distinctly native method. The "peoplehood" model, an innovative approach meant to encompass the interdisciplinary nature of Indian studies within the tribal purview, has yet to prove itself to the discipline.⁷⁰ While proponents are spinning it as a promising method in Indian studies, its implementation has yet to yield tangible results. If this perennial struggle over ideology is any indication, Cook-Lynn's vision remains presumptuous, at best; it is an idealistic view of the discipline.

Like American studies, Indian studies remains an interdisciplinary field of inquiry. Indianists use an interdisciplinary approach in their research works concerning Indians. A single piece of scholarship in Native studies may cut across the fields of law, literary criticism, sociology, religious studies, history, anthropology, business, economics, and political science. Moreover, the literature review by Holm, Pearson, and Chavis reveals a rich body of theories employed in the discipline: class conflict theory; critical legal theory; critical race theory; critical

⁷⁰ Tom Holm, J. Diane Pearson, and Ben Chavis, "Peoplehood: A Model for the Extension of Sovereignty in American Indian Studies," *WSR* 18:1 (2003), 7-24.

literary theory; women's studies theory; family stress theory; feminist theory; economic theory; postmodernist theory; deconstruction and reconstruction theories; ethnic and cultural studies theories; dependency theory; modernization theory; French rationalist theory; theory of public policy; internal colonialism and powerless politics models, etc.⁷¹

Cook-Lynn constantly argues that these theories hamper the objectives of the discipline, because they pull the field in opposing directions. She dismisses their advancement of knowledge in the discipline, equating knowledge in Indian studies with empowering Indian nations. The development of competing epistemologies hinders Indian studies and its goals, Cook-Lynn maintains.⁷² However, against her prescription that knowledge bases in Native studies be systematically organized into a discipline with its own content and methodology for empowerment purposes, Native studies still relies on interdisciplinarity.⁷³ Clearly, Indian studies employs methodologies and contents of other established disciplines; it remains an interdisciplinary field of study that requires its practitioners to have some familiarity with sources and methods from other disciplines in order to seek for information in them and evaluate their relevance to research on Indians. In the end, interdisciplinarity brings people from different disciplines to be conversant with one another; its practice entails a holistic approach to knowledge.⁷⁴ Native studies can't thrive in autarky.

⁷¹ Ibid., 9-10.

⁷² Cook-Lynn, "Who Stole Native American Studies?," 9-28; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 12.

⁷³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 146.

⁷⁴ Lynn Westbrook, *Interdisciplinary Information Seeking in Women's Studies* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishers, 1999), 26-27; Julie T. Klein, *Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, and Practice* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 36 & 95.

b) MAJOR DISCIPLINARY PRINCIPLES: NATIONALISM, SOVEREIGNTY, AND INDIGENOUSNESS

Cook-Lynn has written extensively about the distinctive principles of Native studies. Her programmatic scholarship, which represents Indians in terms of nationhood and sets them apart from other Americans, puts forward three cornerstone principles that differentiate Native studies from mainstream and minority models of disciplines: nationalism, sovereignty, and indigenusness – a triumvirate – with nationalism being its epistemological basis.⁷⁵

The development of Native studies discipline as a strategy of hope for Indian communities assumes the prominence of nationalism. Cook-Lynn holds onto nationalism, sovereignty, and indigenusness as its root principles, because theorizing these concepts can reclaim the independent status of Indian nations and regenerate them. By contrast, examinations of cultural contact, immigration, multiculturalism, diversity, and pluralism hinder Indian sovereignty. Their inability to defend Indian nations as possessors of inalienable political rights, land, and culture disqualify them.⁷⁶ Indianists generally share her view: they use this triumvirate to critique American colonialism and deploy it in calls for land restoration, treaty obligations, and tribal autonomy.⁷⁷ Clearly, its routine usage casts Native studies as a dissenting epistemological field of inquiry.

⁷⁵ Cook-Lynn, "American Indian Studies: An Overview," 22.

⁷⁶ Cook-Lynn, "Who Stole Native American Studies?," 25; "American Indian Studies: An Overview," 23-4.

⁷⁷ Carole Goldberg and Duane Champagne, "The Rise of Tribal Political Power in California," *WSR* 17:1 (2002), 43-63; Eileen Luna-Firebaugh, "The Border Crossed Us: Border Crossing Issues of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas," *WSR* 17:1 (2002), 159-181; Philip J. Deloria, "American Indians, American Studies, and the ASA," *American Quarterly* 55:4 (2003), 669-680; Warrior, "A Room of One's Own at the ASA," 681-687; Jean M. O'Brien, "Why Here?: Scholarly Locations for American Indian Studies," *American Quarterly* 55:4 (2003), 689-696; Sidner J. Larson, "Making Sense of Federal Indian Law," *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 9-21; Champagne, "From Sovereignty to Minority," 21-36; Lloyd L. Lee, "The Future of Navajo Nationalism," *WSR* 22:1 (2007), 53-68.

- RATIONALES BEHIND THE PRINCIPLES

It is relevant to elaborate on the colonial and philosophical rationales behind the choice of these strategic principles, because they locate the discipline within an ideological context and predict the type of knowledge circulating therein.

- COLONIAL REASONS

Colonialism has affected Indian people. According to Vine Deloria, Jr., the betrayal of treaty promises by the United States has brought a greater feeling of unity among Indian nations: every single tribe does “burn with resentment over the treatment it has received at the hands of an avowedly *Christian* nation.”⁷⁸ The United States has conveniently modified the Indian treaties of the invasion era that explicitly recognized Indian sovereignty. In *Tribes, Treaties, and Constitutional Tribulations*, Vine Deloria, Jr. and David E. Wilkins explain that in its infancy, the United States gave indigenous sovereignty its due in negotiating treaties of peace and friendship with American Indian nations. The federal government was in no position to presume to have jurisdiction over the internal affairs of Indian nations or to exercise governing powers over Indian people. Since the survival of the fragile United States depended on alliances with Indian nations that might otherwise side with England or pose a military threat to the young country, the United States had no choice but to respect the independent nation status, the right to self-determination of the indigenous nations with which it came into contact. However, with the passing of time and for colonial purposes, the United States began dodging its Indian treaties, violating the prerogatives of Indian sovereignty.

⁷⁸ Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 50; italics in the original.

Indianists are preoccupied with this deeply troubling development in U.S.-Indian relationships, the widening rift between the treaties and their actual implementations.⁷⁹ In particular, Cook-Lynn demonstrates a classic erosion of Indian sovereignty in the Black Hills case. The illegal appropriation of the Black Hills by the state of South Dakota illustrates America's casual consideration of Indian treaties.

The Black Hills case has received enormous attention, but I will briefly summarize it, given its importance in US-Sioux relations. Lakota Indians believe that the Black Hills are sacred and should be returned for religious reasons. Those who oppose its return, like historian David Miller, argue that Indian religious ceremonies have been held outside of the Black Hills since its taking; therefore, the land is not needed to perform these ceremonies.⁸⁰

Wars between settlers and the Sioux Indians continued between 1864 and 1866 as the rush to Montana, for gold discovered there, was under way. In April 1866, Indian representatives came to Fort Laramie to negotiate an end to the violence. While negotiations were ongoing, Colonel Henry Carrington began to build forts along the Bozeman trail. Red Cloud led a fight to close off the trail where it crossed over the Sioux hunting grounds. The United States sued for peace. The 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty withdrew troops from the Black Hills and created the Great Sioux Reservation. The United States pledged to keep settlers out of the territory, but allowed General George Custer and his army to investigate claims of gold in the Black Hills in 1874. Custer's discovery of gold in the same year led to the establishment of mining towns in the area.

⁷⁹ See: Deloria and Raymond J. DeMallie, *Documents of American Indian Diplomacy*; 2 volumes, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999); Brad A. Bays and Erin H. Fouberg, eds., *The Tribes and the States: Geographies of Intergovernmental Interaction* (Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); Deloria, *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties*; Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U.S. Supreme Court*; Wilkins, *American Indian Politics and the American Political System* (Lanham, MD.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002); Wilkins and Lomawaima, *Uneven Ground*.

⁸⁰ David Miller, "Historian's View of S.705: The Sioux Nation Black Hills Bill," *WSR* 5:1 (1988), 55-59.

In 1875, President Grant opened the Black Hills to miners. By this time the buffalo had been mostly exterminated; so the Manypenny Commission persuaded the Sioux to sign over the Black Hills as an alternative to starvation. On February 28, 1877, the Manypenny agreement was ratified by Congress. By all accounts, this Act is the most controversial treaty in U.S.-Sioux history.

The legal struggle for the Black Hills land claim began in the early 1920s when attorneys representing the Sioux argued that the appropriation of the Black Hills was illegal and that the United States never legitimately purchased the land. To make a long story short, the United States Court of Claims on June 13, 1979, in a 5-2 majority, decided that the 1877 Act was a violation of the Fifth Amendment. In other words, the Black Hills was taken “without due process of law,” or “without just compensation.” So on July 31, 1979 the Sioux were awarded \$17.5 million plus interest, totaling \$105 million. However, the Sioux feared that if they accept the award their land would be officially sold.

As Cook-Lynn consistently remarks, America’s words do not jibe with its actions; the routine modifications of the legal standing of Indian treaties by the United States erects ambiguity as a virtue of its legal system.⁸¹ Besides treaty betrayals, Indians are otherized by the dominant group whose colonial discourse savagizes, inferiorizes, and criminalizes them.⁸² Since desperate ills call for desperate remedies, it is hoped that the triumvirate – nationalism, sovereignty, and indigenusness – can effectively help achieve the mission of the discipline.

⁸¹ Cook-Lynn, “Editor’s Commentary,” *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 5-7. The controversy surrounding the domestic spying/surveillance program and the debate on torture are perfect illustrations of this assertion.

⁸² See Aldama, *Disrupting Savagism*.

- PHILOSOPHICAL/CULTURAL RATIONALES

There exist at least three differences between Indian and Western worldviews. First, Western and Indian cultures dance to two different tunes: linearity versus circularity. Fixico's study documents the linearity of much of Western culture and the circularity of Indian culture. The foremost governing principle of the Indian ethos being the circle, Indian culture tends to privilege a concentric approach toward life: "The native world is one of cycles, and observing the cycles provides an order to life and community."⁸³

Another philosophical difference between both cultures lies in their concepts of the universe. Vine Deloria, Jr. suggests that the major difference between the Indian view of the physical world and the Western scientific one resides in the premise rejected by the people from the West but accepted by Indians: "The world in which we live is alive."⁸⁴ George Thinker, a native academic of Indian cultures and religious traditions, establishes a similar disjunction between the Indian and Western cultures. Rooted in scientific objectivity, the Western world draws a sharp distinction between the animate and inanimate objects. Contrary to the tribal belief that all life forms have consciousness and qualities that are either entirely lacking or poorly developed in human beings, Western science holds that only humans are endowed with consciousness and that other creatures are deprived of it. However, it is unclear whether its qualities are to be identified through science, philosophy, or theology.⁸⁵ Susan A. Miller, a Seminole scholar, further elaborates:

The key distinguishing assumption of the Indigenous paradigm is that the cosmos is a living being and that the cosmos and all its parts have consciousness. Spirits recognized in Indigenous worldviews are real and powerful within the material world. Because the scientific and many other non-Indigenous belief systems reject that

⁸³ Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 42.

⁸⁴ Deloria, *Red Earth, White Lies*, 55.

⁸⁵ George Thinker, "The Stones Shall Cry Out: Consciousness, Rocks, and Indians," *WSR* 19:2 (2004), 105-125.

reality, agents of non-Indigenous institutions and governments ignore spiritual realities, often offending spiritual entities. Consequences of such behavior can injure Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike.⁸⁶

Finally, both cultures differ in their theories on leadership and universal connections. Cook-Lynn argues that leadership in a non-indigenous world treasures power, money, and glory, whereas an indigenous leadership is geared to “understanding the relationships in the universe, which will allow for the survival of humankind, among other things.”⁸⁷ The native worldview relates to other animate and inanimate objects; it concedes inescapable connections between humans, animals, plants, waters, clouds, the sky, the earth, etc. “The phenomena called ‘nature’ by Europeans,” Forbes notes, “are part of us, are related to us, and form part of our identity. We are literally all children of Mother Earth, brothers and sisters, relatives.” From an Indian perspective, then, everything in the web is related to everything else.⁸⁸ Definitely, as Joy Harjo puts it, “there is no separation between human, animal, plant, sky, and earth.”⁸⁹

Besides differentiating Indians from other Americans, both rationales shape the discourse and mold the type of knowledge promulgated in Native studies. Because Indian political status and needs are different from those of any ethnic group in the United States, Native studies focuses on tribal priorities. The most pressing among these is to decolonize Indian nations and move them into a liberatory terrain.⁹⁰ In line with this ideological mission, the discipline is principled against colonial hegemony and participates in an on-going effort to liberate Indian nations, as its knowledge praxis attests.

⁸⁶ Susan A. Miller, “Native America Writes Back,” *WSR* 23: 2 (2008), 10.

⁸⁷ Cook-Lynn, “The Rise of the Academic ‘Chiefs,’” 39-40.

⁸⁸ Forbes “The Use of Racial and Ethnic Terms in America,” 64; see, also, Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 175.

⁸⁹ Joy Harjo, *How We Became Human* (New York: Norton, 2002), xxvi.

⁹⁰ Forbes, “Colonialism and Native American Literature,” *WSR* 3:2 (1987), 22; Emma Perez, *Decolonial Imaginary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 110.

C) KNOWLEDGE PRAXIS IN INDIAN STUDIES

Colonial and philosophical motives dictate the principles of Native studies and determine its epistemology, according to Cook-Lynn. This discipline largely grounds its knowledge on the native “understanding of the interrelationship between human beings, animals, plants, societies, the cosmos, the spirit world, and the function of other natural, even catastrophic, occurrences.”⁹¹ Bred in a completely different culture, proponents of Western centered disciplines and advocates for scientific objectivity label this native knowledge as unscientific. Besides rebutting such a view, indigenous intellectuals also seek to de-center the colonial epistemology and deploy dialogism to that end. Dialogism is a constructive discourse of conflict used to interrupt the monologue of the dominator; it exposes discursive discrepancies and allows the coexistence of multiple approaches to an issue.⁹²

The colonial powers of the West have sought to impose their views on all non-Western people. “The Western colonizing nations of Europe and the derivative settler-colonized states produced by their colonial expansion have been sustained by a central idea: the West’s knowledge of non-Western peoples.” This colonial knowledge, Robert A. Williams argues, becomes “the redemptive source of the West’s presumed mandate to impose its vision of truth on non-Western peoples.”⁹³ Native studies refutes such a bombastic claim and defends an indigenous knowledge grounded in an Indian world. Accordingly, its knowledge praxis conflicts with the linear type of knowledge of Eurocentric disciplines. While the Indian mind seeks to comprehend relationships, the linear mind looks for cause and effect. Consequently, both minds apprehend the world differently: “Whereas the Indian concentric mind is more accepting of the

⁹¹ Holm, Pearson, and Chavis, “Peoplehood,” 18.

⁹² Deirdre Lashgari, ed., *Violence, Silence, and Anger: Women’s Writing as Transgression* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 3-12.

⁹³ Robert A. Williams, Jr., *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 6.

truth and facts, the Western linear mind must pursue empirical evidence to prove something is true so that it can become factual in the scientific sense.”⁹⁴

My Afro-centric understanding of the universe – both physical and spiritual – is that **not** everything can be proven empirically; in fact, many realities elude science. As a result, a native mind can’t comprehend scientific denials of plain realities. For instance, science is agnostic regarding the existence of extraterrestrial beings, despite numerous testimonies by people from all walks of life who alleged to have encountered them. Science can act irrationally at times and astronomy provides its latest brand of stupidity, in my opinion. Pluto’s demotion to the rank of dwarf planets as of 24 August 2006, for instance, shows that scientists rather conform to the consensus opinions of their profession, while claiming to be guided by empirical evidence. The scientific community can dismiss any inconvenient knowledge/truth out of hand. Science hardly accepts alternative interpretations, even backed by evidence. This causes some critics to decry fear as the root of scientific irrationality. Clearly, science at times jeopardizes its claim of objectivity, because it does not thrive on rationality: fear governs it.⁹⁵

Eurocentric ways of knowing are narrow in scope. It is, therefore, ludicrous to seek a Western validation of an indigenous truth/knowledge.⁹⁶ American Indians have myriad ways of knowing: ceremonial cycles, sacred histories, and relationships with particular geographical areas.⁹⁷ Moreover, until Europeans invaded Indian tribes, their oral tradition provided “precise knowledge of birds, animals, plants, geologic features, and religious experiences of a particular

⁹⁴ Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 8-9.

⁹⁵ Deloria, *Red Earth, White Lies*, 42-3 & 79-82.

⁹⁶ As Blaise Pascal has it, “Plaisante justice qu’une rivière borne, vérité en deçà des Pyrénées, erreur au-delà.”

⁹⁷ Anthony T. Clark and Norman R. Yetman, ‘To Feel the Drumming Earth Come Upward,’ *Indigenous Studies Today* (Fall 2005/Spring 2006) and *American Studies* 46:3 & 4 (Fall/Winter 2005), 8.

group of people.”⁹⁸ These ways of knowing are incompatible with Western modes of knowing and incomprehensible to most people from a cultural boundary known as the “West.” Consequently, Western and indigenous modes of knowing are autonomous; none seeks any validation from the other. Arguably, they are opposed to each other as is feminist scholarship to patriarchy.

Feminists have long represented patriarchal knowledge as a subordinate deity serving male power. Patriarchy has wiped out women’s questions so much so that women have not been able to formulate their own questions to meet their own experiences, feminists claim. The Women’s Liberation Movement even charges that women have not been able to experience their own experience under patriarchy.⁹⁹ In taking on women’s oppressive conditions, feminist scholarship debunks patriarchal constructs and inaugurates an egalitarian era in knowledge production.¹⁰⁰ Feminist contestation of patriarchal knowledge validates the principle that every self-identified community has its local realities which, in turn, shape its experience, knowledge, and truth. Therefore, establishing a hierarchy of knowledge is a puerile exercise. Knowledge is knowledge, because every type of knowledge has proven useful to the community who manufactures it. The following paragraphs exemplify this point of contention.

The hierarchization of knowledge has adversely impacted the concept of development, which had lost much of its initial promise by the close of the twentieth century. Armed with an unshakable belief in the scientific knowledge that presumably transcends all boundaries, Western development experts strive to improve Third World countries. However, a significant number of

⁹⁸ Deloria, *Red Earth, White Lies*, 51.

⁹⁹ Mary Eagleton, ed., *Feminist Literary Criticism* (New York: Longman, 1991), 5.

¹⁰⁰ Lesler-Irabinna Regney, “Internationalization of Indigenous Anticolonial Cultural Critique of Research Methodologies: A Guide to Research Methodology and Its Principles,” *WSR* 14:2 (1999), 114.

Western development projects in these countries have failed, because the indigenous knowledges – deemed irrelevant – are excluded in the conceptualization of these projects.¹⁰¹

Holm, Pearson, and Chavis present the disastrous example of the sheep reduction program foisted on the Navajos in the 1930s. Similar scenarios prevail in fiction as well. Paule Marshall's creative writing, for instance, squarely blames the poor performance of development projects on the failure to incorporate local knowledges at their inception. Her Third World island of Bournehills has known many such failed projects: a housing scheme built with the help of a Canadian company; a crop diversification pilot project to help the peasants grow banana instead of sugar cane alone; an irrigation system installed by a farming group from the United States; a soil conservation program; and a family planning program.¹⁰² As William A. Williams contends in *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, the insistence that other people ought to implement American ideas is preposterous, because "the American way of doing things simply does not work for the other people," in some cases.¹⁰³

Third World opposition to Western self-help programs comes as of no surprise. This indigenous sabotage evidences what James C. Scott calls "practical resistance," which is a constant testing of the equilibrium established between two actors with asymmetrical power capabilities. Practical resistance encompasses everyday practices of noncompliance, foot dragging, and deception; it aims to make one's presence felt.¹⁰⁴

European colonization of the rest of the world made it an implicit requirement to obtain Western approval to validate realities specific to indigenous people worldwide. This trend used

¹⁰¹ John Briggs and Joanne Sharp, "Indigenous Knowledges and Development: A Postcolonial Caution," *Third World Quarterly* 25:4 (2004), 661-76.

¹⁰² Paule Marshall, *The Chosen Place, the Timeless People* (New York: Avon Books, 1969), 59-62.

¹⁰³ William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Dell, 1962), 10.

¹⁰⁴ James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), xvi-xvii; and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 190-193.

to be so prevalent that definitions of Western literature were applied to indigenous oral traditions, because Western literature was deemed the benchmark. Literary scholars Charles Larson and George L. Cornell critique this attitude, arguing that to force the concept of universality on non-Western people makes Western culture the standard of measurement.¹⁰⁵ The Eurocentric benchmark is just one standard among others; its absolute reign is over. Must I seek Western sanction while talking about the *harmatthan*, a specific weather known to the sub-Saharan region where I hail from? That dry and dusty wind, which blows south from the Sahara into the Gulf of Guinea between November and March, is West African trademarked. Although scientists claim that it can push dust and sand all the way to the United States, the *harmatthan* still remains exclusively an African phenomenon: it has no equivalence in the West. Eurocentric advocates should reconsider their ideological views; this reconsideration should include rethinking merging proposals between Indian studies and other disciplines.

d) REJECTING MERGING PROPOSALS: INDIGENOUS VS. ETHNIC

Native peoples who live and identify within their ancestral communities do not see themselves as racial, ethnic, or minority groups in the general American sense of those terms. Native peoples who live in or have ties to their traditional communities see themselves as part of long-standing communities or nations with rights to self-government, land, and resources that predate the U.S. constitution and are granted by the Creator. Native peoples, even urban Indians, do not form an ethnic group but are members of nations recognized by the United States.¹⁰⁶

Indian studies has been coerced into merging with other apparently similar disciplines but Indianists have strongly opposed such proposals for disciplinary and historical reasons.

¹⁰⁵ Charles Larson, "Heroic Ethnocentrism: The Idea of Universality in Literature," in Bill Ashcroft et al., eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*; 1st ed., 64; George L. Cornell, "The Imposition of Western Definitions of Literature on Indian Oral Traditions," in Thomas King et al. eds., *The Native in Literature* (Oakville, Ontario: ECW Press, 1987), 174-187.

¹⁰⁶ Champagne, "From Sovereignty to Minority," 21-22.

From a disciplinary standpoint, merging Native studies with other ethnic studies programs will weaken the foundational basis of the discipline itself: “The two major concepts that have served as the guideposts and grounding forces for Native studies are indigenoussness and tribal sovereignty. Our indigeneity, our originality in and sacred relation to a specific place, distinguishes us in a profound way from all others.”¹⁰⁷ Conflating Indian studies with ethnic studies will make obsolete the very **reason for being** of the discipline, because ethnic groups included in ethnic studies want to be a part of the American mainstream. In a very real sense, merging Indian studies with minority studies will jeopardize Indian studies, for minority studies dwells on ethnic labels and defends minority centered issues.

Ethnic labels fundamentally negate Indian indigeneity. For Indianists and *WSR* scholars, American Indians are indigenous people with lands, treaties, resources, and histories different from any other group in the United States. Cook-Lynn, Vine Deloria, Jr., Wilkins, Williams, Warrior, Weaver, Willard, Downing, Thornton, Mihesuah, Jaimes, Miller, Womack, Vizenor, Forbes, and Champagne concur that Indians have specific histories, treaties, and rights that set them apart. They alone have nation status and treaties with the federal government; a special body of laws and policies pertains exclusively to them.

Despite these historical givens, some institutions or individuals have contested these unique attributes of Indian people in violation of a Federal Court’s ruling that “treaties made by the United States and Indian Nations are of the same dignity as treaties with foreign nations.”¹⁰⁸ The federal government itself has routinely violated Indian treaties, despite its obligation to uphold them. It is no wonder that state or private institutions of higher education do not honor Indian treaties either. In this vein, Cook-Lynn points out that college administrators and faculty

¹⁰⁷ David Wilkins, “Keynote Address,” *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 165.

¹⁰⁸ Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry, *Indian Treaties: Two Centuries of Dishonor* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1977), 7.

often deter Native studies from executing its core mission of defending Indian sovereignty and rights. Since only a few university administrators understand the difference between tribal membership and ethnic identity, Native studies falls into the ethnic studies rubric in most institutions of higher education.¹⁰⁹ Clearly, the political misrepresentation of Indian nations accounts for proposals to merge Native studies and ethnic studies, in the first place.

Second, the socio-political circumstances leading to the creation of the discipline equally mislead to these merging proposals. Ironically, then, the driving force behind the creation of Indigenous studies programs has given ammunition to merging advocates as well. Because Indian studies programs were created in response to socio-political disturbances of the 1960s and 1970s, merging proponents establish pseudo-commonalities between Indian studies claims and ethnic studies demands. This misconception has been the ground for demanding fusion of the disciplines.

Finally, budgetary constraints force college administrators to think in creative ways; they view merging alternatives as synonymous with cost effectiveness. Thus, conflating Native studies and ethnic studies programs becomes a means of addressing budgetary shortfalls.

In sum, misrepresentation of Indians as minorities and budgetary constraints account for the placement of Native studies within the ethnic studies rubric. However, merging Indian studies with ethnic studies crosses a sensitive line. To consider Native studies as another ethnic studies program has baffled Indianists, because this discipline takes up specific Indian demands. As I have shown in another study, though Indians and immigrant ethnic groups do share some commonalities, Indians still remain different from the ethnic groups included in the ethnic

¹⁰⁹ Cook-Lynn, "Who Stole Native American Studies?," 9-28; and Champagne, "From Sovereignty to Minority," 34.

studies buffet.¹¹⁰ In a very real sense, merging Indian studies with immigrant minority centered disciplines is to ignore that American Indians are statutorily different from immigrant ethnic groups in the United States. These groups lack sovereignty, nation status, and treaties with the federal government. Devoid of treaty rights, they focus mainly on civil rights and fight for their insertion within the U. S. economy and culture. Unlike Indians, they have settled in the United States to make a new life and are ultimately seeking a piece of the American dream. In line with their claims, ethnic studies mostly deals with inclusion of immigrant minorities in American national life, while Native studies focuses on indigenous people who voice the demand for tribal sovereignty.¹¹¹

Redundant proposals to assimilate Native studies into other disciplines have led Cook-Lynn to underscore the singularity of Indian studies: “Minority/Ethnic Studies are programs of immigrant cultures and peoples in this continent. American Indian Studies is of cultures and peoples forever indigenous to this continent.”¹¹² Simply stated, the trend to incorporate Native studies into other apparently similar disciplines is nothing less than intellectual (neo)-colonialism, a move indigenous scholars have rejected since the 1980s.¹¹³ As recently as 2003, three Indianists at the American Studies Association conference have, in one way or another, rejected the project of including Indian studies in American studies and rather challenged Americanists to reverse their assumptions. It is unrealistic to merge two antipodes: Native studies, which views United States history as a story of colonization and seeks to decolonize tribal nations; and American studies, which has neglected (at least until recently) the United

¹¹⁰ Ruben K. Afagla, “A Divided Horizon in their Common Sky?,” 55-88.

¹¹¹ Warrior and Weaver, “Introduction,” 9.

¹¹² Cook-Lynn, “Editor’s Note,” *WSR* 2:2 (1986), ii.

¹¹³ See Stevenson, “‘Ethnic’ Assimilates ‘Indigenous,’” 33-51; Forbes, “Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty,” 11-23; Deloria, “Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty: Looking at the Windmills in Our Minds,” *WSR* 13:1 (1998), 25-31.

States domestic imperialism. In response to calls to merge Indian and American studies, Indianists propose that Americanists think about sovereignty as a category of analysis to be taken seriously in critiquing U. S. colonialism.¹¹⁴ In any case, Cook-Lynn unequivocally articulates the mission of Native studies: “Indian Studies is about government and politics and sovereignty for Indian nations. It is about rights based on the extra-constitutionality of a government-to-government relationship with the U.S. federal government unlike any other in the United States.”¹¹⁵

As native intellectuals often remind merging advocates, any community that represents itself in terms of nationhood must use the term nation, which implies a historically developed community of people possessing a distinct language, a territorial land base, a self-governing system, and a common culture. Indianists argue that claims of native nationhood are downgraded when Indians are branded as ethnics. This contention sustains Indianist criticisms of the usual two-component names of American indigenous people, because they underscore similarities between them and other hyphenated Americans and dash any hope of territory possession or self-determination.¹¹⁶ In this context, the only viable alternative for Native studies is to defend the distinctive political status of Indian nations:

We are Indigenous – of this land – with centuries-old relations, obligations, and responsibilities that dictate that we follow our own political paths toward the future. Others may choose to walk the trail beside us – to learn, as we are relearning, our ways and to support our goals – but in no way can we continue to allow others to lead us, to define our problems, and to impose their strategies and programs on us.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ They are: Philip J. Deloria, “American Indians, American Studies, and the ASA,” 669-680; Warrior, “A Room of One’s Own at the ASA,” 681-687; and O’Brien, “Why Here,” 689-696.

¹¹⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 16.

¹¹⁶ Forbes “The Use of Racial and Ethnic Terms in America,” 63.

¹¹⁷ Stevenson, “‘Ethnic’ Assimilates ‘Indigenous,’” 49.

Everything considered, ethnic and Indian studies have opposed interests and can't be conflated. It comes as no surprise that Native studies is structured around the principles of nationalism, sovereignty, and indigenesness. Only this triumvirate can champion Indian causes, Cook-Lynn maintains.¹¹⁸ In her judgment, a native scholarship that shows an ideological ambivalence concerning these principles is useless, as are Native studies programs lacking in empowerment strategies for Indian nations.

CONCLUSION

This chapter underscores the twin roles of *WSR* and Cook-Lynn in shaping an Indianist vision of the broader institutional presence and goals of Native studies. Cook-Lynn is a founder and a long time editor of *WSR*. Through anti-colonial or Indianist scholarly publications, curricular proposals, and platforms regarding the proper mission of Native studies, both Cook-Lynn and *WSR* define the discipline in terms of sovereignty, nationalism, and indigeneity. Both are instrumental in setting the discipline in its oppositional course; they actively participate in its defensive mechanism and anchor its oppositional discourse. In the absence of a dependable academic organization in Native studies, *WSR* publications push for an endogenous approach in the discipline, while Cook-Lynn puts nationalism, sovereignty, and indigenesness at the forefront of curricular development, disciplinary principles that ground the radical discourse circulating therein.

The chapter equally examines three major instabilities in the field: the various appellations of the discipline, its academic journals, and professional associations. Additionally, its institutional status remains another challenge, in light of Cook-Lynn's observation:

¹¹⁸ Cook-Lynn, "American Indian Studies: An Overview," 22.

The truth is, we are still programs. We are still embedded in the departments of related disciplines and we have seen in the past decades what happens when there is no department status for faculty members and, therefore, no defense of tenure for those faculty members. When the embedded faculty member leaves his or her position in the related discipline, no one teaches the classes he or she has developed in Indian Studies and the program dies a natural death of attrition.¹¹⁹

Native studies is no stranger to challenges. Besides merging proposals, it has faced other structural predicaments. Instances include, among others, instructors who initially came from non-Indian cultures, compelling the discipline to serve as a career stepping stone for outsiders who wished to work with Indians, rather than providing intellectual pursuits for Indians themselves. As Roxanne D. Ortiz remarks, the main reason for the instability of Indian studies programs remains the lack of qualified Indian faculty. Even when Indian personnel with the appropriate backgrounds and knowledge are available, in the absence of Ph. Ds. and publications, “the programs flounder in instability because the unqualified faculty remain part-time or temporary and are eventually phased out in the retention, promotion, and tenure procedures of the university.”¹²⁰ This situation is being addressed; the growing number of Indian Ph. D. holders in the academy palliates it.

In sum, Indian studies has come a long way and has mainly relied on two militant instruments for its shaping: Cook-Lynn and *WSR*, both of whom have proposed the indigenization of the academy and the adoption of an endogenous approach in Native studies. Cook-Lynn’s activist oeuvre foregrounds the cultural, political, and social relevance of Indian nations. In order to collaborate with other Indianists and articulate an Indianist vision of the discipline, she co-founded (in 1985) *WSR*, the main artery for distributing Native studies scholarship. She left her tenured professorship in 1990 but continued to edit *WSR* until 2004. As

¹¹⁹ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 13.

¹²⁰ Roxanne D. Ortiz, “Developing Indian Academic Professionals,” *WSR* 1:1(1985), 7.

WSR's editor from 1985 to 2004, Cook-Lynn is of no mind to follow pedantically moderate views, and therefore publishes only articles she feels can shape the oppositional stance of the discipline and defend Indian nations. She sets the agenda for the fledgling Native studies discipline, writes many articles in defense of Indian nations, and comments on events involving Indian communities. In all, her works represent American Indians as the original inhabitants of the United States with rights and privileges specific to them alone. From her perspective, Native studies and Indianists have no excuse for showing an ideological ambivalence about Indian nationhood: they must defend it, rain or shine.¹²¹

¹²¹ Cook-Lynn, "The American Indian Fiction Writer," in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 85.

CHAPTER THREE:
NATIVE VOICE (S) AND AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES

This chapter on native voice(s) is a companion to the previous one, but it specifically engages a controversial, albeit vital debate in Native American studies: Who is entitled to participate in the discourse in Indigenous Nations studies? Whose/what view(s) carry weight and authority in the discipline? What are the downsides or pitfalls of discarding some native voices within its realm?¹

There are three sections in this chapter. The first one contextualizes and argues Cook-Lynn's urge for a native voice; it deploys an analogous scholarship to provide a context that illuminates her specific contribution to the subject. The second section explores Cook-Lynn's conceptualization of a native voice within a decolonization framework, for the issue of a voice has been a collective concern for scholars from subjected communities worldwide. Although Cook-Lynn writes from a position held by a number of other prominent postcolonial critics and Indianists, she singularly elaborates a program that specifies the content and the goals of a native voice. She does this in her essays, book reviews, and fiction. Finally, the third section addresses Cook-Lynn's dividing Native studies into native and non-native voices, which creates some regimes of recognition, inclusion, and exclusion in the discipline.

I) CONTEXTUALIZING THE NECESSITY OF A NATIVE VOICE IN THE UNITED STATES

Cook-Lynn's emblematic observation regarding the importance of a native voice in academia can effectively help launch this chapter: "The emergence of the indigenous voice in academia in the last several decades has been recognized as a huge breakthrough for the right to

¹ I am aware that no single native voice exists. There are many viewpoints about issues associated with teaching, writing, and interpreting American Indians. However, except in some rare cases, I use "native voice" instead of "native voices" throughout this chapter.

...speak for oneself and one's people. It is as fundamental as food and decent housing."² Because Indianists believe that United States colonization has long suppressed Indian voices, Cook-Lynn comments that Indian descendants must tell the arduous and difficult stories of Indian nations in order to retrieve lost histories and maintain a native identity. She remains convinced that non-Indian intellectuals' unawareness of such alternative stories has allowed them to ignore how U.S.-Indian history continues to shape the perspective of Indian intellectuals.³

I examined the motives behind Cook-Lynn's writing in chapter I. She reveals the major forces that compelled her to write: the deliberate diminishment of Indian life in the United States; the loss of millions of acres of treaty-protected indigenous lands; the multitude of American Indians who have been forced away from their homelands as a result of federal Indian policy; the lack of understanding of native cultures and Indian political status in modern America; America's arrogant, racist, and colonialist attitude vis-à-vis Indian nations; and the betrayal of some native intellectuals who predict a future filled with uncertainty for Indian nations.⁴

Since Cook-Lynn reveals assuring the cultural, historical, and political survival of Indian nations as her main scholarly goal as is reflected both in her scholarship and other writings, it is fair to suggest that the misrepresentation of American Indians in U.S. history is another major reason for her writing. By all available evidence provided by Indianists, a one-dimensional perspective informs history in America. For the most part, western historians have routinely presented Native Americans as an obstacle to Anglo-American expansion. For instance, Cook-Lynn captures Frederick J. Turner's overriding influence on American history in her analysis of

² Cook-Lynn, "How Scholarship Defames the Native Voice ... and Why," *WSR* 15: 2 (2000), 80.

³ Lisa J. Udel, "Revising Strategies: The Intersection of Literature and Activism in Contemporary Native Women's Writing," *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 19:2 (2007), 71-72.

⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, ix-xii; "You May Consider Speaking about Your Art," 55-63.

a paper he presented at the American Historical Association in 1893. His paper premised, Cook-Lynn contends, that Indians were “an obstacle to progress and white settlement, represented a mere nuisance to the progress of an important democracy, and deserved to pass into oblivion.” Consequently, Turner urged his peers to describe Indians “as a ‘stage’ in frontier development, a passing phase, a vanishing race,” according to Cook-Lynn, who charges him of setting up “the basis for methodology and theory concerning the settling of the West and the ridding of the continent of Indian nations.”⁵ Likewise, native historian Fixico maintains that Turner’s now infamous “Frontier Thesis” induced most Euro-Americans to think about Native Americans as inferior and losers in a supreme contest for land. This principle, he argues, has been the leitmotif of American history since the late nineteenth century.⁶ For both Cook-Lynn and Fixico, then, Turner epitomized the pervasive notion of American Indians as a barrier in American culture.

Turner has influenced American historiography, to some extent. His frontier thesis, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” became part of the standard historiography of American History; it spawned a massive following of “Turnerians” both in and out of the academy, and “anti-Turnerian” revolutions, including the movement called “The New Western History.”⁷ His thesis remains controversial; even some historians within Western and frontier history contested his approach and critiqued him almost from the start. “The mainstream of the profession has long since discarded Turner’s assumption that the frontier is the key to American history as a whole; they point instead to the critical influence of such factors as slavery and the Civil War, immigration, and the development of industrial capitalism,” one source affirms.⁸ Others argued that his formulation ignored the presence of Indian tribes whose subjugation was

⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 143; *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 53-4.

⁶ Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 130. .

⁷ See: <http://www.answers.com/topic/frederick-jackson-turner> (consulted on 11/18/2010).

⁸ See: http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/people/s_z/turner.htm (consulted on 11/18/2010).

required by the nation's westward march. Clearly, while his thesis enjoyed periods of widespread acceptance, it suffered scholarly attacks as well. Defenders and critics still engage Turner's ideas.⁹

Moreover, Cook-Lynn is bothered by western historians' claims that Indians lack political knowledge, a major stereotype used to dismiss their contributions to the United States.¹⁰ Despite their political contributions to the founding document of the United States, American Indians are hardly credited with any formative role in the making of this nation. Vine Deloria, Jr. offers a poignant example illustrating the pervasive denial of Indians in his scrutiny of Elisabeth Tooker's *The United States Constitution and the Iroquois League*. Stunned by such a perennial denial in mainstream scholarship, Vine Deloria, Jr. sarcastically declares in his review essay that Tooker "articulated her own version of the Six Nations government and demonstrated, to her satisfaction, the impossibility of the Six Nations having any relevance at all for American constitutional thought," thereby underscoring "her lack of knowledge of political philosophy." For the historical record, Vine Deloria, Jr. recalls that "the constitutional debate really involved allocating political powers and functions between the states and the federal government, and in solving this problem the constitutional fathers had to have given careful consideration to what the Six Nations had already done in solving this vexing question."¹¹

⁹ See: <http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/acs/1890s/turner/turner.html> (Bowling Green State University; consulted on 11/18/2010).

¹⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 85.

¹¹ Vine Deloria Jr., "Comfortable Fictions and the Struggle for Turf: An Essay Review of *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*," in Devon A. Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 74; see, also, Donald A. Grinde, Jr., "The Iroquois and the Nature of American Government," *AICRJ* 17:1 (1993), 153-173; Bruce E. Johansen, "Notes from the 'Culture Wars': More Annotations on the Debate Regarding the Iroquois and the Origins of Democracy," *AICRJ* 23:1 (1999), 165-175; Johansen and Grinde, "The Debate Regarding Native American Precedents for Democracy: A Recent Historiography," *AICRJ* 14:1 (1990), 61-88.

This portrait of Indians in American life brings up another debate about Native Americans, namely, their representation. The representation of American Indians in mainstream discourse raises even more controversy. The most troubling images of Indians, in Cook-Lynn's view, are their representations as wanderer-settlers, vanished people, culturally deficient people, and ethnic minorities.

Besides these unfortunate images, Indianists allege that mainstream media neglect current stories of American Indians. In addition to the claim by some Indian centered institutions that the mainstream media trivialize the everyday stories of America's aboriginal people, Indianists charge that these media hardly treat the history and cultures of American Indians as an integral part of the total history of the United States.¹² Cook-Lynn attributes the misrepresentation and neglect of Indians in U.S. history to anti-Indianism, a sentiment which has enabled its advocates to perceive Indians as anti-Americans.¹³

Equally, mainstream research on American Indians calls for an Indian response. Apparently Native Americans have entertained the imagination of Euro-Americans since contact. In a study charting the development of the Indian portrait in American culture, Mary A. Money asserts that Indians have appeared as evil beings in diaries and captivity narratives since contact with Europeans.¹⁴ Money's claim that American Indians have fascinated, frightened, and attracted other Americans is a refrain chanted by scores of analysts: "Native people in the United States are the most researched people in the world. Outsiders have studied everything – our religions, our hunting practices, our sexual lives, and our health and education," Crazy Bull

¹² See the University of Washington Center for Indigenous Media at <http://depts.washington.edu/nvoices/> (consulted on 12/5/2004).

¹³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 4.

¹⁴ Mary A. Money, "Broken Arrows: Images of Native Americans in the Popular Western," in Diane Morrison, ed., *American Indian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Contemporary Issues* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 363.

observes.¹⁵ However, the inability of outside researchers to voice the mute and silent ethos of an unknown culture often leads to the circulation of erroneous information about Indian communities. As Fixico remarks, prior to the emergence of native scholars on the academic scene, research on Indian tribes promoted biased views about them.¹⁶

Still, the intervention of Indian scholars in academia did not halt the dissemination of unwelcome information about American Indians, after all. Not so long ago, Susan A. Miller denounced Richard White's use of derogatory terms in *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1991) in reference to the Winnebagos and Wyandots, along with accusation of relegating them to the past. Also, Miller stigmatized Ramón Gutierrez's much-heralded book, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford University Press, 1991), for its outright offense to Pueblo culture.¹⁷ If anything, the countless anti-Indian publications inside academia attest to its leadership role in hatching Indian stereotypes. The following paragraph witnesses the reaction of some native scholars to this sensationalism and reveals their determination to stop it.

Most native intellectuals resent how Indians are sketched in the narrative of the United States. Suffice to recall the main driving force behind two books that construct American Indians from their own indigenous perspective. In introducing *American Indian: The First Victim*, Jay David states that its main purpose is to explore the "facets of Indian life, to offer a forum in which the Indian himself will present a discussion of his own history, philosophy, and needs. For

¹⁵ Crazy Bull, as quoted in Terry L. Cross, "Putting our Mind Together: Participatory Research, Tribal Sovereignty, and Indigenous People," a paper presented at the MAASA conference in Lawrence, KS, on 18 April 2004, p. 2; Money, "Broken Arrows," 379.

¹⁶ Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 130.

¹⁷ Miller, "Licensed Trafficking and Ethnographic Engineering," in Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*, 100-110.

too long the white man has spoken for the Indian. It is time non-Indians listen to the voices which they have long suppressed.”¹⁸ Also, decades after David’s thought-provoking work and regardless of their tribal identities and histories, contributors to *Natives and Academics* cite a similar leitmotif. They reaffirm that the major reason behind the book is “to remind scholars that many Indians are not satisfied with the manner in which they have been researched or with how they and their ancestors have been depicted.”¹⁹ This statement underpins Indians’ discontent about their representation.

Native Americans have been subjugated, as a result of European colonization. To justify land confiscation in North America, European colonists have used lies and negative images to demonize them. Time and again, American Indians are caricatured as evil or devilish. And, there is no end in sight. Contemporaneous ways of representing and relating to indigenous people are generally based on accounts by early ethnocentric travelers that may have begun as ill-informed opinions about indigenous cultures. Likewise, mainstream America has aggressively taken up the tradition set up during colonial times; so much so that Cook-Lynn and other critics have established solid links between the Indian of the movies and the stereotypical Indian created by chroniclers of early European settlers.²⁰

By all available evidence, the situation is worsening for American Indians in this high tech era, where Hollywood reigns supreme. As Beverly R. Singer has observed, the prominence

¹⁸ Jay David, ed., *American Indian: The First Victim* (New York: William Marrow, 1972), 8-9.

¹⁹ Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*, x.

²⁰ Cook-Lynn “Who Gets to Tell the Stories,” *WSR* 9:1 (1993), 60-64. See, also, Cornel Pewewardy, “From ‘La Belle Sauvage’ to the ‘Noble Savage,’” published in *Multicultural Education* 6:3 (1999), 6-11; available at <http://www.hanksville.org/sand/stereotypes/pewewardy.html> (consulted on 12/9/2004); “Fluff and Feathers: Treatment of American Indians in the Literature and the Classroom,” published in *Equity and Excellence in Education*, April 1998; available at <http://www.hanksville.org/storytellers/pewe/writing/Fluff.html>. Elizabeth Bird’s edited book of essays provides a broad view of their caricatures – *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

of American Indian stereotypes in early Hollywood westerns sacrificed the humanity of America's indigenous people. It exaggerated the Western frontier as a confrontation between good and evil, and characterized it as civilized Europeans against wild Indians.²¹ In bursting the Indian into the public imagination as blood-lusting savage, heathenish anti-Christ, bloodthirsty villains, and vanishing nobleman of the forest, Hollywood money-hungry industry has disseminated distorted images of Native Americans; its movies have reified Indian stereotypes.²²

Media representations have fantasized Indians to the point of foregrounding wish fulfillment in any Indian portrait. In general, then, American Indians are baffled by their portraits in the mainstream media:

We know that the white man's images of us have little or nothing to do with the reality of Indian life. Most of these images are fictional creations of the white imagination and ignore what we are truly like. Children, and children now grown, have at best a mixed conception of these mysterious peoples whom they meet through history books and the mass media. The Indian portrait of the moment may be bellicose or ludicrous or romantic, but almost never is the portrait that of real persons.²³

Indian portraits in the mainstream media are stereotypical images. Indian stereotyping has been the focus of many studies, including a classic one authored by an acute analyst of the condition of twentieth-century American Indians, historian Robert F. Berkhofer.²⁴ In *The White Man's Indian*, Berkhofer recapitulates two distinct stereotypes of America's indigenous people that

²¹ Beverly R. Singer, *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 14.

²² Rita Keshena, "The Role of American Indians in Motion Picture," *AICRJ* 6:2 (1974), 28.

²³ Cornel Pewewardy, "The Pocahontas Paradox," published in the *Journal of Navajo Education*, Fall/Winter 1996/97; available at <http://www.hanksville.org/storytellers/pewe> (consulted on 3/7/2004).

²⁴ Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*. Other studies include: Jefferey R. Hanson and Linda P. Rouse, "Dimensions of Native American Stereotyping," *AICRJ* 11:4 (1987), 33-58; Money, "Broken Arrows," 363-388; Robert Appleford, "Coming out from behind the Rocks: Constructs of the Indian in Recent U.S. and Canadian Cinema," *AICRJ* 19:1 (1995): 97-118; John A. Price, "The Stereotyping of North American Indians in Motion Pictures," *Ethnohistory* 20: 2 (1973), 153-171; and Devon A. Mihesuah, *American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, 1996).

devolve from mainstream perception. First is the figure of the “good Indian,” an idealized caricature of the traditional “noble savage,” a loyal friend, who cooperates with the invaders. These stereotypical Indians live in harmony with nature in a state of innocence and simplicity. Beautiful in physique and regal in bearing, they are brave in combat, yet tender and loyal in social relationships. The “bloodthirsty” or the “bad Indian” makes up the second stereotypical group. Many negative qualities are heaped upon this category of Indians: they are naked, lecherous, debauchers, lazy, deceitful, and treacherous. Weaver complements these categories with a third one, the half-breed stereotype. The half-breed is an extension of the “bad Indian;” Indians of this category are distrusted by both cultures and fit in nowhere. Regardless of the category, Weaver posits, these stereotypical images are inextricably bound up with mainstream self-evaluations, because they describe Indians negatively in terms of what they lack or what they are not, compared to Euro-Americans.²⁵ Definitely, the stereotypical image of the American Indian is not only unrealistic, it is outright grotesque.

Ubiquitous Indian stereotypes speak to the significance of representation in society. I will now use some theories and analogous scholarship on representation to underscore its social role.

Representation is a universal concept and a powerful tool that shapes our understanding of the surrounding world. Stuart Hall defines it as the production of meaning through language and points out that the concept has a central place in the study of culture, because it connects meaning and language to culture. To shape our understanding of a given situation, representation foregrounds its memorable aspects by means of stereotyping, the dominant poetics of which consists in reducing complex characteristics of an individual to a few traits. Invested with a discursive form of power, which operates through culture, the production of knowledge,

²⁵ Weaver, “Ethnic Cleansing, Homestyle,” *WSR* 10:1 (1994), 27.

imagery, and representation, stereotyping is an absolute essentializing, reductionist, and naturalizing phenomenon.²⁶

Representation is culturally constructed and ideologically informed. Robert G. Lee, in *Orientalism*, elucidates how Asian-American imagery has been carefully constructed to reflect ideological shifts in the conceptualization of ethnic stereotypes corresponding to the evolution in U.S. culture.²⁷ Similarly, Jean-Pierre Durix argues that the representation of Africa in the travelers' tales of imperial times mostly corresponds to a Europeanized rationalization of images belonging to the colonizers. Notwithstanding differences in fantasized representations of Africans and Orientals, they share similar underpinnings. African nightmares of cannibalism and despicable rites available in *Heart of Darkness* are substitutes for the Oriental image of carnal pleasures in harems. In both cases, Durix underscores, the identity of the colonized was confiscated, constructed, and made acceptable to Western tastes.²⁸ As a powerful tool used to define racial differences, representation affects social relations, the construction of subjectivity, and identity.

The image obtained through representational mechanisms is not reality, but it often takes precedence over reality. Linda T. Smith and Mary A. Money comment that a distorted image can take on the semblance of reality when it has been repeated over a period of time. Routine perceptions of early explorers about indigenous people that are currently embedded in the

²⁶ See Stuart Hall, "The Works of Representation," 15-28 and "The Spectacle of the Other," 257-258 in Hall, ed., *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (California: Sage, 1997).

²⁷ Robert G. Lee, *Orientalism: Asian American in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999).

²⁸ Jean-Pierre Durix, *Mimesis, Genres and Post-Colonial Discourse* (New York: St. Martin, 1998), 5.

attitudes of non-native people towards natives attest to this possibility. In that sense, representation plays an important social role, because it gives the impression of the truth.²⁹

An image cannot exist without someone to see or imagine it. Some rapacious imaginers have so repeatedly recorded their fantasized Indian portraits that whenever most Americans think of Native Americans, they easily call up images of Cowboys and Plains Indians. These images gained ascendance in the American popular imagination in such a thorough way that the ubiquitous Plains Indian warrior literally stands for American Indians. This image emphasizes Indian savagery and portrays a defeated race destined to vanish. This practice brings up erasure, another important category of Indian representation that has spurred Cook-Lynn's theorizing on a native voice.

The erasure of Indians from American history, and the perpetuation of the myth that they have vanished from American soil are contentious themes among scholars of American history and culture. The Indian vanishing thesis permeates literature, popular culture, museum studies, and history, to mention some selected areas. Craig S. Womack points out that many twentieth-century mainstream writers have endorsed vanishing viewpoints and tragic portrayals of Indians. Likewise, in a study of Indian representation in the popular culture venue of the American musical, Jace Weaver unveils the pervasiveness of vanishing Indian myths in the American psyche. He cites frequent Indian erasures from the environment depicted as palpable proof of a home-grown form of ethnic cleansing. Similarly, Timothy W. Luke documents its prevalence at museum exhibitions. Luke charges that Indian art exhibitions usually tend to emphasize the vanishing aspect of Indian culture. Conforming to the dominant ideology, museums uphold the vanishing thesis by solely dwelling on Indians of the past and discarding cultural artifacts of on-

²⁹ Money, "Broken Arrows," 363; Linda T. Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies* (New York: Zed Book, 1999), 35 & 79.

and off-reservation Indians. Also, Philip J. Deloria's *Playing Indian* underscores the centrality of Indian erasure in U.S. culture. Philip J. Deloria unveils the process through which non-Indians have appropriated Indian rights and land, claiming that they are now the "native" people of this land by right of conquest. Thus, "playing Indian" assumes the guise of authenticity and implies erasure. Philip J. Deloria demonstrates that those who "play Indian" have little interest in consulting with any Indian people, hence the absence of Indian voices in the historical discourse. In line with anti-Indian scholarship, then, both elite/high and popular cultures have endorsed the concept of the vanishing Indian.³⁰

The foregoing discussion evidences the magnitude of Indian stereotyping in America. Not only are books rife with biased representations of Native Americans still in wide circulation, libelous materials are being published on them. For the sake of Indian dignity and survival, Cook-Lynn's scholarship provides a litany of pressing issues that need addressing and which hold center stage in her intellectual production: Indian land dispossession, silenced voices, cultural diminishment, Indian self-determination and the sovereignty of indigenous governance, among others. Likewise, Vine Deloria, Jr. underscores some "Indian copyrighted" materials that are disputed by non-Indian scholars. Among others are recent claims by literary critics that Chief Seattle did not make the speech attributed to him, that a newspaper reporter authored Tecumseh's speech about Mother Earth, and that someone else wrote Chief Joseph's surrender speech. Additionally, Jesuits are trying to dispossess the Sioux of their spiritual patrimony by claiming the spiritual comments in *Black Elk Speaks* to be Catholic inspired.³¹ The underlying view here is that Indians are incapable of these intellectual achievements. Cook-Lynn takes these

³⁰ Womack, *Red on Red*, 19; Weaver, "Ethnic Cleansing," 27-39; Luke, *Museum Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 82-99; Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

³¹ Deloria, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 29; see, also, Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*, 6.

distortions of Indian life and cultures as a personal challenge, because they attack the dignity, pride, and survival of Indian nations and individuals. Consequently, she calls native scholars to salvage Indian tribes by voicing resistance to mainstream stereotyping.

This bird's eye view of the American scene shows one fundamental reality, namely, the history of Native Americans is a long chronicle of exploitation, distortion, denigration, and denial, to say the least.

In response to his accusers who set a price on his head for authoring *The Satanic Verses*, Salman Rushdie once stated, "The liveliness of literature lies in its exceptionality, in being the individual, idiosyncratic vision of one human being, in which, to our delight and great surprise, we may find our own image reflected. A book is a version of the world. If you do not like it, ignore it; or offer your own version in return."³² In this context, Cook-Lynn summons native intellectuals to articulate their own version of Indian reality, urging them to exercise a radical intellectualism. She particularly cautions native academics against a wait-and-see attitude, insisting that only a strong response from Indians themselves can contain the flood of misinformation about Indian tribes.³³ Similarly, Forbes, another committed native scholar, claims that Indian history, in the main, rightfully belongs to Indians. He is upset that the first two hundred thousand years or so of American Indian history is still almost completely in the hands of non-natives. In part, he imputes this situation to the passive attitude of many native scholars, an attitude which has aided in the concoction and dissemination of theories that not only ignore significant details about Indian life but that may also have harmful effects on Indian communities. Because native intellectuals have the right and obligation to challenge the colonial

³² Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands* (London: Granta Books, 1991), 412.

³³ Cook-Lynn, "The Radical Conscience in Native American Studies," 9-13; "Native Studies is Politics," in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 151-158; "Who Gets to Tell the Stories," 60-64; and "The Literary and Political Questions of Transformation: American Indian Fiction Writers," *WSR* 9:1 (1995), 46-51.

dominance of Indian history, be it political, social, cultural, linguistic, legal, or artistic, Forbes opines that Indian voices must examine every aspect of indigenous heritage and engage the usual stereotypes held by the dominant society against American Indians.³⁴ Endowed with a specific meaning, this same topic of native voices holds the center stage in Cook-Lynn's scholarly production.

II) COOK-LYNN'S CONCEPTUALIZATION OF A NATIVE VOICE

a) A TRUE NATIVE VOICE FROM COOK-LYNN'S PERSPECTIVE

At the outset, it is important to state Cook-Lynn's basic conceptualization of a genuine native scholarship. In her view, native writing should demonstrate the following purposes: (1) defending tribal land and sovereignty; (2) nurturing tribal culture; and (3) publicizing that American Indians are well and alive.

Cook-Lynn earnestly contends that besides developing political theory that defends and advances the sovereignty of indigenous governance, a native scholarship must engage Indian land dispossession, indigenoussness, conquest, oppression, silenced voices, cultural diminishment, and Indian struggles for self-determination. Here is an example of Cook-Lynn's assignment to Indian scholars, in line with her conceptualization of a native voice:

We don't need too many more doctoral dissertations on the life of N. Scott Momaday (interesting though that may be), unless the scholarship includes a critique of his outrageous defense of the Bering Strait Theory and the role of science in describing native origins, and what this essential conflict means to indigenoussness (a major concept of the discipline) on this continent....We need dissertations on the Yankton Land Case that will reveal the anti-Indian legislation that comes out of Congress and is promoted by the state and federal court systems. We need to publish the facts of the Dann Case and the Utah Land Case revealing more of the illegal activity of lawmakers that reduces reservation life to a life of poverty. We need to study the water rights cases of the Missouri River tribes and we need to publish our studies.³⁵

³⁴ Forbes, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 17-21.

³⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 158.

In sum, a native voice must demonstrate an actual political commitment to tribalism, Indian nationalism, and anti-Americanism; but such a commitment does not necessarily make its author a traitor to the United States, from her perspective.³⁶ Cook-Lynn does not only talk the talk, she actually walks the walk. She shows her version of a native voice through essays, book reviewing, and fiction writing as well as through her repeated calls to native intellectuals to work for the well-being of Indian nations. Equally, she sets herself up as an example of a native voice through her advocacy for native representation by natives themselves. And, concomitantly, based on her particularly long editorship of *WSR* (20 years), Cook-Lynn sets herself up as a judge of other voices. Primarily motivated to disrupt, dislocate, and redirect the conventional view on indigenous life, Cook-Lynn has relentlessly urged Indian intellectuals to fill the United States with a resounding native voice. She has time and again challenged them to counter the Indian stereotypes that are perpetuated in various academic disciplines.

b) STEREOTYPING AND MAINSTREAM TEMPTATION, CORE ELEMENTS DICTATING THE INTERVENTION OF A NATIVE VOICE

As discussed earlier, there is no denying that an ethnocentrism predisposed Europeans to see Indians as culturally deficient people. In analyzing Euro-American and Indian relations, Cook-Lynn singles out some compelling elements that mandate the intervention of a native voice in the American landscape: the historical erasure of Indians, their stereotypical representation, and the persistence of the vanishing Indian theory. Cook-Lynn is adamant that most Americans truly believe in the stereotypical assumption that Indians are damned, pathetic remnants of a

³⁶ Cook-Lynn, "Radical Conscience in Native American Studies," 12-3; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 60.

race, or vanished altogether.³⁷ Another issue for her is the quiescent attitude of many Indian intellectuals, namely, their unwillingness to advocate for the historical, cultural, and political survival of Indian nations. This last element needs more elaboration.

The state of the Indian voice in the United States makes the expression of a native perspective an absolute necessity now more than ever before. Indeed, Cook-Lynn's cursory survey of the American scene reveals her deep disappointment in many Indian intellectuals. She holds that the prime job of native intellectuals is to take up the fashionable Indian (auto)biography written by mainstream scholars with so-called Indian collaborators and informants, because this genre distorts the histories of Indian nations. For Cook-Lynn, native intellectuals should defend indigenous legacies in the most appropriate ways. For the most part, in her opinion, this is not happening.³⁸ Other native scholars share her concern. Edward C. Valandra, for instance, maintains that the distortions of tribal lives and cultures found in the so-called native autobiography constitute a direct call to Indian scholars to reclaim their intellectual heritage.³⁹

Moreover, most Indian scholars have been a colossal disappointment in Cook-Lynn's judgment, because not only are they not producing critical works to address and/or redress the wrongs caused to their communities, but their works are totally irrelevant to tribal lives and communities.⁴⁰ In this respect, Cook-Lynn alleges that most native intellectuals routinely lament their hapless conditions, instead of seriously engaging the life-and-death issues plaguing their nations. They are particularly interested in narrating "fantastic stories about the deficit lives of urban Indians on the streets of America, or the anguish of living lives of poverty and despair on

³⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 10.

³⁸ Cook-Lynn "Life and Death in the Mainstream of American Indian Biography," 93; *Notebooks*, 58-9.

³⁹ Valandra, "As-Told-To Native [Auto]biography: Whose Voice Is Speaking?," *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 103-119.

⁴⁰ Cook-Lynn, "Meeting of Indian Professors," 61.

the homelands.” They thus reinforce Indian stereotypes in their artistic creations, with the sole goal of appealing to mainstream audiences. The overwhelming message this type of Indian creative writing sends, she contends, is that Indians must despair over their loss and escape their roots. Cook-Lynn cites James Welch’s *The Heartsong of Charging Elk* as an example. Her review of Welch’s fictionalized story demonstrates the obliteration of Charging Elk, who becomes an embodiment of the “vanishing” theory so popular in American history.⁴¹ Such an assessment seems unfair in light of Welch’s interpretation of *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*:

I do hope to point out, during the course of my story, the differences in cultures, the clashes that can result from those differences and how a person or a group of tribal people have to struggle to maintain their individual and tribal identities in a mainstream culture. Given my subject matter, these issues naturally come up. Although I consider myself a storyteller first and foremost, I hope my books will help educate people who don’t understand how or why Indian people often feel lost in America.⁴²

In all, she is profoundly disappointed that many Indian intellectuals “have sold themselves out” in order to please mainstream readers, by engaging in endless discussions of mixed bloods and lost hopes. In the end, Indian scholars who produce this kind of literature, Cook-Lynn opines, are detached from their native communities: they are exploiting themselves for selfish interests.⁴³

c) SETTING HERSELF UP AS A ROLE MODEL FOR AN AUTHENTIC NATIVE VOICE

Cook-Lynn’s awareness of the disastrous situation of Indian nations prompts her insistence on the expression of a distinctly native perspective, i.e., her version of a native

⁴¹ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 81; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 33-4.

⁴² Welch’s interview with Cindy Heidemann during the 2001 Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Book Award ceremony honoring *The Heartsong of Charging Elk*; available at <http://www.pnba.org/welch.htm> (consulted on 11/11/2010).

⁴³ Cook-Lynn, “Some Thoughts about Biography,” 73-4; “Life and Death in the Mainstream of American Indian Biography,” 90; *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 112-118.

perspective. She is appalled that most Indian scholars are validating what she views as “fake scholarship” on Indians. As matter of fact, she remarks that contemporary Indian intellectuals are now incorporating the classic trope of Indians’ lack of political knowledge in their novelistic writings, one of the major stereotypes historians have used to dismiss and distort early Indian and Euro-American relations. This observation, compounded by other factors, compels her call for “a true” native voice. Cook-Lynn spearheads such a call by delving into the theme of native voice in many of her publications in *WSR*, a journal which is crucial to the politics and orientation of native scholarship. In addition, she devotes enormous intellectual labor to this topic in her books of essays. These essays definitely provide a comprehensive insight into Cook-Lynn’s conceptualization of a native voice.

Cook-Lynn published at least six articles centered on a native voice between 1990 and 2000 in *WSR*, the primary journal for native intellectuals.⁴⁴ In all likelihood, these essays served an awareness-raising purpose, given the large circulation of *WSR* and the didactic tone of Cook-Lynn’s essays.⁴⁵ In these essays, then, she takes indigenous intellectuals to task for not voicing her concerns about the victimization of tribal nations. She faults them for lacking a true native voice as per her three criteria listed above. In Cook-Lynn’s estimation, most Indian scholars have failed to take up themes of invasion and oppression pertaining to colonized people. Their failure to address Indian destabilization puzzles Cook-Lynn, because indigenous people all over the United States (and in other colonized places) are removed from their specific geographic

⁴⁴ They are: (1) “In the American Imagination, the Land and Its original Inhabitants,” 42-47; (2) “The Radical Conscience in Native American Studies,” 9-13; (3) “Who Gets to Tell the Stories,” 60-64; (4) “The Literary and Political Questions of Transformation,” *WSR* 9:1 (1995), 46-51; (5) “Life and Death in the Mainstream of American Indian Biography,” 90-93; and (6) “How Scholarship Defames the Native Voice,” 79-92.

⁴⁵ *WSR* is widely read throughout the world: see *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, xi.

homelands, displaced, and exiled in myriad ways.⁴⁶ As a number of Indianists have consistently argued, this failure evidences both the escapism and the unpreparedness of most Indian intellectuals to take on the struggles of their nations.⁴⁷

Simultaneously, Cook-Lynn signals her concern with a tribal voice in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner and Other Essays* (1996), where she initially confronts Wallace Earle Stegner's historically flawed and inaccurate representation of Native Americans, before tackling various misconceptions about them. In "Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner," the title essay, Cook-Lynn objects to Stegner's portrayal of the American West in his fiction, contending that no other author has been more successful in serving the interests of the nation's fantasy about itself than Stegner. When Stegner declares that Indian history stopped in 1890, the year of the Wounded Knee Massacre, and when he claims the American West as his native land, Cook-Lynn argues, Stegner negates the whole past, present, and future of Indian nations. She is articulating a radical native voice, i.e., a voice that challenges the mainstream discourse, in this instance. By reclaiming this space as her own, Cook-Lynn not only locates the American West as a site of struggle, but she asserts a native right of repossession that symbolically neutralizes Stegner's claim to the place. Further, not only is Cook-Lynn positioning herself as a strong tribal voice in critiquing Stegner's scholarship, but she champions a native voice by making the negation of Indians (in the American discourse) the centerpiece of her entire scholarship.

After attacking Stegner's scholarship, Cook-Lynn presents herself as a judge of works by other native intellectuals, a self-appointment in need of no confirmation whatsoever. Cook-Lynn allows herself to show examples of good Indian writing by focusing on writers such as N. Scott

⁴⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 88.

⁴⁷ See Vine Deloria, Jr., "Marginal and Submarginal," in Mihesuah and Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy*, 16-30; "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 25-31; and Forbes, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 11-23.

Momaday and Ray Young Bear, two accomplished native writers. Both have produced strange and brilliant works, which marked the beginning of a new revolution in tribal storytelling. Their novels are not only filled with honesty but also they reflect some level of optimism for Indian nations as well. In general, scholars – Indians and non-Indians – who have taken on the struggles of Indian nations become reference intellectuals in Cook-Lynn’s view: Helen H. Jackson, D’Arcy McNickle, Felix S. Cohen, Robert F. Berkhofer, Vine Deloria, Jr., Russell Thornton, Donald L. Fixico, David E. Wilkins, Robert A. Warrior, Craig S. Womack, Jack D. Forbes, Edward C. Valandra, and Jace Weaver, among others. Cook-Lynn’s self-nomination as a judge of other (native) scholars and her singling out of these (native) scholars speak to her seriousness and inflexibility about a tribal voice.

Further, Cook-Lynn’s insistence on the importance of her approved tribal voice in academia and her unapologetic defense of the land and the future of Indian nationalism make her a carrier of a native voice in the framework of *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*. Above all, in her attempt to clear away some of the ridiculous ideas about Indian nations, Cook-Lynn deploys a strong native voice when, at the outset, she signals, on the one hand, her intention to re-examine mistaken ideas about the Indian past, and her determination to initiate a broad public dialogue about previously neglected issues, on the other.⁴⁸ Cook-Lynn’s voice throughout *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner* reminds the audience that Indians are still here. In the end, this book sets her scholarship apart for fiercely articulating a tribal perspective. But, there is more.

It is by now obvious that Cook-Lynn’s preoccupation with preserving Indian nationhood prompted her fundamental question concerning a native voice and which is worth repeating: “*Is what I am teaching and writing and researching of value to the continuation of the Indian*

⁴⁸ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, xiii.

Nations of America?”⁴⁹ This self-reflexive inquiry constitutes the foremost question native scholars should pose to themselves while exercising their intellectual talents or carrying out their professional responsibilities. Cook-Lynn underscores the importance of a tribal voice in the United States by admonishing native intellectuals to bear in mind that survival of tribal nations is essential. Moreover, she cautions Indian scholars that it is not enough to do the research and writing, but that they should keep in mind the tribal nations of the United States as the constituencies for their work.⁵⁰ Is the younger generation of Indian scholars prepared to heed this injunction? Could they afford Cook-Lynn’s ultimate price of resignation? Whatever their response, one thing remains certain: Cook-Lynn intends to keep the survival spirit of Indian nations alive through her own teaching, writing, and research work. And, as one of the consultants in Indian studies, and one of its most important voices, Cook-Lynn vows to keep the Indian collective “plot moving,” to use her own metaphor.⁵¹

d) DOING THE RIGHT THING EVERYWHERE: THE INTELLECTUAL WORK OF TRIBES

By all available evidence, Cook-Lynn seems to embrace a hemispheric vision in her specific conceptualization of an accomplished native intellectual. Regardless of their geographic location, her ideal native intellectuals are those who can lend their expertise to renew native consciousness and address powerful threads of tribal nationhood for the sake of the people; successful tribal intellectuals are native people who can write inspirational or communal literature so that tribal nations may thrive against every vicissitude.⁵² Cook-Lynn’s critique of

⁴⁹ Cook-Lynn, “Radical Conscience in Native American Studies,” 13; italics in the original.

⁵⁰ Cook-Lynn, “Keynote Address: Indian Studies,” 185.

⁵¹ In “To Keep the Plot Moving,” Cook-Lynn discusses issues of sovereignty and indigenoussness in the framework of Native studies: see *New Indians, Old Wars*, pp. 7-42.

⁵² Cook-Lynn, “Life and Death in the Mainstream of American Indian Biography,” 93; “Some Thoughts about Biography,” 73; *Notebooks*, 89; *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 154.

scholars who have attempted to discredit “I, Rigoberta Menchú,” underscores her overriding concern with a native voice on a global scale. Moreover, her unyielding defense of Menchú’s work demonstrates her willingness to fight for the textual authority of every native author who produces an authentic piece of scholarship – regardless of the author’s geographic location.⁵³

Cook-Lynn’s overriding concern for tribal nations has led her to dissuade Indian scholars from doing “the slave work of the universities;” instead, she urges them to pursue the intellectual work of their tribes, because it is “the biggest issue at stake.”⁵⁴ Cook-Lynn demonstrates her personal commitment to the Sioux nation by refusing to use her position of a college professor as a stepping stone to becoming a part of the mainstream. Instead, she uses it to reclaim American Indian history, because she feels that “the entire history of America, vis-à-vis the continent’s indigenous population, had to be rewritten, and the place to do it was in the nation’s colleges and universities.”⁵⁵ Since Cook-Lynn’s identity is tied to her recollection of Indian history, she strongly believes that neglecting tribal heritage will be detrimental to American First Nations. Because tribal issues must come first, Cook-Lynn maintains an activist agenda both to keep the tribal voice alive and to challenge the American ideology of dominance and oppression. She sets the example in scholarly work that spans a wide range of topics, including contemporary images of Indians in popular culture, the function of art in a nationalist agenda, the effects of tribal politics upon the individual, and the issue of Indian survival in the modern world, where indigenous and Western cultures often collide and coalesce. In particular, her activist writings aim to incite younger native scholars to rescue the native voice.

Cook-Lynn can be described as a whistleblower in “American Indian Intellectualism,” where she hammers home the point that Native Americans are only given a voice in intellectual

⁵³ Cook-Lynn, “How Scholarship Defames the Native Voice,” 79-92.

⁵⁴ Cook-Lynn, “Radical Conscience in Native American Studies,” 12.

⁵⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, ix.

debates when they are needed to validate non-native representations of Indians or when their own works reflect or enhance popular concepts of American indigenous people. Although some native intellectuals have addressed some issues, they remain mostly superficial and self-centered in their approach, according to Cook-Lynn, the arbiter. As self-appointed judge-in-chief, Cook-Lynn prescribes that writings about the tribal experience should reflect the roots of indigenous culture and deal with past and present Indian struggles in the United States. She consequently calls for self-consciousness among Indian scholars, insisting that native intellectuals must consider the questions of location and purpose. Cook-Lynn predicts that once native scholars lose sight of what it means to be an Indian in contemporary United States, tribal intellectualism will pass away. Therefore, she strictly links the survival of American First Nations to the survival of native intellectual traditions, both inside and outside academia.⁵⁶ She contends that the bulk of publications by Indians to date mainly enhances individualism but fails to promote sovereignty and tribalism. In her estimation, such an intellectual state is tantamount to cutting Indian writers off from effective political action, because it severs their link from the past and undermines the present search for legitimate First Nation status in the United States.⁵⁷

Cook-Lynn's tribally centered intellectual work seeks to challenge the Western predominant view; it charges native intellectuals to produce a counter-narrative to the dominant discourse that seeks to terminate tribal nations. A paradigm shift in this bleak picture would necessitate native scholars' commitment to voicing their tribally centered views. As some postcolonial and feminist theorists argue, as long as members of the dominant culture hear no voices but their own, their monologic truth will blindfold them. The emergence of other

⁵⁶ Cook-Lynn, "American Indian Intellectualism and the New Indian Story," *American Indian Quarterly* 20:1 (1996), 57-76; and "The Literary and Political Questions of Transformation," in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 34-44; see especially p. 44.

⁵⁷ See Cook-Lynn, "The American Indian Fiction Writers," in *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 96.

viewpoints is contingent upon a multiplicity of voices entering the discourse, as the margin talks back to the center. The constructive discourse of conflict becomes possible when other voices challenge the dominant monologue.⁵⁸

Cook-Lynn's numerous publications on native voice indicate the importance she grants the native voice of those who agree with her. Seeking to stop the traffic in distorted history and sensationalized imagery, Cook-Lynn has authored two additional books of essays: *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* (2001) and *New Indians, Old Wars* (2007). Both books, it must be emphasized, materialize Cook-Lynn's ideological views on what a native voice should accomplish for tribal nations. While the former tackles issues of land restoration, Indian survival, and the Indian genocidal history, Cook-Lynn defends, in the latter, tribal sovereignty and indigenesness, along with initiating a dialogue for the development of Native studies as an empowering academic discipline for tribal nationhood. Moreover, *New Indians, Old Wars* implicitly acknowledges the occurrence of a fundamental mutation, namely, that an intellectual war has replaced the physical battle that opposed both camps. In both books, Cook-Lynn articulates a native voice and uplifts tribal nations, conveying her firm conviction that the war continues despite this strategic shift in the battleground, a principle she upholds in her other writings as well.

e) HER REVIEW ESSAYS AND FICTION

Additionally, to underscore her seriousness about voicing a tribal perspective, Cook-Lynn has reviewed scores of slanderous materials in her essays. Contending that book reviewing remains an important vehicle for native intellectuals to speak back to the often patronizing

⁵⁸ See Ashcroft et al., eds., *The Empire Writes Back*, 33-53; and Deirdre Lashgari, ed., *Violence, Silence, and Anger*, 3.

mainstream sensibilities that have disseminated damaging misinformation on native communities, Cook-Lynn has critically assessed many works in which Indians are not appropriately depicted. The long list of such works is footnoted in chapter I and includes, among others: *Writing Indian Nations*; *Killing the White Man's Indian*; *Black Hills, White Justice*; *Hanta Yo*; *Broken Cord*, *Black Eagle Child*, and even Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*.

An unapologetic defender of Indian nations, Cook-Lynn's examination of *Writing Indian Nations* reveals its falsification of basic historical records concerning U.S.-Indian relations. The biggest shortcoming of *Writing Indian Nations*, however, according to Cook-Lynn, lies in its failure to assist the Sioux nation in its present struggle for well-being and self-determination.⁵⁹ Likewise, rebutting Fergus M. Bordewich's idea that Indian sovereignty derives from the European concept of nation-state that never existed in pre-Columbian America, Cook-Lynn demonstrates that Indian sovereignty predates the European colonization of the continent. Consequently, Bordewich's bold proposal that the United States can define Indian nationhood in any way it wants is simply preposterous. Indian sovereignty is non-negotiable.⁶⁰

Similarly, although many scholars – including Cook-Lynn – have commended Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* for driving Indian victimization home, Cook-Lynn finds Brown's concluding the book with “the death” of Indian nations objectionable. She fires back: “The reality is that American Indian nations all over this continent have survived, they continue to believe in their own survival.”⁶¹ Cook-Lynn is equally critical of Michael Dorris' provocative reference to the Sioux as “dead, or dying,” in *Broken Cord*.⁶² Cook-Lynn is a bearer

⁵⁹ Cook-Lynn's review essay on Maureen Konkle's *Writing Indian Nations*, *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 201.

⁶⁰ Cook-Lynn's review essay on Bordewich's *Killing the White Man's Indian*, *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 231.

⁶¹ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 51.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 11; see, also, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 72-90.

of a native voice and an uncompromising defender of the Indian survival thesis; she has routinely set the record straight whenever tribal nations are pronounced dead in any piece of scholarship. Indian nations came close to the end during the period of land loss and enforced assimilation, but they do not assimilate and vanish. Against all odds, Indians are not about to perish from the face of the earth, Cook-Lynn reminds anti-Indians.⁶³

While *Black Hills, White Justice* purports to elucidate the moral and ethical questions surrounding the Sioux Black Hills case, Cook-Lynn points out that Edward Lazarus comes to an immoral and unethical conclusion, making the disturbing statement that the Sioux were “blind and mute and utterly dependent” in reclaiming the Black Hills.⁶⁴ Cook-Lynn counters that the Sioux are intelligent, realistic and thoughtful people who understand their own political and historical conditions. In sum, she feels that Lazarus is cynical in his anti-Indian stance, to put it mildly. Likewise, Cook-Lynn claims that *Hanta Yo* is no realistic portrayal of the Sioux, since most Sioux people view the novel’s depiction of their lives and histories as obscene, inaccurate, and downright exploitive. Never mind the publisher’s grandiose claim that *Hanta Yo* is an authentic saga about the Sioux around 1800.⁶⁵

An expansive critic, Cook-Lynn takes issues with the film *Dances with Wolves* and cautions Indians against its misleading message as well as the make-believe nature of this movie.⁶⁶ Cook-Lynn does not only grant herself the right to a point of view, the right to articulate a tribal voice, but she asserts her aesthetic judgment in her reviews as well.

⁶³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 133 and 180.

⁶⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, 22.

⁶⁵ Cook-Lynn, “The Rise of the Academic ‘Chiefs,’” 38-9; *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, 65-66.

⁶⁶ Cook-Lynn, “Radical Conscience in Native American Studies,” 10-12; *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, 74.

f) HER VALUE JUDGMENT AND FUNCTIONAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ART

Cook-Lynn's numerous review essays hint at her value judgment on art and delineate her particular concept of Indian aesthetic production. A number of critics demonstrate that art is functional in the conception of artists who come from oppressed communities. For instance, Roy Sieber, Austin Shelton, and Chinua Achebe concur on the functional role of art in the African context. While Sieber theorizes that Africans fundamentally ignore art for art's sake, Shelton contends that they view art as "socially functioning rather than aesthetically pleasing."⁶⁷ Achebe's conviction of the functional role of art has led him to admit that his fiction is applied art as opposed to pure art:

I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past – with all its imperfections – was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them. Perhaps what I write is applied art as distinct from pure.

Through the medium of his art, Achebe wants to rekindle pride in Africans, "to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of years of denigration and self-abasement."⁶⁸

By all available evidence, Cook-Lynn seems to espouse a similar view. She takes art so seriously that she honestly believes it reflects all an individual or a nation intends to be.⁶⁹ And, as stated in chapter I, she is ultimately convinced that an Indian artistic production incapable of defending Indian land and nationhood is worthless.⁷⁰ Such an ideological stance underlies her fiction and essays alike.

⁶⁷ Roy Sieber, "Mask as Agent of Social Control," *African Studies Bulletin* 5:2 (1962), 8; Austin Shelton, "Behaviour and Cultural Values in West African Stories," as quoted in Pio Zirimu and Andrew Gurr, eds., *Black Aesthetics* (Nairobi, Kenya: East African Literature Bureau, 1973), 109.

⁶⁸ Achebe, "The Novelist As Teacher," as quoted in G. D. Killam, ed., op. cit., 4.

⁶⁹ Cook-Lynn, "Life and Death in the Mainstream of American Indian Biography," 93.

⁷⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 43.

Cook-Lynn provides an example of good art for Native Americans in her fiction. In *Aurelia*, for instance, she documents Sioux Indian tribulations in the United States over a period of sixty years, from the 1930s to the 1990s. She patterns Aurelia's life after the complexity of U.S.-Indian relations. So the Lakota girl protagonist, Aurelia, has had to deal with many harsh experiences growing up on the reservation. Throughout her life, however, she continues to immerse herself in traditional thinking and the narrative of the tribe. The unfolding story highlights the poor treatment of the Sioux nation by the federal government. Aurelia's symbolic characterization remains Cook-Lynn's ultimate aesthetic attempt to underscore the persistence and endurance of Native Americans. Despite their loss of lands caused by the flooding, their forced relocation and its ensuing consequence of abject poverty, they seem to be holding on and coping with their conditions. In the end, *Aurelia* audaciously projects for Indian nations a future full of potential, as long as they continue to keep their stories and traditions.

Cook-Lynn's distinctly Manichean view on art can be surmised from the foregoing. She earnestly believes that bad art has a harmful effect on society, while good art is beneficial to it. Particularly, she thinks that bad art is self-serving, personal, and irrelevant to First Nation status in the United States, whereas good art leaves Indian readers optimistic and ready to affirm their lives as Indian people. Speaking from the perspective of tribal realism and communicating traditional values, good art leaves Indian communities hopeful. Along those lines, Cook-Lynn's own artistic production demonstrates, to her satisfaction, that a native artistic creation can rekindle hope for Indian nations. While weaving the genocidal story into its tapestry, the power of hope must prevail over despair in a native artistic creation.

In addition to defending Indian causes, Cook-Lynn actually sets a standard to judge a native voice in her countless critical essays. For example, in "American Indian Intellectualism

and the New Indian Story,” she argues that it is not enough to be an Indian; one must also espouse an Indian ideology. In her estimation, urban mixed blood scholars do not represent an authentic Indian voice, since their works lack expressions of opposition and resistance. Along with promoting an Indian identity based on individualism rather than Indian nation ideology, their writings implicitly acknowledge the failure of tribal governments as native institutions and the irrelevance of sovereignty for tribal nations.⁷¹ Echoing this view, Mihesuah, another committed indigenous academic, holds that indigenous literature should complement tribal history and culture, instead of entertaining a pathetic vision. An indigenous voice should empower decolonization strategies for tribal nations. Moreover, a native scholarship should give Indians hope and propose solutions to the myriad problems afflicting their nations: crushing racism, abject poverty, dysfunctional families, and treaty abrogation. In the end, Mihesuah prescribes that Indian writers promote the following fundamental goals for the sake of tribal nations: hope, happiness, inspiration, and decolonization strategies.⁷² Definitely, art must be functional for oppressed communities, according to Mihesuah and Cook-Lynn.

As can be inferred from the foregoing, Cook-Lynn uses Indian treaties as a standard to judge a native voice. As is stated in numerous U.S.-Indian treaties, she strictly maintains that Indian tribes constitute distinct and separate nations. Therefore, a native voice holding that they are simply another minority, like any immigrant ethnic group in the United States, is a fake native voice, from her viewpoint. Rather, besides promoting Indian sovereignty, a native voice must nurture Indian cultural patterns and articulate the distinctiveness of tribal identity in the contemporary United States. It is a voice proclaiming Indian culture survival against its death; it

⁷¹ Cook-Lynn, “American Indian Intellectualism and the New Indian Story,” in Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*, 111-138.

⁷² Devon A. Mihesuah, “Finding Empowerment through Writing and Reading,” *American Indian Quarterly* 28:1 & 2 (2004), 98-102.

must celebrate the inventive Indian against the invented Indian.⁷³ A native voice can neither adulterate a tribal perspective nor sacrifice native interests for the sake of progress as defined by Western standards. A native voice must systematically challenge colonial paternalism and contribute to decolonizing the native mind. Definitely, an Indian scholarship that revolves around the resurgence of tribal cultures and incorporates native values and belief systems will certainly evidence the liveliness of Indian nations in the United States. Nurturing tribal cultures and proclaiming their *survivance* – to use Vizenor’s neologism – becomes a powerful counterbalance to the vanishing Indian thesis. I may turn to a historical event from 1926, because this specific event fittingly illustrates the point I am getting across.

Haskell Institute (now Haskell Indian Nations University) frustrated supporters of assimilation when it opened its new stadium in the fall of 1926, because in spite of the propaganda that boarding school education had thoroughly achieved its main objective, the native festivities proved otherwise:

It was a homecoming to dedicate a new stadium for its nationally famous football team. The intention was to portray Native American cultures as relics of the past and present sports as a symbol of progress and civilization. In the end, however, the Haskell Homecoming generated a far more ambiguous set of images [...]
In addition to the game scheduled on Saturday between Haskell and Bucknell College, the three-day festivities were to include a powwow, traditional Native American dances, and gatherings of tribes in their traditional clothing. Yet within the context of boarding-school history and the position of sports within the structure of boarding-school life, these festivities were unsettling, for they implicitly acknowledged the continuing survival of vital and diverse Native American cultures.⁷⁴

An expression of a collective native voice, this event illustrated Native Americans’ passive-aggressive resistance to assimilationist education. Even in a diluted form, their

⁷³ Chapter II elaborates the ongoing debate about the misnomer of the original peoples of the Americas.

⁷⁴ John Bloom, “‘There Is Madness in the Air’: The 1926 Haskell Homecoming and Popular Representation of Sports in Federal Indian Boarding Schools,” in Elizabeth S. Bird, ed., *Dressing in Feathers*, 98 & 101.

adherence to Indian cultural patterns remains strong. Despite all proscriptions placed on Indian cultures, they still manifest throughout the United States.

The visibility of a distinctly native voice is the surest way to circumvent cultural imperialism in the United States. A voice that is not oppositional to the dominant culture is truly not a native voice. This explains Cook-Lynn's urging native intellectuals to articulate a distinctly native voice in America, a ringing bell in her essays and fiction alike.

Native self-representation remains a powerful denial of the commonly held assumption that silence gives consent. Indeed, by offering their insights into popular imagery that constructs them as singularly "Indian," native scholars are challenging those deeply engrained stereotypical images. Countering the dominant society's image of native people, their lifestyles and belief systems, remains what representation of native people by native people is ultimately about. Cook-Lynn hopes that Indian writing on Indian issues will eventually catalyze a paradigm shift.⁷⁵

g) PUTTING COOK-LYNN IN A BROADER CONTEXT: THE CIRCLE OF ORGANIC INTELLECTUALS

Cook-Lynn's concern for a native voice cannot be apprehended in a vacuum. Decolonization theory, which spurs her consistent advocacy for Indian representation by Indians themselves, catapults Cook-Lynn into the class of worldwide minority scholars who claim a fundamental right of self-representation, a right to a voice. Long before her relentless calls for a distinctly native voice in the United States, however, committed intellectuals from subjected communities worldwide have heeded and implemented them. The long list of these forerunners includes Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, George Lamming, Albert Memmi, Edward W. Said, Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, and Vine Deloria, Jr., among others. Indeed, many

⁷⁵ Cook-Lynn, "American Indian Intellectualism and the New Indian Story," 111-138.

scholars from colonized societies are convinced that echoing the voice of the silent people will empower members of their communities. They ultimately believe that fighting on behalf of the “wretched of the earth” could contribute to solving problems in those communities.

Particularly, most black intellectuals have wholeheartedly clung to that view. While Achebe aims to rekindle pride in Africans through his writing, the Kenyan novelist and literary critic, Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, claims he speaks on behalf of the dispossessed of the earth. Equally, Molefi K. Asante argues that Afrocentrists are committed to making Africans the subjects of their own historical experiences rather passive witnesses. Further, he contends that Afrocentrists are concerned with constructing a collective black consciousness that can generate political strength, meaningful identity, and the power necessary to improve the socio-economic circumstances of worldwide black people. Similarly, Simon Gikandi and Bernard W. Bell identify the quest for justice as the major reason behind the scholarly production of worldwide Africans.⁷⁶ Also, in defining the responsibility of the Caribbean intellectuals, Gareth Griffiths prescribes that they ought to raise the awareness of their fellows and reinforce the uniqueness of the Caribbean identity.⁷⁷ Indigenous intellectuals, it seems, have a prime responsibility to enlighten the consciousness of their people. I hail from a colonized society; I believe that intellectuals who primarily belong to subjugated communities must direct their people on some value choices in their intellectual labor. They must be accountable to their own communities, first and foremost.

⁷⁶ Molefi K. Asante, *The Afrocentric Idea* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 140-148; *Malcom X as Cultural Hero and Other Essays* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1993), 2; Simon Gikandi, *Writing in Limbo: Modernism and Caribbean Literature* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 234; and Bernard W. Bell, *The Afro-American Novel and Its Tradition* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987).

⁷⁷ Gareth Griffiths, *A Double Exile* (London: Marion Boyers, 1978), 143.

Accountability to one's community primarily motivates some scholars to promote an alternative vision of society. Ernest Gaines's decision to write about members of his community is a case in point. In his fiction, Gaines provides alternative portrayals of African Americans based on people he had grown up with, because African American caricatures originally propelled him to write back.⁷⁸ In the same vein, the authentic African novelists of the independence era have tried to correct the distorted portrayals of the African character. They have manipulated black stereotypes promulgated in European fiction through an artful reversal of the terms with which Blacks are tagged in European novels. For instance, Ferdinand Oyono's *House Boy* and Mongo Beti's *Poor Christ of Bomba* locate the real savages within the European communities in Africa. And, as discussed earlier, Achebe has challenged African stereotypes in his works. In part, these examples display ample evidence that Blacks are motivated to write in order to affect the stereotypical images projected on their communities.

Cook-Lynn's calls for the emergence of a native voice must be seen against this background. American popular culture has attributed negative stereotypes to Indian tribes; mainstream imaginers have entertained a one-dimensional view of Indians and projected distorted portrayals of them. Arguably, Cook-Lynn's relentless calls imply that Indian intellectuals can counter these stereotypes by providing a critique and by offering alternative images. Indian struggle to gain a voice, Indian determination to validate their own representation will allow them to control and define mainstream images which are held up as reflections of Indian realities.

⁷⁸ Cecilia A. Noss, "Ernest Gaines and the Problem of Black Manhood: Giving Positive Models," in Ernest Emenyonu, ed., *Black Literature and Black Consciousness in Literature* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Heinemann, 1987), 155. Among others, his depiction of African Americans is available in his following novels: *Catherine Carmier*; *Of Love and Dust*; *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*; *In My Father's House*; and *A Gathering of Old Men*.

h) ACTIVISM OF ORGANIC INTELLECTUALS: A SOURCE OF SALVATION FOR OPPRESSED PEOPLE?

What is the usefulness of intellectuals who cannot voice the concerns of their communities to whom they owe their very existence? What might excuse indigenous scholars who, by the virtue of their call, know their active involvement in their communities will right the wrong and who choose disengagement over commitment instead? Refusing to lend one's talent to improving the plight of one's community seems unconscionable. In my judgment, these intellectuals fall below a resolute moral standard; they lack accountability in regard to the conflicts and challenges being faced by their communities. As Julien Benda contends in "The Treason of the Intellectuals," these native intellectuals are delaying justice in their communities. Moreover, such a political stance could only speak to Fanon's poignant prediction of the ultimate victory of colonialism in *Black Skin, White Masks*: i.e., natives will reject their own cultures and consider the colonizers as their ancestors. The intervention of radical intellectuals is badly needed in every subjected community.

Cook-Lynn is among committed scholars who prioritize the defense of their nations. There is no doubt that colonialism denies Native Americans their fundamental right to be indigenous people in a meaningful way, given its unjust occupation of the social, physical, and political spaces that these communities need in order to live as indigenous people. Cook-Lynn's scholarship premises that colonialism destroyed the indigenous way of living; it equally upholds that scores of contemporary native scholars have failed to confront colonialism as a psychological state, a pattern of thinking. Her scholarship and other writings purport to transcend this situation and ensure the survival of Indian nations; her oeuvre seeks to rekindle the regeneration of Indian tribes so that they can survive and thrive into the future. Her call to action

is that Indian scholars must tackle issues of land claims, revamp economic development, advocate for Indian self-government and the sovereignty of Indian nations.⁷⁹

In deploying an indigenous voice to construct the history of the Sioux resistance to the American injustice, Cook-Lynn's oeuvre challenges the dominant discourse and proclaims its declaration of intellectual independence. Besides her scholarship that takes up the struggle for the sovereign rights of the Sioux nation, Cook-Lynn performs her activism by writing angry letters to editors. More importantly, she demonstrates a political activism through her collaboration with attorney Mario Gonzalez to demand a formal apology from the federal government for the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre. Her fight for the establishment of a national tribal park at the massacre site clearly exemplifies her commitment to defending tribal nations.⁸⁰ This latest act illustrates Cook-Lynn's decision to confront mainstream assumptions with the hard reality that Indian communities are alive and, if not particularly well, at least surviving in American society.

Complete assimilation of American Indians remains the dream of Indian detractors. To reach such a stage thanks to the silence of native scholars will ultimately validate anti-Indians. The absence of a native voice is the undeniable proof needed to validate the "vanishing" or "vanished" Indian theory. Speaking, writing, painting, filmmaking, dancing, and storytelling convey one's cultural worldviews. As Craig S. Womack aptly remarks, a reality of native literature is that the cultures of which native scholars are writing have not vanished. In creative

⁷⁹ See Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 179-89; and Taiaiake Alfred, "Warrior Scholarship," in Mihesuah and Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy*, 88-99.

⁸⁰ *The Politics of Hallowed Ground* provides a comprehensive timeline of the Siouxian activities to that end.

ways, Indian works assert the survival and evolvement of native cultures, despite propaganda to the contrary. Silence is viewed as conspiracy and treason.⁸¹

As some theorists on discourse and critical identity argue, members of any self-identified group have the credentials to speak on their own behalf.⁸² Because Indian voices carry an important weight in this increasingly multicultural age, Indians are entitled, in the main, to speak about themselves and address their own concerns. Not only are native intellectuals entitled to speak for themselves, but they also have the obligation to step out of the role popular imagination has given them and take up positions in the areas of creativity and production. As Salman Rushdie has said, (formerly) colonized people and still-disadvantaged minority intellectuals should use creative language to express their specific experiences.⁸³ It seems fitting for Indian scholars to deploy the political language of invasion, theft, genocide, paternalism, and colonialism, for that purpose. And, as Scott R. Lyons insists, after years of colonization and resistance, American Indians must make clear, in their own voices, what they want, including posing their own research questions and, if necessary, voicing resistance to mainstream research on and about them.⁸⁴ In the end, the representation project for indigenous people implies representation as a form of voice and expression, besides the political notion of representation.

Nevertheless, natives should expect contestation of this principle, as does Cook-Lynn in her anticipation of the lukewarm reception of native voices. Sensing that criticism by anti-Indian scholars could disparage her fellow scholars, she forewarns them to expect defamation of native voices. However, she equally renders a critical service to native voices by endowing them with

⁸¹ Womack, *Red on Red*, 10.

⁸² Judith Roof and Robyn Wiegman, eds., *Who Can Speak?: Authority and Critical Identity* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

⁸³ Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands*, 394.

⁸⁴ Scott R. Lyons, "Rhetorical Sovereignty: What Do American Indians Want from Writing?," *College Composition and Communication* 51 (2000), 447-68.

life-preserving power for Indian nations, like food, water, and housing for human beings. By equating the right to speak for one's community to these basic necessities, Cook-Lynn is particularly pressing native scholars to voice themselves for the sake of Indian nations. Clearly, a native voice equals breathing for Indian nations; an authentic native voice is a carrier of life for tribal nations.

Everything considered, Cook-Lynn is a strong native voice. Not only has this topic preoccupied her throughout her entire career, but she even prematurely ended her tenured faculty position for native voice's sake, in 1990, when she noted a lack of institutional support for native voice.⁸⁵ Her large body of texts, available in many scholarly journals, consistently defends one thing: Indian communities/native nations are still alive and well.⁸⁶ Furthermore, cognizant that a tribal voice would become more widespread should publishing facilities be of some help, she co-founded *WSR*, a journal which has become, over the years, the primary voice for native intellectuals. *WSR* has kindled readers' awareness of the existence of Native Americans.

One can only hope that Cook-Lynn's battle for the visibility of a native voice in the American landscape will eventually pay off. It seems important to note, however, that she holds a Manichean view tainted by a segregationist perspective. In my judgment, her utilitarian policy could have far-reaching consequences, given its overriding potential to endanger the very discipline she purports to defend and consolidate, American Indian studies.

⁸⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, xi.

⁸⁶ Her publications appeared in *Prairie Schooner*, *South Dakota Review*, *Sun Tracks*, *Pembroke*, *Greenfield Review*, *Ethnic Studies Review*, *American Indian Quarterly*, and *WSR*, among others.

III) REGIMES OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN NATIVE STUDIES

This section answers the questions raised at the outset of this chapter, e. i., the view(s) that carry weight and authority in the discipline and the way in which the policy of muting some voices has impacted the discipline over the years.

Upfront, it seems clear to me that from Cook-Lynn's perspective Indian studies should be a rallying ground for indigenoussness and tribal sovereignty (or nationalism). One serious consequence of this ideological stance: **not** every Indian voice is recognized as a legitimate contributing native voice. In line with Cook-Lynn's definition of a native voice, it appears to me that only certain native voices are entitled to participate in the discourse in Indian studies. Per Cook-Lynn's conceptualization, a native voice must defend tribal land and sovereignty, nurture tribal culture, and proclaim the survivance of Indian individuals and nations in America. For Cook-Lynn, any artistic production that "can call itself Native American must clearly have two approaches: a corrective approach that goes beyond criticism to reconstruction, and the expression of an inevitable tribal consciousness that acts to assure a tribal-nation people of its future."⁸⁷

It is safe to theorize that for Cook-Lynn, the only authentic native view(s), voices that advocate Indian nationalism and sovereignty, are those that should carry weight and authority in the discipline. Although future studies will assess the full impact of such a policy on the discipline, I think I can safely assume that discarding some voices within the discipline has impacted it in adverse ways over the years. Despite Cook-Lynn's observation that the development of competing epistemologies has had inappropriate influences on the discipline, despite her assertion that multiculturalism, feminism, postmodernism, and cultural studies have shifted the direction of Indian studies in inappropriate ways, I still believe her inflexible position

⁸⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 77.

is potentially harmful for the discipline.⁸⁸ Has the implementation of these epistemologies really off-tracked the discipline and disempowered it to the point of requiring a purification of native voices within its realm?

In any case, Cook-Lynn's stance on Indian voices and her value judgments on Indian art suggest that only a certain kind of native voice should receive consideration in Native studies. As discussed in previous chapters, there is documented evidence attesting to Cook-Lynn's influential position in Native studies. She is one of the major voices in the field, with her long editorship of *WSR*, the main journal devoted to the scholarship which accompanies the development of academic Native studies. Being one of the seasoned scholars of Indian studies and vested with gate-keeping power for years, she remains an authority in the discipline. Moreover, considering her lifelong commitment to Indian studies as evidenced by her exceptional input to the pedagogy and politics of the discipline, Cook-Lynn has earned a well-deserved reputation of being the "conscience" of American Indian studies. Furthermore, given her contributions to the shaping and shape of Native studies, Cook-Lynn has been the keynote speaker at numerous Indian studies gatherings. In sum, Cook-Lynn is the face of the discipline, if her recognition by her peers as the "dean" of Indian studies is any indication.⁸⁹

In light of Cook-Lynn's discriminatory stand on native voices, Indian scholars who entertain the dream of Native American studies as a welcoming field of divergent ideas are deceiving themselves. This view seems relegated to the realm of impossibilities, at best. Indian intellectuals who cling to such an alluring possibility delude themselves, commit high treason, and risk being labeled **wannabe** Indians, in Cook-Lynn's lexicon.

⁸⁸ Cook-Lynn levels the charge in "Who Stole Native American Studies?," and reasserts the same view in her "Keynote Address: Indian Studies." *New Indians, Old Wars* fully develops it.

⁸⁹ See: James Riding In, "Editor's Commentary," *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 5; Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, xi.

In fact, Cook-Lynn – one of the dominant forces that has shaped the discipline over the years – knows no middle ground when it comes to the foundational principles of the discipline: indigenusness and sovereignty of Indian nations. In her contention that sovereignty has been denied Indian nations for centuries, Cook-Lynn is inflexible and leaves no room for negotiation on this principle. She locates the denial of Indian sovereignty at the heart of American life and challenges Indian studies practitioners to defy that reality. She thus considers the discipline to be a rallying point for indigenusness and tribal nationalism/sovereignty: you defend them and you are included in Cook-Lynn’s pantheon as a worthy voice; or you fail to pay tribute to them and you are castigated, ostracized and definitely quarantined for possessing a **tribeless** voice. Cook-Lynn’s lenses project a black and white picture – no gray area allowed, no blurring line between mainstream and American Indian views – so to speak. She extends this view to existing Native studies programs, classifying them as either “empowering,” or “disempowering.”⁹⁰ For Cook-Lynn, the watchdog in the discipline, then, the major question of Indian studies is not just about meeting the needs of students; it is not just about recruiting Indian professors and enrollments of Indian students: it is rather about native politics, government and sovereignty, first and foremost.

As noted in chapter I, in one of her keynote addresses to Indian studies practitioners, Cook-Lynn even expresses dismay at how the majority of American Indians in the Black Hills of South Dakota is more interested in civil rights issues and other “trivialities” than their treaty-related privileges. She is adamant: talking about civil rights is irrelevant in American Indian studies, as she insists in *New Indians, Old Wars*. After all, tribal nations have government-to-government relationships with the United States; they still have ongoing treaties with the federal government. Therefore, from Cook-Lynn’s perspective, American Indians should be claiming

⁹⁰ See, particularly, Cook-Lynn, “Who Stole Native American Studies?,” 9-28 and *New Indians, Old Wars*, 14-15.

their treaty rights by asking relevant questions concerning land reform, economics, and the survival of Indian nations.⁹¹

She values the sovereignty and indigenusness of Indian nations to the point even of downplaying the enormous academic hurdles facing Indian students, contending that they are common to many minority groups across the country, even though she dismisses any comparison with minority groups. Instead, she singles out the indigenusness and sovereignty of Indian students as if these two concepts could magically solve their daily flesh-and-blood academic problems. In my view, to maintain that Indian students are set apart from other groups of people in this country because they are indigenous people with lands and treaties, and to suggest that these elements deserve upmost care is mind-boggling.⁹² But Cook-Lynn sees it in another way. In her judgment, the discipline must defend these concepts, first and foremost; the well-being of Indian students, future defenders of Indian nations, comes second. In my opinion, her radicalism, in this instance, is over the top; it misses the point as she intentionally elevates the foundational principles of the discipline to the status of Deity. I think Cook-Lynn has taken her eye off the ball by promoting a blind cult of the principles of the discipline. In fact, she can be accused of abandoning the very people who will defend the future of Indian nations. Or is Cook-Lynn trying to represent herself as a custodian of abstract ideas and guardian of moral standards that are often ignored in the market place and the house of power?⁹³ It is commonly believed that great people are often misunderstood. Are we misunderstanding Cook-Lynn in this instance, because not all stakeholders share in her prioritizing; by Cook-Lynn's own admission, her prioritizing has not only failed to resonate with many stakeholders but it has ignited contentious debates among them as well. At best, it seems Cook-Lynn has given Indians something to believe in, or something to

⁹¹ Cook-Lynn, "Keynote Address: Indian Studies," 179-187; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 1-13.

⁹² Cook-Lynn, "Keynote Address: Indian Studies," 186.

⁹³ S. M. Lipset and R. B. Dobson, "The Intellectual as Critic and Rebel," 138.

debate. Above all, I find disturbing Cook-Lynn's seeking to delegitimize Indian scholars who promote neither tribal nationalism nor traditional knowledge; her critique of scholars who disagree with her is equally troubling to me.

In the same keynote address mentioned above, Cook-Lynn alludes to the schism within the discipline: "I am at odds with the so-called mainstream of Indian studies. I happen to think that Indian studies is about indigenous rights, the treaty rights of those Indian nations that have survived the holocaust of the nineteenth century. I realize that's a narrow-minded view. And I realize the consortium has to take up the question of what the boundaries of Indian studies should be." Theorizing that Native Americans cannot be all things to everybody, Cook-Lynn expounds the approach that Indian scholars cannot sit back, if they are "to find the solutions to the issues that face the tribes, the tribal nations, who are at risk every day."⁹⁴

By insisting on the dominance of selective concepts such as sovereignty, nationalism, genocide, self-determination and peoplehood, along with a carefully crafted mixture of Indigenist and postcolonial theories, the radical wing within the discipline not only drives their points home and/or strives to empower American Indians, but it equally accuses native scholars who lack radicalism of being unfit to speak in the discipline: an internecine battle.⁹⁵ This statement is not an over-simplification of Cook-Lynn's conception of American Indian studies: her entire oeuvre sustains this view. From Cook-Lynn's altercations with Michael Dorris (her quintessential example of tribeless voice)⁹⁶ to her scorning of "academic chiefs," to her fights

⁹⁴ Cook-Lynn, "Keynote Address: Indian Studies," 181.

⁹⁵ In addition to Cook-Lynn's ideas, one could gather more information about the nature of the theory promoted in Native Studies in: Deloria, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 25-31; Holm, Pearson, and Chavis, "Peoplehood," 7-24; Rigney, "Internationalization of an Indigenous Anticolonial Cultural Critique of Research Methodologies," 109-121; and Forbes, "Intellectual Self-Determination and Sovereignty," 11-23, among others.

⁹⁶ See Cook-Lynn, "A Mixed-Blood, Tribeless Voice in American Indian Literatures: Michael Dorris," in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 72-90.

against forgery as is shown through her repeated quarrels with mixed-blood Indians and **wannabe** Indians, Cook-Lynn seeks to impose a specific direction on the field by harnessing the rich diversity of voices American Indians could bring to the discipline. From her perspective and as I demonstrated earlier, a native scholarship worth attention in Native studies has to accomplish at least one of these three things: defend tribal sovereignty and land; promote tribal culture and worldview; and proclaim the endurance and continuation of tribal nations, with respect to their tribulations in the United States.⁹⁷ Under these circumstances, what happens to other native voices that nurture different priorities?

In Cook-Lynn's programmatic and dogmatic vision of American Indian studies, these "tribeless voices," as she repeatedly refers to them, deserve no consideration whatsoever in the realm of the discipline. Does this radical move aim to purify Native studies? Do the so-called "tribeless voices" carry any potential to corrupt the discourse of Native studies or hamper the objectives of the discipline? Does this move indicate the existence of some cultural regimes of recognition, inclusion, and exclusion in Native American studies as is the case in American studies? Whatever the goal(s) of this attempt to exclude some native voices from the discipline, one question needs to be brought up: How well does this policy take into account the tremendous level of cultural and political differentiations that exist among the staggering number of federally recognized tribes (564) and unrecognized tribal nations and communities?

What authority, if any, entitles Cook-Lynn to dictate this unilateral view in Indian studies? Warrior contends that Indians themselves need to be teachers, not just students, of their own experiences and histories; therefore, the necessity of the discipline.⁹⁸ Under these circumstances, how wise is it to reduce their experiences to a single one? Wilkins argues that the

⁹⁷ Cook-Lynn, "The Radical Conscience in Native American Studies," 12-3; *New Indians, Old Wars*, 27-28 and 67.

⁹⁸ Warrior, "A Room of One's Own at the ASA," 682.

huge number of Indian tribes accounts for their difficulty in developing long-term political alliances. If this reality is to impact Indian studies in any way at all, should it not be gauged in terms of the resounding discordance among the multiplicity of native voices seeking to enrich the field? Mihesuah mentions the plurality of Indian viewpoints relating to oral history, ethnic fraud, Indian studies programs, and much more.⁹⁹ Cook-Lynn's radical position assumes that every single native scholar has her political upbringing. I think these voices should be allowed a say in Indian studies.

In any case, Cook-Lynn's assessment of numerous Indian studies curricula indicates her project of seeking to determine what is acceptable – and not acceptable – within the discipline. In so doing, she unilaterally seeks to set the boundaries of Indian studies. If anything, in its preoccupation with tracking the level of (im)purity in the discipline, Cook-Lynn's scholarship hands down this verdict. Cook-Lynn's endeavor to systematize, organize and arrange native scholarship in oppositional binaries that order and sanitize Native studies might indicate her concern for purity in the discipline. Purity is a key theme at the heart of every society, Mary Douglas contends. She theorizes that fear of pollution becomes palpable when things are out of place and suggests that mere presence in the wrong place, or the inadvertent crossing of a boundary, may qualify as pollution. Douglas notes that desire for purity dictates our attitudes to society and determines our value judgments. More importantly, she contends that reactions to pollution are not always conscious acts.¹⁰⁰ Eliminating some native voices from Native studies could be a perfect illustration of this unconscious act.

Not only is Cook-Lynn a challenging Indian voice but she has a strong faith in the power of a native voice as well. Her concern with native voices in American Indian studies is

⁹⁹ Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*, 17.

¹⁰⁰ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London: Ark Paperback, 1966).

apparent in her publications (and the courses she taught, I suspect). While I laud her preoccupation with a native voice that led her to resign from her tenured faculty position, while I treasure her urge to native scholars to turn away from Western academic standards and be accountable to Indian people, I am dubious about, and wonder whether her effort to impose a one-dimensional view on the discipline is a good move, since there is no single native voice. I applaud her insistence on Native American philosophy as a philosophy in its own right, and not merely in its relation to the ideas of Aristotle, Plato or Hegel. I admire her conservative stand that tribal nations should not be seen as another minority; that they must be distinctly treated as separate nations in agreement with their treaties with the United States. I prize her repeated calls to native scholars to be accountable to the tribal nations, first and foremost.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, while agreeing that Indian studies must not emulate mainstream disciplines, I am critical of the unilateral effort by some ultraradical Indianists to impose a monolithic direction on the field through silencing other Indian voices, Cook-Lynn being the prime example among them. Granted, striking the right balance between the specific demands of a discipline wanting to stay apart and the divergent voices of its people is a delicate business; but quarantining the views of a significant proportion of Indian intellectuals – i.e., cosmopolitan critics – from Native studies hardly solves the puzzle. Cook-Lynn's attitude of alternately lauding and then denigrating N. Scott Momaday's ambivalent voice is quintessential in this respect. As stated earlier, Cook-Lynn regards Momaday as the foremost native scholar who has influenced a number of Indian intellectuals, including Cook-Lynn herself. Although Momaday's works mark the beginning of a new revolution in tribal storytelling and reflect some level of optimism for Indian nations, Cook-Lynn is appalled by his defense of the Bering Strait Theory of migration as well as by his reference to the Lewis and Clark expedition as "one of the great epic

¹⁰¹ See Cook-Lynn, "Native Studies is Politics," in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 151-158.

odysseys in American history.”¹⁰² Momaday’s ambivalent voice spurs Cook-Lynn’s demand that Indian intellectuals engage his awkward position in their research works.¹⁰³ Indeed, by holding such a black and white view in the discipline, Cook-Lynn fails to recognize the complexity of native voices. Categorizing native voices is a risky venture.

Although Cook-Lynn has not acknowledged the consequences associated with the reality of discarding some voices in my conversation with her, it is my considered opinion that this hierarchy among native voices is real and may be detrimental to the discipline, to some extent. My extensive reading of *WSR* publications only reinforces my initial suspicion. In my assessment, articles from this journal mainly promote Cook-Lynn’s ideological conceptualization of the discipline; no digression is allowed, which speaks to the powerful handling of censure in the journal. To be sure, the discourse here is in line with the newfound goal of the discipline. Arguably, this trend establishes some regimes of recognition, inclusion, and exclusion within the discipline. If *WSR* promotes the scholarship which accompanies the development of academic Native studies, it follows that silencing some voices within the journal affects the discipline as well.

CONCLUSION

Everything considered, articulating a native voice is not a matter of **Indianness**. If it remains true that some Native Americans by blood have not expressed a native voice in their writings, it is also true that the writings of some non-Indian scholars have taken up the struggles of tribal nations. The list includes, among others, Helen H. Jackson, Felix S. Cohen, Robert F.

¹⁰² Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks of Elizabeth Cook-Lynn*, 111-2.

¹⁰³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 158. For the record, Cook-Lynn praises Momaday in *Notebooks*, 8-9; “Meeting of Indian Professors,” 64; and “Editor’s Commentary,” *WSR* 12:2 (1997), 7. She is critical of him in “Editor’s Commentary,” *WSR* 12:2 (1997), 7-8; and *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 197.

Berkhofer, and Dee A. Brown, even if she finds Brown's conclusion disturbing. These non-native authors, as Fixico suggests, have "articulated an Indian voice, an Indian version of the history of the American West." In all, these scholars simply introduced Indians in a different way and humanized them.¹⁰⁴ This reality might force Cook-Lynn to rethink the issue of Indian voice and re-conceptualize it as a blurring topic. Perhaps this new conceptualization will leave room for some hesitant scholars who are willing to contribute to the field but who are afraid of being castigated because of the resonance of their voices. In the end, Cook-Lynn might be unwittingly harming the discipline. Or is Indian studies just a network of radical intellectuals who see no other way to defend their nations, except by upholding the principles of the discipline and alienating other native scholars?

¹⁰⁴ Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 108-9.

CHAPTER FOUR:
GOOD AT HOME, BAD ABROAD?:
THE AMERICAN OVERSEAS IMPERIALISM AND THE
NEGLECT OF ITS DOMESTIC IMPERIALISM

“Americans go about the globe crying about civil rights, yet refuse to return treaty rights and lands stolen from tribal nations and refuse to lift the stigma of colonial oppression in native enclaves and the law.”¹

First off, this opening text by Cook-Lynn magnifies the contradiction at the heart of United States culture of imperialism, as is evidenced in the title of this chapter. Second, Cook-Lynn’s definition of imperialism and her representation of the perennial violence at the heart of U.S.-Indian history serve as another cogent text at the outset of this chapter on American imperialism and the neglect of its internal dimension:

Imperialism, defined as the policy of extending the rule of an empire over colonies for reasons of Conquest and profit, was a condition that clearly marked early Indian/white relations and continues today, on and off Indian Reserved Homelands throughout the country. It is the impetus for colonial praxis, which has become the basis for several centuries of oppression as well as the contemporary crimes of America that remain unlitigated.²

The common denominator of both opening texts, in the context of this study, is that a dissertation on Cook-Lynn without a chapter on her vision of cultures of United States imperialism would overshadow an important aspect of her view on American culture. For that matter, her diagnosis concerning the oxymoronic nature of American imperial culture bears repeating:

What America wants in its race relations with American Indians is to steal and occupy the land, to kill and otherwise destroy the land’s inhabitants, and yet provide an ethical example throughout the world of a democratic and ‘good’ society developed for the purpose of profiting from that activity.³

Colonialism figures prominently in Cook-Lynn’s intellectual production; in fact, it remains the dominant theme of her creative writing and essays. In her editorial commentary to

¹ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 10.

² Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 6.

³ *Ibid.*, 52.

the *WSR* issue that examines colonialism, Cook-Lynn states that perspectives about the early years of U.S.-Indian history are ubiquitous in historical literature and often clouded with distortions, half-truths, and biased non-Indian viewpoints. She equally alleges that most mainstream historians have gone to great lengths to separate the United States from the history of colonialism, contending that federal Indian policy is essentially colonial policy.⁴ As a result of these premises, Cook-Lynn foregrounds United States imperialism in her essays and fiction to refute mainstream scholars' neglect of American domestic imperialism. Therefore, this chapter argues that Cook-Lynn's scholarship and other writings equate United States internal colonization with the destruction of Indian nations and cultures and advance a critical and oppositional view of U.S. expansion and colonization.

I) DEFINING COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM

First, it is crucial to delineate the Western personality, the grounding force of European colonization of the rest of the world. In an ingenious review of the bulk of scholarship from Plato, Augustine, and up to Freud, Richard Dyer solidly links the Western imperialistic propensity to two dominant traits of its culture: enterprise and the concept of will – the control of self and the control of others. Although both attributes remain central in Western culture, the concept of will seems to be the propeller: “Will is literally mapped on to the world in terms of those who have it and those who don’t, the ruler and the ruled, the coloniser and the colonised.” As such, will compels the “great ruling powers among the white nations” to assure “the leadership of the human species.” This fairy tale, which makes “the Ruling Race” accountable for human progress, articulates a blatant essentialist view by granting leadership roles solely to Europeans and Euro-Americans, or to people from a geographic and cultural area known as the

⁴ Cook-Lynn and James R. In, “Editors’ Commentary,” *WSR* 19:1 (2004), 5-10.

“West.” They alone can lead humanity forward because of their inherent temperamental qualities of dynamism and leadership: far-sightedness, will power, and energy. Europeans found in imperialism the most appropriate vehicle to channel this dynamism, for imperial enterprise provides an unprecedented horizon of expansion, with dangers to face, and a wealth of materials to organize – goods, terrain, and people.⁵

A number of anti-colonial and postcolonial scholars, including Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Chinua Achebe, Amílcar Cabral, Edward W. Said, and Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, have dissected the concept of colonialism. Generally, colonialism consists in keeping colonies, usually but not always, abroad. Informed by theories concerning the inherent superiority of European culture and the rightness of empire, colonialism is a social, political, and economic system that grabs the lands and resources of others. Colonialism “has always been about land and resources,” Cook-Lynn writes.⁶ The concept equally refers to the rule of a group of people by a foreign power; it is the invasion and occupation of one nation by another. Its common manifestation, according to Cook-Lynn, remains the domination of external territories without the consent of the indigenous inhabitants.⁷ Fundamentally sustained by the creation of fictive claims of superior and preemptive rights over the indigenous people of the coveted lands, colonialism basically subjugates natives.⁸

⁵ Richard Dyer, *White* (London: Routledge, 1997), 31-32. Walter Benn Michaels, in his summary of American colonialist ideas, writes the following about the “Ruling Race”: “Anglo-Saxons . . . were not only capable of self-government, as a ‘race of empire-builders’ . . . they were biologically destined to govern others as well” (as quoted in Dyer, *White*, 32).

⁶ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 73.

⁷ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 209-10; Cook-Lynn and In, “Editors’ Commentary,” 5-10.

⁸ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*; Harry Magdoff, *Imperialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978); Albert Memmi, *Le Portrait du colonisé* and *Le Portrait du colonisateur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985); David K. Fieldhouse, *Colonialism, 1870-1945* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981).

Raymond F. Betts, who has written extensively about the history of French colonies abroad, defines colonialism as a set of “attitudes and justifying ideologies (racism, cultural superiority, or ‘White man’s burden’) that sustained colonial domination.” Unlike previous centuries wherein colonialism basically meant European settlement in the colony, its contemporary manifestation entails domination of the land and native subjugation to European control.⁹ Cook-Lynn equates the concept with an addiction to greed, sickness, supremacy, power, and exploitation, in her editorial commentary I mentioned above. In sum, colonialism is the political control and economic exploitation of a country by a colonial power. Fanon and Memmi argue that colonization is not effective without the mandatory silencing of the colonized through all forms of institutionalized violence. Definitely, colonialism can be apprehended as Western political, cultural, and economic projects of domination and as a trope for violation.¹⁰

Encapsulating the violent side of the colonial enterprise, Julia V. Emberley argues that the cultural and educational inferiority as well as narrow economic specialization conferred upon the colonial subject “constituted a mode of epistemological enforcement used to maintain domination and exploitation as well as severely damage, if not destroy, indigenous social formations.”¹¹ In fact, Cook-Lynn concurs that colonialism has brought complete disorder to Indian tribes by disconnecting them from their landscapes, their languages, their histories, their social relations and their own ways of thinking, feeling and interacting with the world. Cook-Lynn’s *Aurelia*, for example, explores the disruption caused by American colonization in the

⁹ Raymond Betts, *Decolonization* (2nd ed.; New York: Routledge, 1998), 114.

¹⁰ For ample evidence, see Memmi’s books on colonialism: *Le Portrait du colonisé* and *Le Portrait du colonisateur*; Michael Yellow-Bird, “Cowboys and Indians Toys of Genocide, Icons of American Colonialism,” *WSR* 19:2 (2004), 42; Nicholas B. Dirks, ed., *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 5; Howard Adams, *A Tortured People* (Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 1995); Bonny Ibhawoh, *Imperialism and Human Rights* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).

¹¹ Julia V. Emberley, *Thresholds of Difference: Feminist Critique, Native Women’s Writing, Postcolonial Theory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 6.

lives of the Sioux. Along with severe impacts on cultural, social, and political fabric of the Sioux Indians, readers of this novel are constantly reminded of the presence of the swollen river and how the flooding has affected the community. Actually, many critics point to colonialism as the epicenter of the lawless situation that affects colonized people worldwide. Alongside Fanon, Achebe, Memmi, Ngugi, and Césaire, Hussein A. Bulhan, for instance, contends that humankind has known social oppression since time immemorial but points out that Europe's global conquest dramatically changed oppression's character and scope. Europe's greed for land and labor entailed the occupation of continents, the colonization and enslavement of millions, leaving victims in every corner of the world.¹² James R. In, an American Indian scholar and colonized subject himself, expresses similar views:

[T]he thrust of European expansionism, aimed at acquiring lands, resources, and labor belonging to others, dramatically altered the lifeways, sovereignty, populations, governments, landholdings, and spirituality of tens of millions of peoples who lived in hundreds of distinctive cultural and political groupings. This imperialism consciously sacrificed the human and property rights of indigenous peoples while elevating the colonizers to a status of privilege.¹³

It is worth underscoring that both the people under the foreign power and their lands make up the colony. As Weaver argues, a colonized people become the possession of the colonizer: "Everything they have and everything they are may be appropriated and used to serve the ends of the dominant culture," i.e., the colonizer.¹⁴

An underdeveloped area and usually remote from the metropolis, a colony is a nation which is controlled politically and economically by a colonial power. Generally, the colony is the chosen place where the "mother country" develops its agricultural products and exploits other natural resources for its own benefits. This creates contemporary underdevelopment in former

¹² Hussein A. Bulhan, *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression* (New York: Plenum Press, 1985), 37-48.

¹³ James R. In, "Editor's Commentary," *WSR* 19:2 (2004), 5.

¹⁴ Weaver, "Ethnic Cleansing," 37.

and current colonized societies, a reality which draws Cook-Lynn's comments: "We continue to lose our resources and riches stolen from us by our greedy benefactor, the very thieves who have given us the reputation in history of being beggars."¹⁵ Susan A. Miller, another native intellectual concerned with theorizing the colonization of Indian nations, suggests that the peculiar trait of colonialism is the extraction of the raw materials of one people by another: "The planting of colonies outside the boundaries of the colonial nation is only to further the extraction. The manipulations of people whose lands are colonized ... are founded in the colonial motive of making the resources of colonized peoples more available to the colonial interest."¹⁶ In a way, then, colonialism entitles the metropolitan powers not only to depend on native labor and products, but to accumulate the wealth of the colonial territories as well:

The wealth of the imperial countries is our wealth too. For in a very concrete way Europe has stuffed herself inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin America, China, and Africa. From all these continents, under whose eyes Europe today raises up her tower of opulence, there has flowed out for centuries toward that same Europe diamonds and oil, silk and cotton, wood and exotic products. Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from the underdeveloped peoples.¹⁷

For Cook-Lynn, the economics of colonialism has destroyed Indian nations; colonial greed for material resources has decimated Indian tribes; the process of making Indian lands and resources more available to the colonial power has bankrupted Indian communities.¹⁸

Emberley theorizes that colonialism becomes discernible when a "ruling nation sets out to dominate indigenous people, politically, economically, culturally, religiously, and legally." The colonial power exerts its domination over the native population by means of cultural and

¹⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 67. On this subject, see, also, William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*; Daniel A. Offiong, *Imperialism and Dependency* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1982); and David K. Fieldhouse, *The West and the Third World* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

¹⁶ Susan A. Miller, "Seminoles and Africans under Seminole Law," *WSR* 20:1 (2005), 25.

¹⁷ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 102.

¹⁸ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 27-28.

economic restrictions.¹⁹ The late Césaire formulates the most radical definition of colonialism by equating it to theft, pillage, rape, and dehumanization. Further, he asserts that colonialism animalizes human beings.²⁰ Fanon echoes similar sentiments: “centuries will be needed to humanize this [colonized] world which has been forced down to animal level by imperial powers.”²¹

Colonialism is closely related to another concept: imperialism. Both concepts are entangled; so much so that the following definition of imperialism originates from a book by George H. Nadel and Perry Curtis and which is titled *Imperialism and Colonialism*:

Imperialism is the extension of sovereignty or control, whether direct or indirect, political or economic, by one government, nation or society over another together with the ideas justifying or opposing this process. Imperialism is essentially about power both as end and means. Underlying all forms of imperialism is the belief – at times unshakable – of the imperial agent or nation in an inherent right, based on moral superiority as well as material might, to impose its pre-eminent values and techniques on the “inferior” indigenous nation or society.²²

The policy of establishing or maintaining an empire, imperialism can be achieved by political collaboration, or by economic, social, and cultural dependency.²³ Many scholars concur that modern imperialism was popularized at the end of the nineteenth-century; it was an ideology that supported European and American expansion overseas. Regardless of its driving force – whether inspired by explorers or assured by military force – imperialism was, and still is,

¹⁹ Emberley, *Thresholds of Difference*, 6.

²⁰ Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 177.

²¹ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 100.

²² George H. Nadel and Perry Curtis, *Imperialism and Colonialism* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 1.

²³ See B. E. Kipkorir, ed., *Biographical Essays on Imperialism and Collaboration in Colonial Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1980); and Michael W. Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 45.

predominantly grounded in economics. The system serves the interests of the state and, notably, the capitalist seeking new markets and places of investment.²⁴

William A. Williams, one of the first modern historians to integrate economic realities into the study of American foreign policy, advances this “market thesis” in his interpretation of American imperialism. The expansionist ideology and imperial foreign policy adopted by the United States at the end of the nineteenth-century was largely formulated in industrial terms by spokesmen and leaders of the political economy, Williams claims in *Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society*, arguing that these leaders and spokesmen “were primarily concerned with obtaining markets for surplus manufactured goods and venture capital, and with acquiring reliable access to cheap raw materials needed by the American industrial system.”²⁵ The United States needed to sell off the destabilizing surplus of the American economy, Williams argues. He develops this market thesis in his other works, including *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. In his contention, the more troublesome factor in the economic aspect of American foreign policy remains the dogmatic belief that “America’s *domestic* well-being depends upon such sustained, ever-increasing overseas economic expansion.” In Williams’ view, a convergence of economic practice with intellectual analysis and emotional involvement “creates a very powerful and dangerous propensity to define the essentials of American welfare in terms of activities outside the United States.”²⁶

²⁴ Betts, *Decolonization*, 115; D. K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire, 1830-1914* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973); Bill Warren, *Imperialism, Pioneer of Capitalism* (London: NLB, 1980); Harry Magdoff, *Age of Imperialism: The Economics of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).

²⁵ William A. Williams, *Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society* (New York: Random House, 1969), 4.

²⁶ William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 11; italics in the original.

Other market-expansionism historians, such as Walter LaFeber, Thomas J. McCormick, Edward Crapol, Howard Schonberger, and Robert L. Beisner, apply this economic thesis later. These scholars present American imperialism as the product of a consensus of businessmen, politicians, intellectuals, and agrarian spokesmen, though Beisner equally probes the noneconomic aspects, in *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900*, in order to reconcile them with the economic interpretations solely defended by the others.²⁷

The depression of the mid-1890s made the acquisition of new foreign markets more imperative than ever, they argue. American industrialization led to a surplus that must be disposed of abroad, if businessmen were to avoid the unpleasant alternatives. Unless the rapidly accumulating economic over-production could be marketed abroad, these market-expansionism historians contend, American society would face falling profits, mass unemployment, the rise of radical economic programs such as a redistribution of wealth on a scale to enable lower-wage workers to buy the surplus products themselves, and even the possible collapse of the U.S. government itself. Therefore, the industrial and financial community definitely adopted expansionist ideology, in the mid-1890s, as the best way to cope with the recurrent domestic upheavals that threatened to unravel the social fabric. The severe economic crisis following the panic of 1893, as the argument goes, converted many metropolitan spokesmen to the export solution:

They came to accept the overproduction analysis of the fluctuating economy that agrarians had argued for a generation. American leaders acted upon the belief that overseas economic expansion would vent the nation's surplus agricultural, and more

²⁷ See: Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963), and *The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750* (New York: Norton, 1989); Thomas J. McCormick, *China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire, 1893-1901* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967).

importantly, manufactured production. That, in turn, would ensure domestic peace and prosperity, social stability, and the preservation of the existing political system.²⁸

Thus, every administration from Abraham Lincoln (1861) to William McKinley (1901) – ten in all – “employed foreign policy as an instrument for getting rid of this troublesome surplus.”²⁹ Arguing a similar thesis in their previously footnoted essay, Crapol and Schonberger contend that the agricultural and industrial sectors of the American political economy converged in a common movement for empire at the end of the nineteenth-century.³⁰ Williams definitely provides an unusual insight into the market forces that transformed the United States into an imperial power:

The metropolitan minority of the nation gradually accepted the expansionist aspects of the agricultural conception of the world. Its members did so because they were themselves businessmen who shared the fundamental premises of that outlook, because the farm majority was a vigorous and persistent tutor, and because their experience verified and reinforced the lesson they were being taught. They adopted the imperial outlook during the same years that they consolidated their control – still as a minority – of the political economy. The result of those interacting processes was a war against Spain and the formulation of a grand strategy for such imperial expansion of the free American marketplace.³¹

Economics dictated American imperialism. Like its twin concept colonialism, imperialism equally denotes the domination of one nation by another and occurs when a strong state effectively dominates a weaker one.³² In this vein, Alfred Cobban remarks that imperialism implies the domination of one people by another and ultimately means the extension of power

²⁸ Edward Crapol and Howard Schonberger, “The Shift to Global Expansion, 1865-1900,” in William A. Williams, ed., *From Colony to Empire: Essays in the History of American Foreign Relations* (New York: J. Wiley, 1972), 186.

²⁹ Robert L. Beisner, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900* (Arlington Heights, Ill.: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1975), 13.

³⁰ Crapol and Schonberger, “The Shift to Global Expansion, 1865-1900,” 135-202.

³¹ William A. Williams, *Roots of the Modern American Empire*, 450.

³² Tony Smith, *Pattern of Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6; Fieldhouse, *Colonialism*, 3; see, also, Winfried Baumgart, *Imperialism: The Idea and Reality of British and French Colonial Expansion, 1880-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 1-2.

over other nations.³³ No wonder that accounts of imperialism are conveyed in “terms of the excitement of advance, of forward movement through time, and of the conquest and control of space.”³⁴ Clearly, imperialism is about territorial and political claims to power over people outside the boundaries of the imperial nation. It definitely entails territorial expansion by any able nation to increase the area over which to exert its right of sovereignty.³⁵

Edward Said comes up with two quite different but intimately related aspects of imperialism in his interpretation of Joseph Conrad’s insight into the system. Although the power to take over territory is the driving force behind imperialism, imperial practices essentially mask this forceful idea “by developing a justificatory regime of self-aggrandizing, self-originating authority interposed between the victim of imperialism and its perpetrator.”³⁶ Conrad’s bitter experience of his own exploitation and the exploitation of Africans in the colonial Congo contributes to his incisive assessment of the colonial enterprise in *Heart of Darkness*.³⁷

Indian scholars articulate similar discourse in theorizing American domestic imperialism. Addressing the justificatory regime relating to the colonization of Indian nations, for instance, Caskey Russell argues that economic motives dictate colonialism and that colonizing powers will do anything to justify their usurpation of another people’s culture, property, and ability to live. In order to ease guilt, colonizers have put in place vast justification systems “to keep the colonized quietly obedient, willing to give up rights and resources and even willing to die in defense of a

³³ Alfred Cobban as adapted from David G. Boyce, *Decolonisation and the British Empire, 1775-1997* (New York: St. Martin, 1999), 2.

³⁴ Dyer, *White*, 31.

³⁵ Raymond Aron, *Imperialism and Colonialism* (Leeds, U.K.: Montague Burton Lecture on International Relations, 1959), 3.

³⁶ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 69.

³⁷ Molly M. Mahood, *The Colonial Encounter* (London: Rex Collings, 1977), 5-7.

system of exploitation and oppression.”³⁸ In all likelihood, colonial exploitation would be unattainable without these justificatory regimes.

In the end, imperialism is the project of Western imperial nations to dominate other societies, traditions, and histories. For that matter, Cook-Lynn features the destruction of tribal legacies as a peculiar trait of the colonization of American Indians. “For the indigenous peoples of the continent,” she writes, “the policies of Americanization were to secure political freedom and liberty for the individual, ignoring and tearing down tribal and communal value systems. This meant destroying the native, indigenous past.”³⁹ Fanon encapsulates the same characteristic of the system. “Colonialism [or imperialism] is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native’s brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.”⁴⁰ Definitely, as the Tunisian sociologist Memmi comments, it is not enough for the colonizers to control the present and future of the colonized, they must rewrite their past as well.⁴¹

To some extent, I must admit, drawing a fine line between both concepts becomes a complicated exercise, at times; their features are intertwined so much so that it is almost impossible to engage one without encroaching upon the territory of the other. Colonialism and imperialism thrive upon a presumed inequality between the conquering and the subject people.⁴² Both demand the colonizer’s physical interventions as well as emotional investment in the coveted lands. Colonialism and imperialism are about property acquisition and self-

³⁸ Russell, “Language, Violence, and Indian Mis-education,” 98.

³⁹ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 2.

⁴⁰ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 101.

⁴¹ Memmi, *Le Portrait du colonisé*, 112-115.

⁴² Aron, *Imperialism and Colonialism*, 3.

aggrandizement; both dispossess natives of their lands, culture, and identity.⁴³ Basically, they showcase their economically exploitive agendas, their deployment of force and their accrual of social and material power to the colonizer-imperialist and allied metropolitan interests. As Robert J. Young suggests, both concepts involve forms of subjugation of one people by another.⁴⁴ They generally promote the ideological legitimization of Western domination and defend more acquisitive and blatantly power-laden agendas of metropolitan centers.⁴⁵

Above all, imperialism and colonialism are about cultural interventions in other spaces, as culture lies at their juncture. Nicholas B. Dirks sums up the colonial enterprise as a cultural project of domination:

Although colonial conquest was predicated on the power of superior arms, military organization, political power, and economic wealth, it was also based on a complexly related variety of cultural technologies. Colonialism not only has had cultural effects that have too often been either ignored or displaced into the inexorable logics of modernization and world capitalism, it was itself a cultural project of control. Colonial knowledge both enabled colonial conquest and was produced by it; in certain important ways, culture was what colonialism was all about.⁴⁶

As Jack D. Forbes argues in his essay on colonialism and American Indian literature, colonialism and imperialism distort, oppress, suppress, falsify, warp, change, and destroy indigenous cultures.⁴⁷ Culture is the complex system of meaning and behavior of a given society; it includes beliefs, values, knowledge, arts, morals, laws, customs, habits, languages, and dress.⁴⁸ Culture includes ways of thinking and patterns of behavior; it involves how people interact, the

⁴³ Cole Harris, "How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94:1 (2004), 165-82.

⁴⁴ Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 15.

⁴⁵ David Lambert and Alan Lester, "Geographies of Colonial Philanthropy," *Progress in Human Geography* 28:3 (2004), 321-2.

⁴⁶ Dirks, ed., *Colonialism and Culture*, 3.

⁴⁷ Forbes, "Colonialism and Native American Literature," 19.

⁴⁸ Andersen and Taylor, *Sociology: The Essentials* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2005), 36-63 and Barbara D. Miller, *Cultural Anthropology* (2nd ed.; Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), 1-23.

objects they make and use. Actually, as Robert Wuthnow and Marsha Witten cogently state, “Culture appears to be ‘built into’ all social relations, constituting the underlying assumptions and expectations on which social interaction depends.”⁴⁹ Culture definitely provides meanings and understandings to the social order.

As much as culture differentiates one nation from others, any nation’s imposition of its culture on another constitutes an imperial domination. As Said suggests in his dramatic connections between the imperial endeavor and the culture that both reflected and reinforced it, profits were tremendously important in the expansion of the Western empire, but controlling the cultures of subordinate, inferior, or less advanced people was more important than material profit to imperialism and colonialism.⁵⁰ To be sure, both imperialism and colonialism understood themselves primarily as cultural projects involved in naming, appropriating, classifying, textualizing, exterminating, demarcating, and governing a “new nation.”⁵¹ Definitely, as Antony Anghie theorizes, imperialism and colonialism are centrally concerned with cultural subordination, economic exploitation, territorial dispossession, and racial discrimination.⁵² Despite their similar traits, Said establishes a neat distinction between them.

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said defines imperialism as “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory.” Although colonialism, which usually involves settlements, has largely ended, Said believes imperialism still dominates international affairs; it “lingers where [colonialism] always has been, in a kind of general cultural

⁴⁹ Wuthnow and Witten, “New Direction in the Study of Culture,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 14 (1988), 50.

⁵⁰ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 10.

⁵¹ Donald E. Pease, “New Perspectives on U.S. Culture and Imperialism,” in Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 22.

⁵² Antony Anghie, *Colonialism, Sovereignty, and the Making of International Law*, 7.

sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic, and social practices.”⁵³ The process of decolonization implies that the “mother country” gives up its paternalistic and patronizing attitudes vis-à-vis its former colonies. However, the political authority of the imperial countries over their former dependent territories, a paternalism that manifests itself in the guise of political intervention and economic control, is the kind of imperialism Said alludes to: “Imperialism did not end, did not suddenly become ‘past,’ once decolonization had set in motion the dismantling of the classical empires. A legacy of connections still binds countries like Algeria and India to France and Britain respectively.”⁵⁴

Imperial domination becomes discernible when a former colonial territory which has gained independence and political sovereignty is still controlled economically, politically, and fiscally by its former colonial power.⁵⁵ As John M. Coetzee fittingly remarks, an empire imagines itself in perpetuity: “One thought alone preoccupies the submerged mind of Empire: how not to end, how not to die, how to prolong its era.”⁵⁶ Michael B. Brown is on solid ground when he asserts that “Imperialism is still without question a most powerful force in the economic, political and military relations by which the less economically developed lands are subjected to the more economic developed. We may still look forward to its ending.”⁵⁷ Like its successor-word neocolonialism, imperialism denotes indirect cultural or economic domination of countries formerly colonized but now politically independent.⁵⁸ In the end, imperialism is a recycled version, a reconfiguration of master-servant relationships between modern Western powers and their overseas colonial territories, or a domination of the native population on the

⁵³ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 282.

⁵⁵ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 98-99. The case of Francophone Africa is a cogent example: Paris still wields enormous economic, political, and military power there.

⁵⁶ John M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (London: Seeker & Warburg, 1980), 133.

⁵⁷ Michael B. Brown, *After Imperialism* (rev. ed.; New York: Humanities, 1970), viii.

⁵⁸ Nadel and Curtis, *Imperialism and Colonialism*, 3.

same continent. The latter case applies to the American colonization of Indian nations, a subject matter that has received scant attention in mainstream scholarship, in my opinion.

Cook-Lynn's scholarship and other writings demonstrate the relevance of these definitions to the colonization of Indian nations and debunk the specialness of American imperialism, both at home and abroad. A myth about the exceptionalism of American imperialism has led the public to view United States imperialism in benevolent terms. In particular, the business community and policy makers are in denial about American colonialism by taking the ideological position that the United States seeks to liberate native people through colonialism. Prior to the intervention of revisionist historians in the 1960s, this myth has morphed into a powerful belief, conveying an all-pervading idea that American colonialism does not subject; it rather unshackles colonized people: a paradox.

Otto H. Kahn's strong denial of United States imperialism perfectly exemplifies such a myth. He holds that the United States has never invaded other countries in order "to oppress and exploit" their people or "to add these territories to our domain." Rather, he claims, American conquests are solely motivated by benevolent, altruistic, noble, and redeeming purposes, namely: "to end an inveterate rule of tyranny, malefactions and turmoil, to set up decent and orderly government and the rule of law, to foster progress, to establish stable conditions and with them the basis for prosperity to the populations concerned."⁵⁹ Max Lerner deployed another version of such an argument in *America as a Civilization* (1957):

America did not set out to dominate the world as the Nazis did under Hitler. There was no ideological fanaticism behind American expansionism, as in the case of the Communists. The American case is not even like that of the Roman Empire, which

⁵⁹ Otto H. Kahn, *The Myth of American Imperialism* (New York: Committee of American Business Men, 1925), 4-5.

was the product of a similar energy system but which rationalized its expansion as Rome's civilizing function in a world of outworn kingships and barbarian hordes.⁶⁰

This argument stood the test of time until the 1960s, when revisionist scholars confronted the civilizing claims of American imperialism.⁶¹ Diplomatic historians and market-expansionism scholars challenged the United States messianic discourse on spreading freedom and bearing the “burden” of empire in the 1960s. They unmasked the American anti-imperialist ideology and dispelled the benevolent intervention of a compassionate America trying to rescue an already colonized world from disaster.

William A. Williams and his students are revisionist historians; they examine U.S. foreign activities from a new angle, breaking with the traditional interpretations of American overseas imperialism as a civilizing mission. However, it is left to others to engage the neglect of American domestic imperialism. Along these lines, Cook-Lynn's fiction and essays foreground the United States colonization of Indian nations. Her short story, *Then Badger Said This*, urges Dakota Indians to remember their unique identity in their colonized world, where Indian and Western cultures collide and coalesce. In this fiction, grandmothers caution their grandchildren **against assimilation**, urging them to remember who they are, because “you must be able to identify yourself as a Dakotah for the grandmothers who are standing on the ghost road...” to let you in the spirit world.⁶² In fact, *Then Badger Said This* takes its title from old Dakota stories and includes such characters as badger, meadowlark, rabbit, bullhead, raccoon, and spider. As Cook-Lynn has recently commented, many of these “characters were traditional figures who

⁶⁰ Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization: Life and Thought in the United States* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), 887.

⁶¹ William A. Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976* (New York: Morrow, 1976); Beisner, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900*; Thomas McCormick's introduction to “Crisis, Commitment, and Counterrevolution,” in Williams, McCormick, Gardner, and LaFeber, eds., *America in Vietnam: A Documentary History* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1985), 45-60.

⁶² Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 15; *Then Badger Said This*, 22.

gave the rules to live by: how to be a decent Dakotah.”⁶³ Likewise, she uses her novel, *Aurelia*, to critique the repeated intrusions of Euro-Americans onto the Sioux nation. By detailing the impositions of mainstream values on Indian cultures, this novel reminds its readers that the colonization is not over. And, as I suggested in her functionalist conceptualization of art in chapter III, Cook-Lynn takes art very seriously and endows the fictional realm with endless possibilities. Consequently, she uses fiction to acquaint the public with the continuous colonization of Indian nations.

She critiques colonialism in her essays as well. She refutes the specialness of American imperialism in her essay on the Lewis and Clark odyssey and her comparative study on the Iraqi invasions and U.S.-Indian wars.⁶⁴ Moreover, she debunks the exceptionalism of American colonialism through comparing U.S-Indian and U.S-Middle Eastern history:

The Americans’ history, in my view, what is called the manifest destiny colonization of this continent, is one of the crimes of human history. And, now, it would seem that America will move on from this dark and bloody ground, to the winning of the entire globe, if what is going on in the Middle East is any measure. The deaths of thousands of Iraqis and the destruction of their cities and their civilization, their art and geography, seem to be inconsequential. Modern Americans have become the Spanish Conquistadors who burned to the ground the temples of the Incas, the Mayas, and the Aztecs, as well as the northern tribes.⁶⁵

This text claims what a number of studies have argued, namely, that American imperialism has exhibited the same destructive zeal in running its territories since the nation has claimed territorial and political power over people outside its initial boundaries.⁶⁶ Worse still,

⁶³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 5-6.

⁶⁴ Cook-Lynn, “America’s Iraq Attack and ‘Back to the Indian Wars’!!” *WSR* 11:1 (1995), 62-64; “Warriors, Still,” and “The Pitfalls of Telling Tribal Histories,” in *New Indians, Old Wars*, 65-113.

⁶⁵ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 14.

⁶⁶ See, for instance, Kaplan and Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism*; Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Gilbert M. Joseph, et al., eds., *Close Encounters of Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); John B. Judis, “Imperial Amnesia,” *Foreign Policy* 143 (July/August 2004), 50-59.

Cook-Lynn argues in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* that the American colonization of Indian nations is tainted with genocide. Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish heritage, coined the term genocide to mean an organized mass murder of communities, while Cook-Lynn laconically defines it as “the systematic killing of a people.”⁶⁷ Ward Churchill defines the same concept as “the destruction, entirely or in part, of any racial, ethnic, national, religious, cultural, linguistic, political, economic, gender, or other human group[s], however such groups may be defined by the perpetrator.”⁶⁸

Cook-Lynn devotes a substantial intellectual labor to the Indian holocaust in her entire oeuvre to prove her claim that the spilling of blood of innocent victims lurks behind the colonization of Indian nations.⁶⁹ Although this footnote lists some scholars who have addressed the same topic, in one way or another, Cook-Lynn singularly establishes a close association between colonization and genocide in the Americas to underscore the destructive propensity of the system. Cook-Lynn’s extensive examination of the link between U.S. colonization and Indian genocide translates her ideological conviction that a meaningful history of the United States must commence with the foundational act of Indian extermination. To be sure, her heavy investment in the Indian genocidal history magnifies the culture of United States imperialism. This interpretation seems credible in light of her recent redefinition of the term “genocide”: “It is also the denial of basic human rights that impedes the development of a nationalist legal, social, and

⁶⁷ Cathie Carmichael, “The Violent Destruction of Community during the ‘Century of Genocide,’” *European History Quarterly* 35:3 (2005), 397; Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 187.

⁶⁸ Ward Churchill, as quoted in Lawrence W. Gross, “Teaching American Indian Studies to Reflect American Indian Ways of Knowing and to Interrupt Cycles of Genocide,” *WSR* 20:2 (2005), 124.

⁶⁹ See, also, M. Annette Jaimes, ed., *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992); David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); George E. Thiner, *Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); Robert F. Heizer, *The Destruction of California Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993).

intellectual system that, in turn, makes it impossible for a domestic people or domestic nation to express itself collectively and historically in terms of continued self-determination and sovereignty.”⁷⁰

Furthermore, Cook-Lynn includes the trivialization of racism against Indians in the deceptive package of U.S. colonization of Indian nations: “Few pay any attention to the fact that native peoples in the Americas are among the most economically deprived and the least well educated of any of the peoples of the world, that they live as domestic nations in one of the most repressive governmental systems ever devised in a democracy.”⁷¹ While Cook-Lynn represents Indian racism as a concrete result of American imperialism, her bleak picture of the Indian genocide foregrounds this event in U.S.-Indian history. She deploys both phenomena to evidence the United States domestic imperialism. In the end, Cook-Lynn positions the United States as an imperial power and connects its treatment of Indian nations back to practices by other European colonial nations:

Although founded in the fervor of a revolution against England, one of the harsher colonial powers to enter the Americas, and its alleged tyranny, the United States incorporated the fundamental elements of the English colonial model into its discourses, laws, and policies. Historians have gone to great lengths to separate the United States from the history of colonialism, but the contributors to this issue tend to agree on one point, namely, federal Indian policy is essentially colonial policy.⁷²

Cook-Lynn definitely represents the United States as a global empire-builder. In her words, this nation has become “an efficient colonizer and determined assimilator known throughout the world for its power to persuade and conquer.”⁷³ For Cook-Lynn, then, the United States has not only morphed into a colonial power; it has zealously carried out its devastating imperial

⁷⁰ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 153.

⁷¹ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 188.

⁷² Cook-Lynn and In, “Editors’ Commentary,” 6.

⁷³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 3.

missions at home and abroad. It shares similar colonial rationales with other Western colonial powers.

II) THE CIVILIZING MISSION IDEOLOGY

In *Against Empire*, Zillah Eisenstein claims that “colonization allows the colonizers to view the world from their standpoint. From this site false universals are concocted and the colonizers’ positions of power allow this deception, and enforce the falsity as truth.”⁷⁴ I think it necessary to elaborate on the main motive from the colonizer’s perspective, in the first place. To counter the notion of colonialism as a civilizing mission, I will invoke, along the way, Cook-Lynn’s critique of colonialism’s self-proclaimed philanthropic purposes.

As discussed in chapter I, Cook-Lynn adamantly refutes the idea that America holds Indian nations for their well-being. Additionally, the previous section has demonstrated Cook-Lynn’s negative review of American colonization of Indian nations. To be sure, her scholarship disputes colonialism’s self-ascribed philanthropic motives and unveils the immoral nature of the system. In her diatribe against American Empire and cultural imperialism, Cook-Lynn brushes aside the routine arguments marshaled to justify the colonial practices and claims the destruction of indigenous civilizations and genocide of native people as the true achievements of American colonization of Indian nations. For instance, “The Lewis and Clark Story,” *Aurelia*, and *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* argue that colonialism has been, and still is, a disaster for the colonized. Cook-Lynn’s scholarship ranks her among critics who concern themselves with exposing the real, self-interested motives behind colonialism – i.e., economic, cultural, and political reasons – in order to undermine the colonial enterprise as a civilizing mission. By assessing the manifold, complex motives behind colonial expansion, these critics are shattering

⁷⁴ Zillah Eisenstein, *Against Empire* (New York: Zed Books, 2004), 28-9.

the civilizing claims of colonialism; they view the so-called colonial philanthropy simply as immoral exploitation masquerading as altruistic intervention.⁷⁵

Colonialism is incontrovertibly a civilizing mission, such is the redundant argument ferociously deployed in its defense. The metropolitan powers, “the people from the center,” routinely perceived overseas territories, “the people on the circumference,” as in dire need of the *mission civilisatrice*. The moral obligation of people from a more advanced civilization to improve “backward” people was regularly advanced to justify colonial expansion. Imperial powers reasoned that the only way in which slavery, cannibalism, infanticide, endemic tribal warfare, among others, could be suppressed and Christianity, education, medical welfare established would be to create a modern society by means of colonialism.⁷⁶ Thus, in *A Passage to India*, for instance, one of E. M. Forster’s characters, without mincing his words, repeatedly conveys the idea that Great Britain holds India for the good of India.⁷⁷ Colonialism simply presents itself as means to achieve civilization. Robert Miles and Annie Phizacklea stress this fundamental claim of the system in their account of the history of British imperialism: “The very existence of Empire was viewed [as] the outcome of the struggle between superior and inferior

⁷⁵ Cook-Lynn, “The Lewis and Clark Story,” 21-33; Aurelia, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 10-11; 79 & 127. Patrick Brantlinger, *The Rule of Darkness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Michael Adas, “Contested Hegemony: The Great War and the Afro-Asian Assault on the Civilizing Mission Ideology,” *Journal of World History* 15:1 (2004), 31-63; Pius Adesanmi, “‘Nous Les Colonisés’: Reflections on the Territorial Integrity of Oppression,” *Social Text* 22:1 (2004), 35-58; Michael Gardiner, “‘A Light to the World’: British Devolution and Colonial Vision,” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 6:2 (2004), 264-81; Achebe, *Hopes and Impediments* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1988); *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (London: Heinemann, 1975); *No longer at Ease* (London: Heinemann, 1960); *Things Fall Apart* (rprt. Oxford: Heinemann, 1996); Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, *Weep Not Child* (London: Heinemann, 1976); *Petals of Blood* (New York: Dutton, 1978).

⁷⁶ Fieldhouse, *Colonialism*, 23.

⁷⁷ E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (rprt; London: HBC, 1984), 51-52, & 120-121.

‘races,’ an outcome in which the labour of the inferior ‘races’ had been appropriated ... to ensure ‘their’ advancement towards ‘civilisation.’”⁷⁸

Colonialism and imperialism have been around since antiquity. Both concepts have been, and still are, about far more than simple domination of other people in distant lands. Some scholars persuasively demonstrate that they entail such domination, but they have also entailed idealist and “progressive” agendas for intervention in the interests of the colonized.⁷⁹ Regardless of timeframe and geographic space, instances of benevolent declarations concerning the said agendas are legion in the shared history of colonialism and imperialism. For the sake of concision, however, I focus on the British, French, and American imperialism of the last five hundred years or so to show its deployment of the civilizational discourse.

The English colonization of Ireland during the sixteenth-century offers the first body of evidence. In order to be “free and prosperous,” the Irish were coerced to become English. The English raised serious objections against the Irish habit of abusing the English system of common law and mainly against the Irish loyalty to their own system of clan kinship rather than to the English law. They vented their frustration and expressly demanded “that the Irish septs be dissolved, that the Irish be moved into town, mingled with the settlers, educated in English, in grammar and in science.” In fact, the English hoped that this assimilation program would fully transform Irish children, who would grow up to “loathe the former rudeness in which they were bred,” while their parents would, by the example of their young children,

⁷⁸ Miles and Phizacklea [*White Man’s Country* (London: Pluto, 1984), 12-13], as quoted in Dyer, *White*, 31-2.

⁷⁹ Lambert and Lester, “Geographies of Colonial Philanthropy,” 320-341; Harald Fischer-Tiné and Michael Mann, eds., *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission* (London: Anthem Press, 2004).

“perceive the foolness of their own brutish behaviour compared to theirs, for learning hath that wonderful power of itself that it can soften and temper the most stern and savage nature.”⁸⁰

The English colonization outside Europe provides similar justifications. The Viceroy of India from 1899 to 1905, Lord Curzon, spoke of colonization as a glorious inspiration, stating that the Empire must deliver to “the people on the circumference what they cannot otherwise or elsewhere enjoy; not merely justice or order, or material prosperity, but the sense of partnership in a great idea.”⁸¹ On the one hand, proponents of European colonization glowingly underscored its benefits to worldwide subjugated people; on the other, they packaged it as “civilizing mission,” or the “White man’s burden,” for home consumption.⁸²

In the same vein, remarking that raw materials “lay wasted and ungarnered” in Africa “because the natives did not know their use and value,” Frederick J. D. Lugard declared that the colonization of Africa made them available to Europeans, while the Africans received in exchange “the substitution of law and order for the method of barbarism.”⁸³ In Lugard’s vision, the colonial enterprise brought a “civilized administration” to the “heart of darkness.” In a colonialist discourse on Africa’s inglorious past – the Nigerian past, to be precise – Iris Andreski puts it this way: “The British administration not only safeguarded women from the worst tyrannies of their masters, it also enabled them to make their long journeys to farm or market without armed guard, secure from the menace of hostile neighbours.”⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Seamus Deane, *Civilians and Barbarians* (Belfast: Dorman and Sons, 1983), 5-6.

⁸¹ Betts, *Decolonization*, 7; see, also, Martin Evans, ed., *Empire and Culture: The French Experience, 1830-1940* (Houndmills, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1-2.

⁸² “The White Man’s Burden” is the title of Rudyard Kipling’s infamous poem (1899) that the English poet dedicated to the Americans as a commentary on what they must do in the newly conquered Philippines.

⁸³ Betts, *Decolonization*, 12. Lugard (1858–1945) was a colonial administrator and the governor-general of Nigeria from 1914 to 1919.

⁸⁴ Iris Andreski, *Old Wives’ Tales: Life-Stories from Ibibioland* (London: Routledge, 1970), 26.

In the same fashion, but coming from the French side, Albert Sarraut (1872 – 1962) made similar statements, an example of which is as follows: “The France that colonizes does not do so for itself: its advantage is joined with that of the world; its effort, more than for itself, must be of benefit to the colonies whose economic growth and human development it must assure.”⁸⁵

Likewise, Jules Hammond, a first-rate advocate of French imperialism, declared in 1910:

It is necessary, then, to accept as a principle and point of departure the fact that there is a hierarchy of races and civilizations, and that we belong to the superior race and civilization, still recognizing that, while superiority confers rights, it imposes strict obligations in return. The basic legitimation of conquest over native people is the conviction of our superiority, not merely our mechanical, economic, and military superiority, but our moral superiority. Our dignity rests on that quality, and it underlies our right to direct the rest of humanity.⁸⁶

These ideological postures and bold declarations generated sustained interest and convinced metropolitan citizens to support the enterprise. Regardless of the imperial nation (Great Britain, France, the United States, etc.), the civilizing character of colonialism is routinely emphasized as a major reason for colonizing “barbaric people” all over the world.⁸⁷ Indeed, from the late eighteenth-century onwards all major European powers claimed to pursue a civilizing project in their respective colonies. What was initially referred to as “improvement” and, later on, “moral and material progress,” quickly morphed into a civilizing mission. This, in turn, became the leitmotiv of imperial ideology. Grounded on the twin fundamental assumptions of the superiority of French (and Western, for that matter) culture and the perfectibility of humankind, the idea of a civilizing mission implied that indigenous people

⁸⁵ Albert Sarraut, as quoted in Betts, *Decolonization*, 12. Sarraut was the governor-general of French Indochina from 1912 to 1919 and twice Prime Minister during the Third Republic (1870 to 1940).

⁸⁶ Jules Hammond, as quoted in Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 17.

⁸⁷ Martin Dauntton and Rick Halpern, eds., *Empire and Others* (London: UCL Press, 1999); Harriet Guest, *Empire, Barbarism, and Civilisation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Agnes Murphy, *The Ideology of French Imperialism, 1817-1881* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1968).

were too backward to govern themselves and that they had to be “uplifted.”⁸⁸ The concrete results of the colonial “uplifting program” in Lugard, Hammond, and Sarraut’s assessment are economic, human, cultural, and civilizational developments of the colonized. These achievements rank high among the important benefits colonial people have reaped from colonialism.

Solidly grounded on such a superior plane, the French government boasted and projected the civilizing mission as the foremost motive for colonizing the “less developed people” around the world. Being gifted with a superior culture and civilization, the French had a moral obligation to bring the benefits of the Enlightenment to the non-European world. France, French imperial apologists claimed, was resolutely engaged in an ideological mission, the mission of the white race, which would ultimately transform barbaric continents into civilized regions. This redeeming vision fueled the spirit of French imperialism and energized its colonial endeavor.⁸⁹ “The goal of colonization,” Pierre P. Leroy-Beaulieu (1843-1916) assuredly declares, “is to place a new society in the best conditions for prosperity and progress.”⁹⁰ The long stretch leading to this erroneous view needs some clarification.

Behind the perception of the superiority of the French culture over the “less developed” cultures is the claim of waged labor and industry that were fundamental to the credo of the sacrosanct Third Republic; so much so that to refuse waged labor amounted to refusing civilization. For French colonial ideologues, then, “work only meant work for wages, whilst work in non-cash systems of rural production was defined as idling, and their non-culture a

⁸⁸ Fischer-Tiné and Mann, eds., *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission*, 4.

⁸⁹ See Agnes Murphy, *The Ideology of French Imperialism*.

⁹⁰ Leroy-Beaulieu, as quoted in Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 107. Leroy-Beaulieu was the chair of Political Economy in the Collège de France.

symptom of the inherent laziness of the native population.”⁹¹ The myth of waged labor, in part, explains the condescending attitude of the French culture vis-à-vis indigenous cultures through its routine emphasis on the “idleness” of overseas cultures.

In any case, based on this cultural logic, colonization was presented consistently as freedom from barbarism and idleness, thanks to its introduction of forced labor on a grand scale, especially in the French colonies where harsh laws stipulated that every able male had to work for a number of days on a yearly basis. The previous footnote clarifies that combating “idleness” was not an exclusive trademark of French colonialism; it was a widespread colonial program. Kathleen Pickering, for instance, reaches similar conclusions in her study of federal Indian policy and the Lakota during the 1880s. As applied to the Lakota, the federal policy aimed to dismantle their traditional economy and assimilate them into the mainstream economy through commodity agriculture and waged work. In order to transform the Lakota into “modern” individuals, the U.S. government implemented a rigorous civilization program dedicated to facilitating, finessing, and forcing the Lakota to transition from task orientation to timed labor. Besides efforts to instill a sense of private business in the Lakota mindset, attempts to bring federally imposed regimes of work and increase Lakota participation in waged work were the *locus classicus* of U.S. policy. “One solution to assimilating the Lakota into the notion of ‘timed labor,’” Pickering concludes, “was to employ Lakota people in federal agency jobs.”⁹²

As Pickering’s analysis suggests, Cook-Lynn and other scholars who concern themselves with theorizing the colonization of American Indians are extending this discourse on the

⁹¹ Martin Evans, ed., *Empire and Culture*, 14. It is important to note that natives of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are judged as lazy by the ruling colonial regime in the course of some four centuries. The prominence of this myth prompted Syed Hussein to probe its origins and functions in *The Myth of the Lazy Native* (London: Frank Cass, 1977).

⁹² Kathleen Pickering, “Decolonizing Time Regimes: Lakota Conceptions of Work, Economy, and Society,” *American Anthropologist* 106: 1 (2004), 85-97.

civilizing mission of colonialism to federal Indian policy. As I stated earlier, Cook-Lynn notes in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America* that compulsory service was forced upon the Sioux on their own treaty lands.⁹³

In light of these efforts to transform the native culture, colonialism can be seen as a relentless struggle of civilized culture against uncivilized culture, of progress against backwardness, of light against darkness. In all, a recycling of Hammond's principle of domination became the blueprint for French (and American, for that matter) cultural attitudes and sense of superiority over natives. "Our protection, you must understand, delivered millions of men, women and children from the nightmare of slavery and death," a guided tour pamphlet read in a celebratory note, and further commended colonialism for its magnanimous deeds: "Do not forget that before we came, on the African continent the stronger dominated the weaker, a woman was but a beast and a child counted for a little. [There] we found the vestiges of an old civilization with outdated beliefs ... how much work we have accomplished."⁹⁴

Similar self-celebratory stances permeate the English assessment of their culture. The English generally tended to consider their way of life superior to that of the aboriginal people they encountered and naturally expected them to adopt English ways.⁹⁵ Said has written passionately about how the English vaunted the superlative nature of their civilization in his illuminating study of Western colonialism. In the system of education designed for English colonies, he notes, "students were taught not only English literature but the inherent superiority of the English race," while the fledgling disciplines of anthropology, ethnography, law, science, and linguistics never wavered to affirm "the superlative values of white (i.e., English)

⁹³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 10-11.

⁹⁴ A 1931 literature of France's Colonial Exhibition, as quoted in Evans, ed., *Empire and Culture*, 16-17.

⁹⁵ Theodore W. Taylor, *The Bureau of Indian Affairs* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 5.

civilization.” These emerging sciences locate barbarism and primitivism outside the realm of Great Britain.⁹⁶

Authorized voices have addressed the inescapable Eurocentrism and racism that materially and discursively shape the colonial encounters between Europeans and worldwide “subject people.” Generally, then, colonizers believe the native populations they encounter in distant lands to be uncivilized. For instance, while en route to San Cristobal, Baptiste, a character in Lamming’s *Natives of My Person*, reveals his preconceived idea about San Cristobal inhabitants. He believes that “civilization” differentiates those aboard the ship from the San Cristobal natives: “Soon you’ll be seeing creatures who resemble you in every way except one. Civilization didn’t touch their skin at birth. Strange creatures.”⁹⁷ Thomas Jefferson exemplifies the pervasiveness of such views in the colonization of Indian nations. For Jefferson, the United States, in its spatial and human dimensions, appeared to be a perfect example of various stages of human society. He saw a progression of cultures that were living monuments to the development of mankind, from the most primitive savage to the enlightened gentleman-scholar:

Let a philosophic observer commence a journey from the savages of the Rocky Mountains, eastwardly towards our seacoast. These he would observe in the earliest stage of association living under no law but that of nature. He would next find those on our frontiers in the pastoral state, raising domestic animals to supply the defects of hunting. Then succeed our own semi-barbarous citizens, the pioneers in the advance of civilization and so in his progress we would meet the gradual shades of improving man until he would reach his, as yet most improved state in our seaport towns. This, in fact, is equivalent to a survey in time, of the progress of man from the infancy of creation to the present day.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 101.

⁹⁷ George Lamming, *Natives of My Person*, 42. This novel is a reconstruction of a voyage of colonization in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries. It describes how a group of European mariners set out in an attempt to reach the Isles of Black Rock, later known as San Cristobal.

⁹⁸ Jefferson, as quoted in Lester G. Moses, *The Indian Man* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 8.

Since the European invasion, the American Indian has been repeatedly hailed by terms that imply a moral judgment of culture and cultural status: uncivilized, barbarian, and savage. Moreover, the colonizers were reinforced in their belief and branded natives as innately inferior beings, because they assumed these people lacked literacy, which was the standard mark of civilization. But Jacques Derrida directs his response to that colonialist mindset, citing André Leroi-Gourhan: “Actually, the peoples said to be ‘without writing’ lack only a certain type of writing. To refuse the name of writing to this or that technique of consignment is the ‘ethnocentrism that best defines the prescientific vision of man.’”⁹⁹

An incurable ethnocentrism lies at the heart of colonialism. In the heights of imperialism, Europeans arrived at the consensus that worldwide indigenous people were in a state of pre-civilization; Europeans believed they could raise them from the lower, more bestial level to higher level. And, as is obvious from Baptiste’s remark, the colonized are associated with negative traits of character. By constructing elaborate hypothetical hierarchies of humankind, advocates of the civilizing mission ideology sought to capture the attributes that separated Western societies from those of the colonized people. Using a standard set of binary opposites, they contrast Europeans (or Americans) with the subjected “others.” Europeans were seen to be “scientific, energetic, disciplined, progressive, and punctual, while indigenous people were dismissed as superstitious, indolent, reactionary, out of control, and oblivious to time.”¹⁰⁰ The colonized were dismissed as lazy, shiftless, childlike, carefree, primitive, uncivilized, and playful people. The colonizers and their civilizations are the norms; the colonized and their cultures are anomalies.

⁹⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*; trans. Gayatri C. Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 83.

¹⁰⁰ Adas, “Contested Hegemony,” 31-32.

These blatantly essentialist oppositions made European intervention a *sine qua non* of normalcy in these doomed places and people. In Said's formulation, imperialism and colonialism are "impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people *require* and beseech domination."¹⁰¹ Little wonder that European and American occupation of others' lands began to be talked of in terms of "The White Man's Burden."¹⁰² Thus, Master Cecil, another character in *Natives of My Person* (genuinely thinking the San Cristobal tribes were in an "animal state"), launched savage attacks against them in order to "civilize" them. When greeted with a bloody resistance that resulted in his defeat at Creek of Deception, he regretted their refusal of the highest offerings of colonialism:

They had no reason to resist. With a little luck he would put the gifts of the Kingdom at their service; correct their tongues, which knew no language; introduce them to some style of living. It was lunacy to desecrate such gifts with an open insult, to resist. Nothing would change except increase of crops, which the natural vegetation now conceals.¹⁰³

A clear revelation from this quote: colonizers portray themselves as bringers of civilization. In this instance, Master Cecil's insight illustrates Fanon's statement that European colonizers consider themselves as "pioneers of civilization."¹⁰⁴ In the colonizer's view, then, the well-being of any indigenous people is possible only in direct correspondence to the degree to which their cultural integrity is destroyed, their worldview extinguished through assimilation into the ever more perfectly "advanced civilizations" of the colonizers.¹⁰⁵ Cook-Lynn extends this Indigenist discourse on the civilizing mission of colonialism to her account of U.S.-Indian history. Her Indianist narration of U.S.-Indian history shows that Indians who objected to

¹⁰¹ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 9; italics in the original.

¹⁰² Michael Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), 5.

¹⁰³ Lamming, *Natives of My Person*, 71.

¹⁰⁴ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*; trans. Charles L. Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1971), 97.

¹⁰⁵ M. Annette Jaimes, "The Stone Age Revisited: An Indigenist View of Primitivism, Industrialism and the Labor Process," *WSR* 7:2 (1991), 35.

American colonization were seen, at the very least, as hostile and mean-spirited troublemakers and, at most, as lazy, deficient, un-Christian, ignorant, cruel, and warlike individuals. In sum, they are portrayed in U.S. history as opposing civilization and its highest offerings, according to Cook-Lynn.¹⁰⁶

Simply observing the day-to-day business in a colony would suffice to reveal the pervasiveness of civilization as the core reason for colonialism, from the colonizers' standpoint. As Gordon Stewart comments, the cultural discourse of civilization was prevalent even within the context of a "down-to-earth" activity such as rubber collection in the colonial Congo, or jute manufacturing in colonial India. Here, instead of thinking about profits and dividends alone, colonizers "depicted themselves as bearers of energy, technology, industry, progress and modernity to a hitherto languid India."¹⁰⁷ In the end, imperialism and colonialism are about the civilizing endeavor whereby "the image of light versus darkness became an all-pervading metaphor, summarizing colonialism as the battle of enlightenment values against despotism and feudalism."¹⁰⁸ Achebe routinely disputes the validity of such a representation. To recall just one of his statements that I referenced in chapter III, colonizers erroneously believe that prior to their invasion, worldwide indigenous people were in "a long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them."¹⁰⁹ The idea that there was no single civilization but multiple civilizations never dawned on the colonizers; such a thought never crossed their minds.

That these indigenous communities had their own systems of order and justice counted for little. As Memmi comments, native institutions were unceremoniously dismissed through a

¹⁰⁶ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 109.

¹⁰⁷ Gordon T. Stewart, *Jute and Empire: The Calcutta Jute Wallahs and the Landscapes of Empire* (New York: St. Martin, 1998), 233.

¹⁰⁸ David Evans, "Documents against Civilization," in Martin Evans, ed., *Empire and Culture*, 72.

¹⁰⁹ Achebe, "The Novelist As Teacher," 4.

series of negations: indigenous people were not considered to be fully human, aborigines were not literate, their languages and modes of thought were felt to be inadequate, natives were not civilized, etc.¹¹⁰ Indeed, colonizers believed they were the only rational, peaceful, and logical human beings “capable of holding regular values, without suspicion;” the colonized “are none of these things.”¹¹¹ The invented image of the colonized provided cultural and moral justification for imperialism, the bottom line being the superiority of the Caucasian over the indigenous people. By basing their argumentation on the simplistic system of binary opposition, colonizers dismissed the colonized as inferior and distinguished the perfect colonizer from the imperfect colonized.

Clearly, colonial powers hailed colonialism as an essentially humanitarian impulse, an act of deliverance, the ultimate aim of which is to unshackle natives from superstition, barbarism, and ignorance. No wonder that the history of the American conquest of Indian nations glorifies progress and cheers the settlers as heroes on their way to the Promised Land, whilst it presents Indian communities as the last remaining survivors of a barbaric native culture that must make way for an advanced civilization. Patricia N. Limerick showcases this feature in her representation of the “creation myth” of American frontier history. Generation by generation, immigrants-colonizers were **chosen** to bring “civilization to displace savagery, took on a zone of wilderness, struggled until nature was mastered, and then moved on to the next zone.” Thrown on their own resources, these pioneers in civilization literally “recreated the social contract from scratch, forming simple democratic communities whose political health vitalized all of America.”¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Memmi, *Le Portrait du colonisé*, 105.

¹¹¹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Viking Books, 1978), 49.

¹¹² Patricia N. Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1988), 322.

Along with Cook-Lynn, M. Annette Jaimes is among native scholars who dispute such a rendering of US-Indian history. Jaimes debunks this self-consoling “creation myth” by highlighting continuity, not a *tabula rasa*, in her account of American settlement:

Even though the European settlers imposed new architectural styles and new ideas of urban planning on America, they usually built over existing Indian settlements rather than clearing out new areas of settlement. Subsequent generations of Americans usually forgot that their towns and cities had been founded by Indians. Myths arose about how the colonists literally carved their settlements out of the uninhabited forest. In nearly every case the European colonists built a city that eventually stretched to hundreds and even thousands of times the size and population of the original Indian settlement, but nevertheless they built on top of a previous settlement rather than starting a new one.¹¹³

Cook-Lynn notes that this action repeated itself sequentially in many colonized places. In Mexico, for instance, the invaders built Christian cathedrals on top of ancient indigenous temples and changed the physical traits of Olmec, Mayan, Mixtec, Toltec, Zapotec, and Aztec civilizations. For Cook-Lynn, this colonial practice obliterates native cultures that had predated the colonizers by thousands of years.¹¹⁴ Moreover, through her comparative analysis of Indian and Iraqi invasions, Cook-Lynn uproots imperialism’s claim of civilizing the uncivilized, arguing that the system destroys the cultures of the colonized, instead:

The people in the Middle East who have been taken over by the United States in a recent war are not uncivilized, and neither were the indigenous peoples of North America. They are not savage, and neither were the indigenous peoples of America. Iraqis are not without god, language, or culture. Neither were the peoples of the Americas. Yet they have been characterized as that by Western minds... Iraq is not a backward country. It is a Muslim country with thousands of years of history, culture, and civilization that has been the pride of the Arab world.¹¹⁵

In my view, colonialism and imperialism are nothing more than expressions of the colonizer’s misbegotten superiority complex, beginning with his positioning of Europe, in the peculiar geography of imperialism, as the center of world affairs. The alleged superiority

¹¹³ Jaimes, “The Stone Age Revisited,” 40.

¹¹⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 126-7.

¹¹⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 209-10.

complex of the colonizer is nowhere better theorized than in the work of an Italian psychologist, Dominique O. Mannoni, whose research primarily targets the effect of colonization on the psychology of the colonizer and the colonized:

The colonizers of the heroic age – the era of colonial expansion – were fully convinced of the superiority of the civilization they represented. Their strength came from their knowledge that, though they represented this civilization, they did not embody it. They did not set themselves up as models; they offered to others their own ideals, something greater than they. But the fact that they possessed superior power persuaded the natives of the overriding need to imitate and, like schoolchildren, to obey.¹¹⁶

The role of ideology cannot be underestimated in this complex business of colonizer-colonized relations. Ideology functions in support of economic and political institutions to maintain the relation of domination and exploitation between those subjects positioned as colonized and colonizer. Every society which has existed for any length of time has some interpretation of its own way of life. As Louis Althusser argues in “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” his most influential essay, “Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.”¹¹⁷ Whether ideology refers to all organized forms of social thinking, or whether it means the concepts, languages, categories, imagery of thought, and the systems of representation that individuals deploy to render intelligible the way society works, the concept has a powerful role in shaping people’s vision of their world.¹¹⁸ A sum of these mental frameworks, ideology comprises beliefs and concepts that explain complex social structures in order to simplify and direct socio-political choices facing any society.

¹¹⁶ Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonialism*; trans. Pamela Powesland (New York: Praeger, 1964), 32.

¹¹⁷ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*; trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 162.

¹¹⁸ Stuart Hall, “The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees,” in David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen, eds., *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1996), 26; and Hall, “Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2:2 (1985), 93.

Consequently, it provides justifications for social relations and is both a reinforcing and legitimating mechanism of control.¹¹⁹

The self-aggrandizing and civilizing mission ideologies that accompany colonialism/imperialism fall into the myths of imperialism.¹²⁰ Catherine Hall entertains the notion that the self-assigned task of the colonizer was to raise the “savage creatures” to a higher state of civilization, educate them, and provide for them.¹²¹ Indeed, colonialism sees itself exceeding expectation everywhere with its extraordinary deeds, causing Margaret Atwood’s comment: “The Indians in Canada did not have the wheel or telephones, and ate the hearts of their enemies in the heathenish belief that it would give them courage. The British Empire changed all that. It brought in electric lights.”¹²² As Jenny Sharpe comments, these vignettes narrate the story of the civilizing mission and present the colonizing culture as “an emissary of light.”¹²³ In the final analysis, the colonizer’s self-portrait as a bringer of progress and modernity to the subject people is best read as a powerful tool of self-legitimation. While colonizers exalted the colonial enterprise as “a philanthropic ‘civilizing mission’ motivated by a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease and tyranny,” colonialism is actually “a gigantic act of pillage whereby whole continents were bled of their human and material resources.”¹²⁴ To be sure, these propagandistic declarations only underscore the deception of the system.

¹¹⁹ Eric Carlton, *Ideology and Social Order* (London: Routledge, 1977), 21-24.

¹²⁰ See: Adas, “Contested Hegemony,” 31-63; Adesanmi, “‘Nous Les Colonisés,’” 35-58; Gardiner, “‘A Light to the World,’” 264-81.

¹²¹ Catherine Hall, “Histories, Empires, and the Post-Colonial Moment,” in Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti, eds., *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 67.

¹²² Margaret Atwood, *Cat’s Eye* [Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, (1988), 79], as quoted in Linda Hutcheon, “Circling the Downspout of Empire: Post-Colonialism and Postmodernism,” in Bill Ashcroft et al., eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 1st ed., 157-158.

¹²³ Jenny Sharpe, “Figures of Colonial Resistance,” in Ashcroft et al. eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 1st ed., 99-100.

¹²⁴ Robert Stam and Louise Spence, “Colonialism, Racism and Representation,” in Ashcroft et al. eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*; 2nd ed., 110.

As it appears throughout this discussion, the trope of savagism is abundantly used to justify colonialism. The concept of the savage was imagined and applied to all non-European people in general, and to the people of the Americas in particular. The cultural historian Hayden V. White traces its origin to the European tradition of the “Wild Man” and “Wild Woman.” White writes: “But to speak of a Wild Man was to speak of a man with the soul of an animal, a man so degraded that he could not be saved even by God’s grace itself.”¹²⁵ Savage people are solitary hunters and superstitious pagans who would not accept the highest offerings of civilization. A fifteenth-century philosophical invention based on second-hand information collected from the diaries of missionaries and explorers influenced by the works of Montaigne, Locke, and Rousseau, the construct of savagism was employed as an “ideological justification for colonial appropriation of non-European territories, particularly in the Americas.”¹²⁶

Additionally, European imperial proponents heavily relied on renaissance ideologies to construct the theory of the “Great Chain of Being,” a convenient system in which everything in the universe follows a particular order: God at the top; primitive and savage indigenous people at the bottom.¹²⁷ Allied together, both constructs made up a powerful ideological arsenal for the conquest and subjugation of those positioned at the bottom.

The construct of savagism has served colonial purposes, especially in the conquest of Indian nations. My discussion of stereotyping in chapter III provides sufficient evidence showing the degree to which both American colonists and scholars have employed this construct in their representation of Indians. Additionally, in *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*, Cook-Lynn charges that Bishop William H. Hare called American Indians the most “reckless and wild” of all

¹²⁵ Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 164.

¹²⁶ Eisenstein, *Against Empire*, 79-80.

¹²⁷ Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 47; Aldama, *Disrupting Savagism*, 11.

humankind and popularized “the stereotypes of Indian childlikeness, Indian savagery, and Indian inferiority.”¹²⁸ Likewise, Richard H. Pratt, a committed advocate of Indian assimilation, once said: “It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows to possess a savage language, superstition, and life. We, left in the surroundings of civilization, grow to possess a civilized language and habit.”¹²⁹ Besides using derogatory names and terming Indian religions as uncivilized, barbaric, and pagan, colonialist texts hailed American Indians as savage people, symbolizing a challenge to be conquered, like the frontier itself. Above all, the realm of painting provides indisputable evidence supporting the pervasiveness of Indian savagery. In contrast to the paintings of European women, who were fully clothed, the portraits of colonial America displayed unclothed Indian women as symbols of savage sexuality in the wilderness. Summarily, American scholarship is plentiful with the construct of savagism. As Mihesuah notes, anti-Indian authors have “used selected data to ‘prove’ that Natives were savage [and] uncivilized heathens. Throughout American history, white writers, politicians, and military men have authored biased works that describe Natives as being among the lowest forms of life.”¹³⁰ In light of this popular savagery imagery, the church and school took upon themselves to facilitate their transition from savagery to civilization, by ridding Indians of their cultures.

According to the theory of cultural evolution, all cultures evolve through similar processes, from savagery to barbarism to civilization, with Western Europe being the pinnacle of

¹²⁸ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can't Read Wallace Stegner*, 53. Hare (1838–1909) was a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church; he was called “the Apostle of the West” for his work in the rural Dakotas.

¹²⁹ R. H. Pratt, as quoted by Desmond King, “Making Americans: Immigration Meets Race,” in Gary Gerstle and John Mollenkopf, eds., *E Pluribus Unum?: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation* (New York: Sage, 2001), 156.

¹³⁰ Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women*, 25.

civilization.¹³¹ Savage and barbarous people were understood to be “miserably deficient;” so much so that they were incapable of generalizing their ideas.¹³² If the history of mankind is one of progress from hunting to farming, it follows that by polarizing the “uncivilized” nature of the nomadic hunters against the “civilized” farmers of the land, colonialist discourse has sought to elevate the colonizers to a status of privilege by highlighting their moral and cultural superiority over those of natives. As Said demonstrates elsewhere, the order of subordination between the Orient/uncivilized and the West/civilized supported “a *positional* superiority” of the latter over the former.¹³³

Articulated in stark Manichean terms, these basic philosophical and cultural considerations inherent in the colonialist worldview were adequate grounds for denying Native Americans their rightful place in the cultural geography in order for colonialism to go forward. This colonialist discourse of the “discovery period,” as Cook-Lynn argues, mandates the subjugation of Indian nations and shapes current U.S.- Indian relations:

Columbus called the natives of this continent simple and good, Cortez said they were savage and cruel (he was military, after all), priests said they were unknown to god, Christians said they were ignorant and deficient, and the military that faced them for a hundred years said they were not human. These descriptions have pervaded all areas of American life—school, church, government, and community.¹³⁴

III) THE UNITED STATES AS A COLONIZING NATION

As the previous sections have demonstrated, colonialism involves not only territorial expansion and exploitation of people and land for profit but also a discourse that presents the

¹³¹ Roy H. Pearce, *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953).

¹³² Guest, *Empire, Barbarism, and Civilisation*, 40.

¹³³ Said, *Orientalism*, 7; italics in the original.

¹³⁴ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 209.

enterprise as morally upright, altruistic, and benevolent. Be it outside or inside the United States, American colonialism has heavily relied on the same civilizational discourse, as Cook-Lynn concurs with other scholars.¹³⁵

The behavior of the United States since 2001 has revived debates about its status as a colonial power; it has critics wondering whether the new equalizer of Europe is seeking to expand its imperial territories. In an unprecedented military adventure, the United States (under NATO) has invaded Afghanistan and Iraq and put in place an impressive new network of military bases in strategically sensitive zones stretching from the Arabian Gulf to South Asia, besides its covert intelligence operations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The United States, the only lion in the forest has been acting alone in search of monsters to destroy, in the course of its current offensive against a new global totalitarian threat made apparent by the attacks of 11 September 2001.

Amy Kaplan brings up some questions about the imperial status of the United States in regard to its post-9/11 (re)actions. Kaplan wonders whether the United States should be classified as imperial or hegemonic, whether it is self-interested or benevolent, whether the American Empire most closely resembles the British Empire or the Roman, and whether it is in its decline or in ascendancy.¹³⁶ Market-expansionism historians and mainstream diplomatic scholars previously discussed in the economic interpretation of American imperialism argue that the United States has actually morphed into an imperial power: “Anyone who studies American history in a serious way quickly realizes that the United States has a record of sustained expansion beyond the limits that it occupied at any given moment in time,” Williams comments,

¹³⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 208-210; Richard J. Barnet, *Roots of War* (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 20-1; Julian Go, “‘Racism’ and Colonialism: Meanings of Difference and Ruling Practices in America’s Pacific Empire,” *Qualitative Sociology* 27:1 (2004), 35-58.

¹³⁶ Amy Kaplan, “Violent Belongings and the Question of Empire Today,” *American Quarterly* 56:1 (2004), 2.

arguing that “expansion,” the major theme of the nation’s history, has been slighted. Instead of probing expansion, he contends, the vast majority of historians, along with other academics and nonacademic intellectuals, emphasized the term **frontier**, though his own discussion of United States expansionism overlooks the colonization of Indian nations.¹³⁷

This substitution of **frontier** for **expansion** might have led some scholars to misread the imperial status of the United States, or show ambivalence concerning its colonial capability; most have neglected the colonization of Indian nations, the major concern of Cook-Lynn’s scholarship. William A. Williams, Walter LaFeber, Thomas J. McCormick, Robert L. Beisner, Richard V. Alstyne, and Richard J. Barnet, among others, have interpreted American diplomacy as colonialist since the 1960s. They have argued that expansion is simply a polite word for empire. But most American scholars have made an **economical use** of the term imperialism in reference to United States imperial activities ever since, despite Beisner’s effort to dispel its distortions. He notes, for instance, that the annexation of Puerto Rico was not seen as “imperialistic,” since the native population did not resist the takeover; nor was the conquest of the Philippines “imperialistic,” because the local populace did resist but were treated benevolently and finally let go. Beisner adds that most members of the new “economic school” contribute to the confusion, going to great lengths “to distinguish among varying *isms*, generally arguing that most Americans were not colonialists, who wanted to govern other peoples, but rather ‘expansionists,’ ‘open door expansionists,’ ‘informal imperialists,’ or ‘anticolonial imperialists.’”¹³⁸ The economical use of imperialism by scholars thereafter make me wonder about the impact Williams and other mainstream diplomatic

¹³⁷ William A. Williams, *Roots of the Modern American Empire*, xii.

¹³⁸ Beisner, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900*, 26-7; italics in the original.

scholars have had on Americanists. Worse, the colonization of Indian nations has often been taken for granted and slighted.

U.S. domestic imperialism generally receives scant attention in mainstream scholarship. While market-expansionism academics and diplomatic scholars advance the economic impetus of American imperialism, they overlook the colonization of Indian nations. They argue that the rapid agricultural and industrial transformation coerced the nation to adopt a foreign policy that eventually helped lay the foundation of the American empire, but they neglect the nation's domestic imperialism. Although they demonstrate that United States political economy promoted American empire, they fail to engage the American internal colonization of Indian nations.

Along those lines, some American scholars position the United States as an imperial power, following the robust rhetoric of empire of the Bush administration. After scrutinizing America's imperial behavior outside the United States, they present the nation as a quasi-territorial global empire, whose nodes of control are the military bases stationed in many semi-sovereign states throughout the world. In particular, Philip S. Golub, a contributing editor of *Le Monde Diplomatique* who teaches international relations and political economy at the Université Paris 8 and at the American University of Paris, affirms that the United States is currently in "the business of bringing down governments, leaving in place imperial garrisons." He further charges that the United States has been flexing its war muscle to demonstrate that its Empire cannot be challenged with impunity. Moreover, after reviewing the White House's 2002 *National Security Strategy* and delving into the views expressed by leading ideologues of American Empire, Golub states that the main objective of the American Republic's power is to deter the emergence of powerful, hostile challengers to its Empire.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Philip S. Golub, "Imperial Politics, Imperial Will and the Crisis of US Hegemony," *Review of International Political Economy* 11:4 (2004), 763-786.

As can be inferred from the above paragraph, American scholars who confront American imperialism **essentially** focus on its outside invasions. They disclaim imperialism as the driving force behind American invasions of Indian nations, if they consider U.S. domestic colonialism at all. Clearly, through the lenses of most American scholars, the socio-political situation of Indian nations, the **ongoing** colonization of Indian tribes, falls outside the realm of imperialism.

It is important to historicize American imperialism, because the United States' vision of itself, as Cook-Lynn contends in her most recent book, is embedded in a history of imperialism.¹⁴⁰

There are parallels between current military deployments of the United States and its expansionist euphoria of the late 1890s. The first significant imperial actions of the United States outside continental America, however, dated back to 1846, when it began sending troops into Mexico.¹⁴¹ This was later followed by the establishment of American colonies in Cuba, Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, an outcome of the 1898 Spanish-American war. Additionally, American strategic bases in Hawaii, Wake Island, and its commercial expansion in China with the Open Door policy catapulted the United States into the class of nations governing overseas colonial territories and definitely changed its status to that of a formal colonial empire.¹⁴² Not only do critics link this expansionist period to its post-9/11 global military invasions but they also charge that the current U.S. imperial drive compels a reconfiguration of world politics.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 180.

¹⁴¹ According to Richard W. Van Alstyne, the United States undertook its first imperial activities in 1812, when it wanted to conquer Canada, then a British colony. See his essay, "The American Empire Makes Its Bow on the World Stage, 1803-1845," in William A. Williams, ed., *From Colony to Empire*, particularly pp. 62-63.

¹⁴² Crapol and Schonberger, "The Shift to Global Expansion, 1865-1900," in William Appleman Williams ed., *From Colony to Empire*, 135-202; and Go, "American Colonial Empire," 18.

¹⁴³ Golub, "Imperial Politics," 763; Judis, "Imperial Amnesia," 52.

In light of the foregoing discussion, Robert Jervis's identification of the Bush doctrine as the establishment of American Empire breaks no new ground, because scholars have long recognized the thrust of expansionism as a continuous impulse in American history, tracing it back to the 1890s, when the nation's industrial and financial community definitely adopted expansionist ideology.¹⁴⁴ However, discussions of United States expansionism are often confined to American overseas possessions, though a meaningful history of American imperialism must commence with its colonization of tribal nations located inside the United States.

Cook-Lynn examines United States domestic thrust of expansionism. First, she contends that American imperialistic history premises that colonists had the right to colonize Indian nations. Second, Cook-Lynn identifies four basic elements that, in her theory, constitute the cornerstones of the United States culture of imperialism; she further links U.S. global imperialism to these fundamentals:

[...] first, that the journey into the undiscovered and unknown parts of the globe is a good and inevitable thing; second, that white America has the duty and obligation to bring its ideas and values into the undiscovered and unknown parts of the world; third, that these ideas and values will be welcomed because they are good; and fourth, that religiosity is to be the guiding force not only to be shared by others, but also to be mandated.¹⁴⁵

Cook-Lynn's scholarship and other writings underscore imperial propensity as a pattern of United States culture. I deploy some elements in the next eight paragraphs to substantiate her theory and to support an imperial view of the United States.

First, as I previously showed, market-expansionism scholars and the mainstream among diplomatic historians argue that American leaders were concerned with empire building as soon as national independence became a reality. They regard the outburst of the 1890s as the

¹⁴⁴ Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* 118:3 (2003), 365-388; and William A. Williams, ed., *From Colony to Empire*, 4.

¹⁴⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 109-10.

beginning of a long career of American imperialism. The United States, a nation which sees itself as omnipotent and invincible as its technological achievements seem to imply, became an empire by any historical definition of the term. From 1776 to the outbreak of World War II, the nation increased its dominion from 400,000 square miles to 3,738,393 square miles, roughly expanding to overseas possessions and territories of 711,604 square miles and a continental domain of 3,026,789 square miles.¹⁴⁶ Though its continental domain is greater than its overseas possessions according to these figures, most mainstream historians have minimized its domestic imperialism, thereby downplaying U.S. histories of continental expansion, conquest, conflict, and resistance which have shaped United States cultures and the cultures of those it has dominated internally.¹⁴⁷

Second, the United States remains “the number one nation.” Besides assuming total control of strategic trust territories and other bases, the nation began its ascendancy to world hegemony in the 1940s; it definitely became “the number one nation” in the 1990s. Since then, advocates of U.S. *imperium* have seen the nation through imperial lenses: the Roman Empire becomes their role model and Victorian Britain their inspiration. Charles Krauthammer, a neoconservative columnist, asserts that “America bestrides the world like a colossus. Not since Rome destroyed Carthage has a great power risen to the heights we have.” Mortimer Zuckerman, another conservative commentator, cheers the U.S. newfound reign: “France had the seventeenth-century, Britain the nineteenth, and America the twentieth. It will also have the twenty-first.” Some prominent politicians of the nation share these views. For example, Jesse Helms, the late Republican Senator from North Carolina and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 1995 to 2001 declared in 1996: “We remain uniquely positioned at

¹⁴⁶ Barnett, *Roots of War*, 17.

¹⁴⁷ Amy Kaplan, “‘Left Alone with America’: The Absence of Empire in American Culture,” in Kaplan and Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, 4.

the center and that is where we must stay... by being the standard-bearer of moral, political and military might and right, an example to which all others aspire.”¹⁴⁸

Third, the United States uses commodities to Americanize others. In addition to its ubiquitous imperialism that has been understood solely in terms of territorial expansion, some scholars have begun telling a complementary story of American imperialism which entails the use of commodities for civilizing purposes. Matthew F. Jacobson and Mona Domosh’s cultural analysis of U.S. economic imperialism suggests the representational differences between civilizing through colonization and civilizing through the sale of goods. American international companies, for that matter, have deployed a civilizational discourse to teach non-whites some level of industrial sophistication.¹⁴⁹

Fourth, U.S. economic hegemony constitutes another element to support its imperial status. Since imperialism has morphed into economic influence lately, the U.S. dollar has become a key node in the nation’s consolidation of its imperial status. The economy of the capitalist world being tied to the U.S. currency, the United States has creatively used its monetary might and other techniques of control to effectively dominate the globe, catapulting the nation into the world hegemon. By definition, hegemony predominates over the global economy to the point that the rest of the world depends on its growth; it sets the so-called universal rules

¹⁴⁸ All these views are available in Golub, “Imperial Politics,” 773-774. Charles Krauthammer is the Pulitzer Prize-winning syndicated columnist and a political commentator for *The Washington Post* and *Fox News*. Mortimer Zuckerman is a commentator for *U.S. News & World Report* and the *New York Daily News*.

¹⁴⁹ Mona Domosh, “Selling Civilization: Toward a Cultural Analysis of America’s Economic Empire in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers*, 29 (2004), 453-467; Matthew F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876–1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000).

that apply to everyone equally, but which match its own interests.¹⁵⁰ To be sure, U.S. imperialism, which initially depended on its economic expansionism, is currently tied to an emerging global economy structured around the logic of corporate capitalism under American pupilage.

Fifth, the cultural imperialism of the United States shines over the planet. The nation increases its imperial influence through export of its movies, magazines, television programs, and educational models. As one scholar accurately notes, the commodification of American culture “colonizes the leisure time of people worldwide.”¹⁵¹

Last but not the least, an imperial creed, the standard of measurement of an empire, complements this list of elements supporting an imperial view of the United States. U.S. expansionists have regularly supplied the nation with the ideological justification behind an empire, i.e., an imperial creed. The American imperial creed has shifted from “manifest destiny” to “the American century” to “world responsibility.” Its constant metamorphosis underscores the United States resolve to carry out its global imperial role amid changing circumstances. Barnett elaborates on its latest creed, that of “world responsibility,” which dated back to World War II:

The imperial creed rests on a theory of law-making. The goal of U.S. foreign policy is to bring about a world increasingly subject to the rule of law. But it is the United States which must “organize the peace.” The United States imposes the “international interest” by setting the ground rules for economic development and military deployment across the planet. Thus the United States sets rules for Soviet behavior in Cuba, Brazilian behavior in Brazil, Vietnamese behavior in Vietnam. Cold War policy is expressed by a series of directives on such extraterritorial matters as whether Britain may trade with Cuba or the government of British Guiana may have a Marxist dentist to run it. Cicero’s definition of the early Roman Empire was remarkably similar. ... Today America’s self-appointed writ runs throughout the world, including the Soviet Union and China, over whose territory the U.S. government has asserted the right to

¹⁵⁰ Terry Boswell, “American World Empire or Declining Hegemony,” *Journal of World Systems Research* 10:2 (2004), 517-24; Thomas McCormick’s introduction to “Crisis, Commitment, and Counterrevolution,” in Williams et al, eds., *America in Vietnam*, 46.

¹⁵¹ Robert W. Rydell, as quoted in Rob Kroes, “American Empire and Cultural Imperialism,” *Diplomatic History* 23:3 (1999), 463.

fly military aircraft. The United States, uniquely blessed with surpassing riches and an exceptional history, stands above the international system, not within it. Supreme among nations, she stands ready to be the bearer of the Law.¹⁵²

In the same vein, the U.S. project to install anti-missiles in some republics of the former Soviet Union constitutes an additional proof of U.S. imperial capabilities, as is its robust rhetoric during the recent Russian military attack on Georgia.¹⁵³

In sum, U.S. imperial creed, territorial expansion, economic leverage, cultural hegemony, advanced technology, diplomatic maneuvering, and military might account for its imperialism and reinforce its status as an empire. Empire is definitely embedded in U.S. culture and shapes Americans' perception of world affairs.

The above elements support an imperial view of the United States, but the nation does not understand itself as an empire. In addition to neglecting its domestic imperialism, the United States casts itself as a “caregiver” to the world when feeding its colonial craving. It maintains a colonial agenda under the banner of bringing justice to bear upon injustice throughout the globe and spins an image of public goods provider to rationalize its involvements in extraterritorial matters.

The United States must use its power to “promote education, and advance stable and just government,” William J. Bryan, Woodrow Wilson’s first Secretary of State agreed with the President, who defined United States mission as the obligation to spread its institutions and principles to the rest of the world.¹⁵⁴ Henry Kissinger provided another illustration when he reportedly made this declaration, following the military overthrow (on 9/11/1973) of

¹⁵² Barnett, *Roots of War*, 21.

¹⁵³ On 20 August 2008, Poland signed a missile defense shield agreement allowing the United States to install a missile defense shield in Poland. The Russian invasion of Georgia happened from 7-26 August 2008.

¹⁵⁴ William A. Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976*, 144.

Salvador Allende, a democratically elected president of Chile: “I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people.”¹⁵⁵ Clearly, U.S. imperial projects are oftentimes hidden in a discourse of rescue. Alongside William A. Williams, Barnet and Said, Cook-Lynn bluntly equates this attitude with America’s cocksureness. Moreover, she attributes the domineering behavior of the United States to its imperial mentality, the driving force behind its global interventions.¹⁵⁶ These interventions, which particularly target Central and South American countries, range from political regime change to outright war.¹⁵⁷

For colonial purposes, the United States has intervened in the world with the regularity of a conveyor belt. The resentment voiced by American foes and allies over its decision to police the world *in solo* constitutes overwhelming evidence of its thrust of imperialism. U.S. military-technological might breeds anti-Americanism because the United States flaunts power and ignores all restraints, which is indicative of its imperial mentality.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, Barnet locates imperialism at the heart of U.S. interventions and reveals that at least one American military offensive had occurred in the Third World every year between 1945 and 1971. This trend has grown exponentially and peaked during the 1991 Gulf War, when 650,000 troops were deployed to fight the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a U.S. ally.

It is fair to advance that Cook-Lynn’s initial understanding of imperialism comes primarily from her experience of the Sioux colonization. Affected by American imperialism at home, Cook-Lynn positions the United States as an internal colonizing power: “Indian societies

¹⁵⁵ As quoted in Ariel Dorfman, *The Empire’s Old Clothes* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 8.

¹⁵⁶ Cook-Lynn, “America’s Iraq Attack and ‘Back to the Indian Wars’!,” 62-64 and “Warriors, Still,” in *New Indians, Old Wars*, 65-86.

¹⁵⁷ William A. Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976*, 144; Barnet, *Roots of War*, 4-24; Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 287.

¹⁵⁸ Eisenstein, *Against Empire*, 33; Golub, “Imperial Politics,” 763-786; Go, “American Colonial Empire,” 18-23; and Judis, “Imperial Amnesia,” 50-59.

are the most strictly colonized enclaves in this country or in many other democratic societies. Law has said that enforced colonization of Indians is just. Thus, the legacy of colonization is everywhere in Indian law and history.”¹⁵⁹ I have demonstrated Cook-Lynn’s interpretation of Indian racism. But foregrounding Indian racism serves her as a stepping stone to staking a fundamental claim, namely, that the colonization of Indian nations is infused with anti-Indianism. Consequently, anti-Indianism remains the central feature of Indian colonization in her scholarship:

The first thing we must agree on is that empire-building and the hating of indigenous peoples have gone hand-in-hand in the making of America. Why would Thomas Jefferson have talked about “Indian Removal” long before the “removal” and “dispossession” of Indians from their homelands really happened, if he had thought Indians had a moral or legal right to be there? Or Frederick Jackson Turner of “savagery” in a thesis that has become the basis for methodology and theory concerning the settling of the West and the ridding of the continent of Indian nations?¹⁶⁰

These rhetorical questions relating to Indian land and genocide trademark her unique critique of American colonization of Indian nations. Scrutiny of the Indian genocide and land dispossession distinguishes Cook-Lynn from other anti-colonial critics. And, since I have already discussed her take on the Indian genocide and elaborate on her view on Indian land shortly before concluding this chapter, it is enough to underscore that these fundamental features of the system fuel her activist demand that native intellectuals stand up to U.S. colonialism in liberating Indian nations. Further, she locates the will to win the entire globe as the dominant feature of American culture and accuses the United States of doing as it pleases both inside and outside its boundaries.¹⁶¹ Cook-Lynn expands on this charge in a couple of essays on Iraqi invasions and

¹⁵⁹ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 25.

¹⁶⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 53-4.

¹⁶¹ See Cook-Lynn’s review essay on Bordewich’s *Killing the White Man’s Indian*, *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 229.

solidly connects the recent one to United States early colonial ventures tainted with an Americanization ideology.¹⁶² Cook-Lynn's scholarship presents a full picture of United States imperialism, because it addresses both U.S. domestic and outside invasions.

The U. S. colonization – both inside and outside the United States – remains the overriding theme of Cook-Lynn's intellectual production. By claiming that America continues to subjugate lands, animals, plants, and people in the name of colonization, Cook-Lynn's scholarship represents the United States as a colonizing nation, both at home and abroad. The United States remains, in her view, the world's last remaining colonial power that continues to dominate territories without the consent of the indigenous inhabitants.¹⁶³ And, as I claim, most U.S. scholars neglect U.S. domestic colonialism. Among others, Frieda Knobloch's *The Culture of Wilderness: Agriculture as Colonization in the American West* is an exception which argues that agriculture was a colonizing force in the settling of the American West. A large number of American scholars rather focus on its overseas empire. The next paragraph provides some evidence based on recent works by Laura Briggs, Donald E. Pease, Amy Kaplan, and Philip S. Golub.

Laura Briggs's *Reproducing Empire* discusses the constitution of American Empire in Puerto Rico. Though Pease and Kaplan's edited book, *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, represents a major paradigm shift in American studies for underscoring the denial of empire at the heart of American culture, its overriding emphasis is rather on the dialectical relationship between American cultures and international relations. This study illuminates U.S. imperial deeds in a context of the global dynamics of empire-building. Likewise, Amy Kaplan's *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* explores the political and economic histories of

¹⁶² See her *Notebooks*, 14; and "Warriors, Still," 65-86.

¹⁶³ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 87-113.

American imperialism. Kaplan leads the way in integrating imperialism into the cultural history of the United States. While she writes the nation into the transnational history of empire, her integrating the “domestic” with the “foreign” in American history is terse on the colonization of Indian nations, in my judgment. Finally, Golub’s recent book applies historical and sociological analysis to make sense of the post-Cold War imperial behavior by the United States.¹⁶⁴ *Power, Profit and Prestige: A History of American Imperial Expansion* argues that an embedded culture of imperialism has shaped American foreign policy. Definitely, as Richard V. Alstyne commented decades ago, the U.S. experience was from the very beginning grounded on the idea of “an *imperium* – a dominion, state or sovereignty that would expand in population and territory, and increase in strength and power.”¹⁶⁵ Again, despite Alstyne’s serious conclusion regarding American imperialism, most mainstream historians have minimized U.S. domestic imperialism. According to Cook-Lynn, the neglect of Indian colonization makes U.S. internal imperialism a virtuous thing.¹⁶⁶ In her view, this practice is as devastating to Indian nations, as is John L. O’Sullivan’s “manifest destiny” doctrine.

As William A. Williams and others have argued, the United States has relied on Providence to carry out its domestic and overseas imperialism. O’Sullivan initially used the phrase “manifest destiny” to advocate U.S. annexation of Texas, in July 1845. In an editorial in *The Democratic Review*, O’Sullivan denounced foreign principalities that were allegedly interfering with U. S. territorial expansion, because they were “checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.” Additionally, in December 1845, he wrote another editorial in

¹⁶⁴ Philip S. Golub, *Power, Profit and Prestige: A History of American Imperial Expansion* (New York: Pluto Press, 2010).

¹⁶⁵ R. W. Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 1.

¹⁶⁶ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 186-7.

the *New York Morning News* about Oregon. O'Sullivan portrayed the United States as a unique political society glowing in the white light of manifest destiny, claiming that God had given Oregon to the United States to further develop "the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government" entrusted to Americans. This evocation of manifest destiny sanctions U.S. expansion over the continent as a God-given right.¹⁶⁷ O'Sullivan's "magical incantation," as William A. Williams claims, spoke for all the millions caught up in a mission to extend American civilization.¹⁶⁸

Taking issue with this construct, Cook-Lynn argues that U.S. domestic expansionism fomented an ideology of racial superiority and entitlement to land which called for driving out Indians to extend the boundaries of a "chosen nation" and satisfy land-hungry populations. In her view, the manifest destiny doctrine was an effective colonizing weapon; it targeted Indian nations that stood in the way of American conquest and ultimately took away their legal, cultural, economic, and political rights. Cook-Lynn showcases the inherent sovereignty of pre-colonial Indian nations to substantiate her claim. Indian nations had known governments of varying sophistication and complexity prior to their invasion. They were sovereign and depended on no other political power to legitimate their acts of government. European powers interacted with these nations through official government-to-government channels to legitimate their transactions. Moreover, at its inception, the United States honored Indian nations and negotiated additional treaties of peace and friendship with them for its survival.¹⁶⁹

The ultimate occupation of the continent shows that the evocation of manifest destiny transcends Texas and Oregon. The nineteenth-century marked the beginning of U.S. expansion

¹⁶⁷ See Manifest Destiny at http://lawlib.lclark.edu/blog/native_america/?p=20 (consulted on 2/6/2007).

¹⁶⁸ William A. Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976*, 97; see, also, Robert L. Beisner, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865-1900*, 76-77.

¹⁶⁹ Cook-Lynn, "The Lewis and Clark Story," 21-33; Cook-Lynn and James R. In, "Editors' Commentary," 5-10; see, also, Deloria and Lytle, *The Nations Within*.

of its national borders from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. Political scientist Albert Weinberg notes that by the decade of the 1840s, the notion of continental expansion and the concept of manifest destiny had become the dominant ideological constructs.¹⁷⁰ Thus, American domestic imperialism was contested in the nineteenth-century. Anti-imperialists attacked President Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory (1803) as imperial. Evangelical Christians organized mass protests against the Cherokee removal, when Georgia relied on a Supreme Court decision and expelled them from their indigenous land, despite their treaty rights to it.¹⁷¹ Robert L. Beisner's *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900* focuses on the anti-imperialist movement in the 1890s, while William A. Williams's *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976* sheds some light on the anti-imperialist fight against the extension of the continental empire into Hawaii, Cuba, the Philippines, and China.¹⁷² Former Presidents Grover Cleveland (1885–1889) and Benjamin Harrison (1889–1893) were anti-imperialists. Cleveland opposed and vetoed the annexation of Hawaii after planters engineered a coup deposing the monarchy. The movement gained momentum in the last decade of the century and led to creation of the American Anti-Imperialist League in 1898. This association opposed American imperialism because it violated the credo of republicanism, especially the need for consent of the governed. Other works discuss the anti-imperialist mainstream since the time of the Vietnam War.¹⁷³ Although they have never been the dominant ones, diverse voices have been raised in protest against American expansion during the major episodes of territorial

¹⁷⁰ Albert Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1935), 43-71.

¹⁷¹ See <http://www.americanforeignrelations.com/A-D/Anti-Imperialism-The-roots-of-american-anti-imperialism.html#ixzz15n4PVLkh> (consulted on 11/18/2010).

¹⁷² Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968); William A. Williams, *America Confronts a Revolutionary World, 1776-1976*, 155.

¹⁷³ See, for example, Williams, McCormick, Gardner, and LaFeber, eds., *America in Vietnam*.

aggrandizement. In light of this information, it can be argued that Cook-Lynn's oeuvre adds an internal dimension to the anti-imperialist movement.

In addition to examining the manifest destiny doctrine, Cook-Lynn analyzes U.S.-Indian treaties to argue the colonization of Indian nations. Treaty discussions make up a lion's share in her study of the Indian socio-political situation for two reasons: first, treaties ground U.S.-Indian relations; second, they provide a historical understanding of tribal-federal affairs. Treaties are basic documents of diplomacy in which two nations agree to regulate their future relations according to a set of mutual principles. Although they have legal and political importance, the major requirement in fulfilling them is that of good will: "Legal points are not nearly as important as the desire and ability of each nation to undertake positive and affirmative steps to ensure that the pledge of faith is not carelessly broken."¹⁷⁴

Treaties between the United States and American First Nations involved, among other things, sales of land and property rights that the tribes possessed and that the United States wanted to acquire. Because tribes are the original owners of the land, courts have held that tribes keep the right to use the land unless they expressly give up that right. Known as the "reserved rights doctrine" from the start of European invasion, the Supreme Court upheld this principle in *United States v. Winans*, ruling that U.S.-Indian treaties are "not a grant of rights to the Indians, but a grant of rights from them - a reservation of those not granted."¹⁷⁵ The court actually compared U.S.-Indian treaties to contracts between "two sovereign nations," thereby recognizing them as having the same legal standing as foreign treaties. They are even recognized under the U.S. constitution as the "supreme law of the land," and by tribal tradition and custom as "sacred

¹⁷⁴ Deloria, "Reflections on the Black Hills Claim," *WSR* 4:1 (1988), 33.

¹⁷⁵ See *United States v. Winans* [198 US 371 (1905)] at http://www.wabanaki.com/treaty_rights.htm; (consulted on 3/7/2010).

covenants.”¹⁷⁶ In sum, U.S.-Indian treaties acknowledged the inherent sovereignty of Indian nations and their rights to self-government.

Even prior to the view held by the court in the previous paragraph, the United States did end the agreement between equals phase circa 1820. Moreover, it has fabricated other legal instruments for colonial purposes, inaugurating what I call **colonization by abrogation**. Three examples stand out.

First, the Supreme Court introduced the discovery theory into federal Indian law in 1823 in *Johnson v. McIntosh*.¹⁷⁷ The facts of the case are as follows: In 1775, Thomas Johnson and other British citizens purchased land in the Northwest Territory, then in the colony of Virginia, from members of the Piankeshaw Indians. This purchase was arranged under a 1763 proclamation by the King of England. Johnson left this land to his heirs. In 1818, Congress sold 11,000 acres of Johnson’s land to William McIntosh. Upon realizing the competing claims on the land, Johnson’s heirs sued McIntosh in the United States District Court for the District of Illinois to recover the land. The District Court ruled for McIntosh, reasoning that his title was valid since it was granted by Congress. McIntosh’s claim, which was derived from Congress, was superior to Johnson’s claim, which was derived from the non-existent right of Indians to sell their land. Johnson’s heirs appealed to the Supreme Court. In a unanimous decision, the court held McIntosh’s claim to have precedent over Johnson’s, affirming the District Court. In an opinion, Chief Justice Marshall discussed the history of the European discovery of the Americas and the legal foundations of the American colonies. He focused on the manner in which each European power acquired land from the indigenous occupants and announced the discovery doctrine, i.e., a

¹⁷⁶ See Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U.S. Supreme Court*, 11; Eileen M. Luna, “Mobilizing the Unrepresented: Indian Voting Patterns and the Implications for Tribal Sovereignty,” *WSR* 15:1 (2000), 94.

¹⁷⁷ *Johnson v. McIntosh* [21 U.S. 543 (1823)].

European power gained title to the land it discovered. Through the Revolutionary War and the treaties that followed, the court reasoned, the United States earned the exclusive right to extinguish the “right of occupancy” of the indigenous occupants and “to grant the soil.” The court established that European settlers that discovered the land had the “sole right of acquiring the soil from the natives” and that Indians themselves did not have the right to sell property to individuals.

The court upheld the European notion that Indians had only marginal occupation rights to their homelands before the European invasion. This disregard of Indian rights occurred after the United States had signed hundreds of treaties with various Indian nations, a legal and historical fact which corroborates Indian nations’ claim to inherent sovereignty.¹⁷⁸ Besides impairing Indian rights to transfer lands to other European nations, this theory has been used to rationalize land grabbing and assimilation policy. Besides taking away Indian title to the land, it negated the sovereignty of Indian nations among worldwide nations.

Second, the court issued a landmark decision in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* to further the colonization of Indian tribes. In 1830, the state of Georgia forbade the Cherokee nation from operating under its constitution. In its decision, the Marshall Court denied the sovereign right of the said nation, reasoning that “the Cherokees were not a foreign nation capable of filing an action in the Supreme Court against a state of the union.”¹⁷⁹ In dismissing the case, the Supreme Court stated that Indian tribes were “domestic dependent nations” and could not turn to the court. This dismissal allowed Georgia to strip the Cherokee nation of its government. However, prior to 1831, the federal government treated Indian tribes as foreign entities in conducting official

¹⁷⁸ See Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 52-65; Ward Churchill, “The Situation of Indigenous Populations in the United States,” *WSR* 1:1 (1985), 30-35; Deloria and DeMallie’s *Documents of American Indian Diplomacy* details every U.S.-Indian Accord and Agreement.

¹⁷⁹ *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* – 30 U. S. (5 Pet.) 1, 20 (1831), as quoted in Deloria and Lytle, *The Nations Within*, 16.

interactions with them. Below is an abridged historical context of the case, as is adapted from *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law* (pp. 95-104).

During the period when the United States was under the Articles of Confederation, a committee of the Continental Congress condemned the “avaricious” attempts of people in the southern states to get Indian lands “by unfair means,” citing it as “the principal source of difficulties with the Indians.” In 1789, President George Washington personally complained before the Senate that “the treaty with the Cherokees has been entirely violated by the disorderly white people on the frontiers.” Armed invasions of Indian country in the western lands of Georgia and North Carolina took the lives of hundreds of Indians and dispossessed the tribes of their treaty-protected lands. By the 1820s, most remaining Cherokee land, once spread over five states, was located in Georgia; removal was considered by this time as the final solution to the land issue. Then, gold was discovered on tribal lands in 1827 and Georgia increased its demands on the United States to remove the Cherokee nation.

The Cherokees established for themselves a solid society. The Cherokee constitution declared the Cherokee nation to be absolutely sovereign and autonomous on its soil. This nation had an agricultural economy, a written language, and a formal government, including a legislature, and courts. The tribe’s 1830 memorandum after Congress passed the Removal Act reminded the federal government that the sovereignty of the Cherokees was secured by treaties with the United States and asserted in the Cherokee constitution:

We wish to remain on the lands of our fathers. We have a perfect and original right to remain without interruption or molestation. The treaties with us and the laws of the United States made in pursuance of treaties, guaranty our residence and privileges, and secures us against intruders. Our only request is, that these treaties may be fulfilled, and these laws executed.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Getches, Williams and Wilkinson, *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law*, 96.

But Andrew Jackson was convinced that Indian nations could no longer exist as independent enclaves within the states of the union when he became President. Either Indians must move west or become subject to the laws of the states. Assured of presidential sympathy, the Georgia legislature passed a law at the end of 1828 which added Cherokee lands to certain northwestern counties of Georgia. A second law declared all Cherokee laws void effective June 1, 1830, prompting the Cherokee nation to appeal to the Supreme Court.

Finally, the Supreme Court carved the sovereignty of tribal nations in another landmark case involving Samuel A. Worcester.¹⁸¹ The facts of the case are as follows: In September 1831, Worcester and others, all non-Native Americans, were indicted in the Supreme Court for the Gwinnett County in the state of Georgia for “residing within the limits of the Cherokee nation without a license” and “without having taken the oath to support and defend the constitution and laws of the state of Georgia.” They were indicted under a 1830 statute of the Georgia legislature entitled “an act to prevent the exercise of assumed and arbitrary power by all persons, under pretext of authority from the Cherokee Indians.” Worcester pleaded that he was, on the 15th July, 1831, in the Cherokee nation, out of the jurisdiction of the Court of Gwinnett County; that he was a citizen of Vermont, and entered the Cherokee nation as a missionary under the authority of the President of the United States, and has not been required by him to leave it, and that, with the permission and approval of the Cherokee nation, he was engaged in preaching the gospel; that the state of Georgia ought not to maintain the prosecution, as several treaties had been entered into by the United States with the Cherokee nation by which that nation was acknowledged to be a sovereign nation, and by which the territory occupied by them was guaranteed to them by the United States. Worcester argued that Georgia could not maintain the prosecution because its statute violated the United States constitution and treaties between the United States and the

¹⁸¹ *Worcester v. Georgia* – 31 U. S. (6 Pet.) 515, 560-561 (1832).

Cherokee nation. However, the Superior Court of Gwinnet overruled the plea; Worcester and others were tried, convicted, and sentenced to the penitentiary for four years.

In an opinion delivered by Chief Justice John Marshall, the court held that the Georgia statute, under which Worcester was prosecuted, violated the United States constitution, treaties, and laws of the United States. Noting that the “treaties and laws of the United States contemplate the Indian territory as completely separated from that of the states; and provide that all intercourse with them shall be carried on exclusively by the government of the union,” Marshall argued, “The Cherokee nation, then, is a distinct community occupying its own territory in which the laws of Georgia can have no force.”¹⁸² But while ruling that the Georgia statute interfered with the federal government’s authority and was unconstitutional, the Marshall Court equally encapsulated the status of Indian nations:

Indian nations had always been considered as distinct, independent political communities, retaining their original natural rights, as the undisputed possessors of the soil, from time immemorial, with the single exception imposed by irresistible power, which excluded them from intercourse with any other European potentate than the first discoverer of the coast of the particular region claimed. A weak state, in order to provide for its safety, may place itself under the protection of one more powerful, without stripping itself of the right of government, and ceasing to be a state.¹⁸³

This phraseology is ambiguous on the sovereignty of Indian nations. Vine Deloria, Jr., Lytle and Wilkins correctly argue that the Marshall Court creates the confused state of tribal-federal relations.¹⁸⁴

In a way, the Marshall Court bears primary responsibility for the perennial colonization by abrogation, which began with Indian removal to federally designated reservations in the 1820s; this phase was completed by the 1850s. Next, Indian nations lost their independent status

¹⁸² Getches, Williams and Wilkinson, *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law*, 118.

¹⁸³ *Worcester v. Georgia* – 31 U. S. (6 Pet.) 515, 560-561 (1832), as quoted in Deloria and Lytle, *The Nations Within*, 17.

¹⁸⁴ Deloria and Lytle, *The Nations Within*, 16; Wilkins, *American Indian Sovereignty and the U.S. Supreme Court*, 22.

from 1871 to 1887, a time period when the federal government regarded them as wards entitled to its protection.¹⁸⁵ The peak of Indian colonization is yet to come with the allotment and assimilation policies.

To promote an agricultural lifestyle among Indians and open up more lands for colonial settlements, an allotment policy was implemented from 1887 to 1928. It sought to terminate Indian communal landholding and assigned reservation lands to Indian individuals, a good number of which ended up in non-Indian hands. In *New Indians, Old Wars*, Cook-Lynn estimates that allotment policy “reduced treaty-protected lands by two-thirds and brought poverty and death to thousands of Indians.”¹⁸⁶ While allotment took Indian lands and disrupted Indian communal lifestyle and economy, the assimilation policy destroyed many Indian cultures.

The Meriam Report’s exposure of the disastrous outcomes of both policies led Congress to pass the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act to encourage Indian self-determination and economic development. This empowerment period spanned the years 1928 to the early 1940s; it was short-lived because the trend to incapacitate tribal governments quickly took over, inaugurating the termination and relocation phase. This turnaround in congressional policy toward Indians resulted in the dramatic departure from the reforms spearheaded by John Collier, Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Felix Cohen of the Interior Department.

Collier’s emergence as a federal Indian policy reformer in the 1920s marked a turning point in Indian affairs. He believed that Indians and their cultures should not be lost to the encroachment of the dominant culture. He identified Indian survival with retention of their land base and expressed this by lobbying for the repeal of Indian General Allotment Act of 1887. As a proponent of cultural pluralism and the repeal of the Dawes Act, Collier argued against

¹⁸⁵ Cohen, *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*, 106.

¹⁸⁶ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 183.

legislation and policies that were detrimental to the well-being of Native Americans. His efforts led to the Meriam Report; he also introduced the Indian New Deal with the passing of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, reversing five decades of assimilation policies.

Cohen worked in the Solicitor's Office of the Department of the Interior from 1933–1948 and was the drafter of the Indian Reorganization Act. He was the primary legal architect of the Indian New Deal, a federal policy that sought to strengthen tribal governments and reduce federal domination of Indian tribes.

The authors of *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law* comment that in the wake of calls from Capitol Hill to repeal the Indian Reorganization Act and to move away from tribal self-government as official federal policy, Collier, Commissioner of the BIA since 1933, resigned in 1945. Similarly, Cohen resigned from the Interior Department in 1948 after federal policy shifted from one of support for tribal governments to that of terminating tribal sovereign status. In 1949 the Hoover Commission issued its Report on Indian Affairs, recommending “complete integration” of Indians as the goal of federal Indian policy; Indians were required to move “into the mass of the population as full, taxpaying citizens.”¹⁸⁷

In order to remove Indians from what remained of their nations and force them to assimilate into the American culture, Congress promulgated termination and relocation laws in the 1950s. In Cook-Lynn's view, the system of laws passed during this phase practically ended treaty-protected nationhood for indigenous people all over the United States and treated Indian nations as colonized people: “These termination and relocation laws were meant to end treaty responsibilities (such as health and education and, certainly land claims) and urbanize large reservation populations to be based in cities such as Seattle, Los Angeles, Cleveland,

¹⁸⁷ Getches, Williams and Wilkinson, *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law*, 199.

Minneapolis, Chicago, and Oakland.”¹⁸⁸ Particularly, Cook-Lynn claims that the passage of Public Law 280 in 1953 materialized Indian disempowerment. This statute granted states of the union criminal and civil jurisdictions in matters involving Indians as litigants on Indian reservations and abrogated their resolutions in tribal or federal courts. Cook-Lynn virulently criticizes PL 280 in her *Notebooks*, because it eliminated Indian law and order structures and caused endemic chaos in Indian Country. It definitely destroyed indigenous social formations, according to Cook-Lynn.¹⁸⁹

The self-determination policy, which currently characterizes U.S.-Indian relations, officially started in the 1960s. Despite the erosion of Indian sovereignty, Indian nations are now encouraged to manage their own affairs. Nevertheless, this phase cannot be the end of the story, if U.S.-Indian history is any guide. The United States craves domination and has more colonizing tools in store for Indian nations; it will keep them in a condition of domination and suppression, I suspect.

This brief survey demonstrates the evolving process of Indian colonization. Further studies might investigate the discrepancy between the scholarship of U.S. historians on the American overseas empire and their neglect of Indian colonization. It is abhorrent to establish futile distinctions among nations of people who have known colonialism with its woes of oppression and exploitation. It is an ethical question. Fanon excoriates: “All forms of exploitation resemble one another. All forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same ‘object’: man.”¹⁹⁰ While most mainstream historians have neglected the colonial violence at the heart of U.S.-Indian history, Cook-Lynn’s fiction and non-fiction foreground it. A leading figure in the colonization and decolonization debate of Indian nations,

¹⁸⁸ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 206.

¹⁸⁹ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 164.

¹⁹⁰ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 88.

Cook-Lynn imputes the colonization of the continent to the discovery doctrine and accuses the United States of treating Indians as colonized people. She critiques American politicians and scholars for neglecting Indian sovereignty since the beginning of colonization in America.¹⁹¹

The United States Supreme Court bears the responsibility of Indian colonization for one reason. Legal scholars claim this court to be the most remarkable legal institution in the entire world.¹⁹² Though it creates no laws, commands no army, and generally remains aloof from the political battles that often occupy the executive and legislative branches of the United States government, its written opinions often change the course of American history. The Supreme Court bears the primary responsibility of what I call the colonization by abrogation, because it allows this to happen. Cook-Lynn's relentless critiques of the American judicial system are grounded in its historic role in Indian subjugation. Although the court is supposed to render impartial justice, it chooses otherwise.

Cook-Lynn's scrutiny of what I call the **dance of the Supreme Court** brings an insight into American domestic imperialism. She examines the role of this institution in the process of Indian colonization. If the court initially upheld the supremacy of Indian treaties over state laws in *Worcester v. Georgia* and ruled that Georgia could not impose its laws on the Cherokee Reservation, it chipped away at Indian sovereignty in its subsequent decisions. Cook-Lynn slashes the court for its cover-ups of the illegal taking of Indian lands and for facilitating the colonization of American Indians. Her scholarship examines the court's distortion of the basic

¹⁹¹ Cook-Lynn, "The Literary and Political Questions of Transformation," 37; Cook-Lynn and In, "Editors' Commentary," 5-10.

¹⁹² See: Dara N. Byrne, ed., *Brown v. Board of Education: Its Impact on Public Education, 1954-2004* (New York: Word For Word, 2005); Peter F. Lau, ed., *From the Grassroots to the Supreme Court: Brown v. Board of Education and American Democracy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); James T. Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality* (New York: Knopf, 1975).

understanding behind U.S.-Indian treaties and tracks its interpretation of law to legitimate political actions of the United States – i.e., its annihilation of Indian nations.

Cook-Lynn claims that the U.S. judicial system masks justice. Her research on U.S.-Indian relations establishes the court's dismissal of the extra-constitutional status of Indian nations. She examines the ways in which Congress exercises a claimed plenary power over Indian nations, a right that was conferred by the court. Cook-Lynn locates U.S.-Indian treaties in historical-legal contexts to argue what she sees as a travesty of justice. She thus uncovers the subversion of Indian sovereignty and validates the Indian claim to sovereignty. For Cook-Lynn, the failure by scholars to contextualize honestly the facts of U.S.-Indian history has resulted in the disavowal of Indian nationhood and sovereignty.¹⁹³

Cook-Lynn's hard look at U.S.-Indian relations seeks to illuminate usurpations of tribal sovereignty. She argues, on numerous occasions, that encroachments on Indian treaties violate Indian sovereignty as acknowledged therein. A case in point is the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. This treaty established peace between the Sioux and the United States and set a 26 million acre reserve apart for the "absolute and undisturbed use and occupation" of the Sioux nation. The United States violated this treaty as well. On its violation, Cook-Lynn comments: "The diminishment of these reserved lands and the structures of tribal poverty developed by law and occupation and congressional and executive order has been the history of the last one hundred years for Sioux Indians in the Northern Plains."¹⁹⁴

United States violations of tribal sovereignty disregard treaty principles that were intended to protect Indian nations against American abuses. In particular, the court's dismissal of two of these enlightens its choice of colonization over justice. First, it has put aside the "Canons

¹⁹³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, x and 8.

¹⁹⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 49.

of Construction.” These Canons suggest that treaties are to be construed in a manner favorable to Indian nations; that treaties are to be interpreted as they would have been understood by Indian nations, should competing interpretations arise. In other words, their interpretations must not affect Indian tribes adversely. Getches, Williams, Jr. and Wilkinson provide this insight:

Although many treaty rights are clearly expressed in Indian treaties, others are not. The courts have been liberal in recognizing the existence of Indian treaty rights in those instances when they are not clearly stated in the treaty. Three primary rules have been developed: ambiguous expressions must be resolved in favor of the Indian parties concerned; Indian treaties must be interpreted as the Indians themselves would have understood them; and Indian treaties must be liberally construed in favor of the Indians. Thus the construction of Indian treaties is akin to the construction of adhesion contracts, in that Indian treaties, like adhesion contracts, are liberally construed in favor of the weaker party, and their terms are given the meaning attached to them by laymen unversed in the law.¹⁹⁵

Second, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* suggests the court’s condoning U.S. intrusion into Indian self-government, despite treaty restrictions. These actions ultimately result in a record of broken treaties and unfulfilled promises. In concluding her analysis of how perfidy on the part of Americans and the United States government devastated the Delaware, Nez Percé, Cheyenne, Winnebago, Ponca, Sioux, and Cherokee Indians, Helen H. Jackson, Cook-Lynn’s role model scholar, put it this way:

It makes little difference, however, where one opens the record of the history of the Indians; every page and every year has its dark stain. The story of one tribe is the story of all, varied only by differences of time and place; but neither time nor place makes any difference in the main facts. Colorado is as greedy and unjust in 1880 as was Georgia in 1830, and Ohio in 1795; and the United States Government breaks promises now as deftly as then, and with an added ingenuity from long practice.¹⁹⁶

Charles Wilkinson argues that one fundamental barrier Native Americans have faced is that public understanding of their distinctive issues comes slowly. He adds: “Their special rights are complex and history-based, emerging from the deep past rather than being ignited by the fire

¹⁹⁵ Getches, Williams and Wilkinson, *Cases and Materials on Federal Indian Law*, 129.

¹⁹⁶ Helen H. Jackson, *A Century of Dishonor: A Sketch of the United States Government’s Dealings with Some of the Indian Tribes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 337-338.

of the moment. In every instance, the Indian position is fragile because it ultimately depends on the capacity and willingness of the majority society to explore unfamiliar intellectual terrain.”¹⁹⁷ Like Wilkinson and Robert A. Williams, Cook-Lynn seems convinced that a better public understanding of the historical contexts of U.S.-Indian treaties can move “American Indians from the margins to the center of a history of the legal traditions that have determined Indian tribalism’s rights and status in America.”¹⁹⁸ And, as legal scholar Felix S. Cohen comments, the status of American Indians “is not a matter of race or birth but is a matter of contract and consent.”¹⁹⁹

In view of the foregoing, Cook-Lynn discloses the historical contexts of U.S.-Indian treaties. Her elaboration on treaty contexts is a strategic invitation to contemporary Euro-American scholars, who challenge the legality of Indian claims to sovereignty, to revisit U.S.-Indian treaties: “The reality is that from the beginning, the indigenous peoples in North and South America have behaved as nations among other nations, with complex governing and social systems, and a history of treaty-signing with the United States that has been largely ignored and dismissed by American and European scholars.”²⁰⁰ Against the views of treaty dismissal advocates, Cook-Lynn argues that treaties should regulate U.S. Indian relations:

The imperialistic ideology that informs the laws and policies that contribute to the oppression of Indian nations must be acknowledged, challenged, and criticized by scholars so that the writing of history is not seen as mere lip service to global affairs in which democratic ideals are said to be foremost considerations. Simply stated, the disempowerment of Indian individuals and nations in America, along with its social, political, and economic consequences, constitutes a flagrant abuse of national sovereignty.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷ Charles F. Wilkinson, as quoted by Robert A. Williams, Jr., *Linking Arms Together: American Indian Treaty Visions of Law and Peace, 1600-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 134.

¹⁹⁸ Williams, Jr., *Linking Arms Together*, 6.

¹⁹⁹ Cohen, as quoted in Wilkins, “The Cloaking of Justice,” *WSR* 10: 1 (1994), 2.

²⁰⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 24.

²⁰¹ Cook-Lynn, “The Lewis and Clark Story,” 31-32.

Cook-Lynn is fighting back popular views that Indian treaties be relegated to oblivion. Treaties sealed the fate of the United States and tribal nations generations ago, Cook-Lynn maintains. Be it in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, or in *New Indians, Old Wars*, she argues that these legally-binding documents established elementary principles of sovereignty and possessory rights for Indian nations and opposes the colonial strategy to incorporate Indian treaty rights and land ownership into the ethnic heap of multiculturalism. Consequently, Cook-Lynn accuses those American and European scholars who ignore and dismiss Indian treaties as accomplices in the U.S. colonization of Indian tribes. She equally denounces America's cavalier attitude toward Indian nations, critiques its creation of second-class citizens out of sovereign tribal people, and demands that Indian treaties regulate U.S.-Indian relations. Like Rigoberta Menchú, a Guatemalan Quiche Indian woman and a leading advocate of Indian rights, Cook-Lynn attaches a great importance to U.S.-Indian treaties and agreements. She believes, like Menchú, that these legally-binding contracts "should be fully respected in order to establish new and harmonious relationships based on mutual respect and cooperation."²⁰² The only satisfactory alternative for Cook-Lynn remains "the return of lands and the return of assets and the return of the symbols of social order (education, police) to those from whom they were stolen."²⁰³

Cook-Lynn's treaty vision seems rooted in the treaty-making tradition of the Sioux nation. *Documents of American Indian Diplomacy* and *Linking Arms Together*, for instance, capture the Siouxan mindset to that effect. Both works examine the Indian diplomacy of the invasion era and thereafter and underscore the importance of treaty-making from an Indian perspective. As an example, representatives of six tribal nations reassured the Twelve United

²⁰² Menchú's 1993 International Peace Prize acceptance speech, as quoted in *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 34.

²⁰³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 55.

Colonies at a 1775 treaty ceremony that “the resolutions of the *Six Nations* are not to be broken or altered; when they resolve, the matter is fixed.”²⁰⁴ Both books equally underscore the sacredness of a treaty from a tribal viewpoint. Some Indian nations, for that matter, have sealed treaty deals by smoking the pipe of peace, a sacred gesture:

The calumet pipe is one of several recurrent symbols and ritual systems dispersed throughout the treaty literature of the Encounter era reflecting the basic understanding of American Indians that a treaty was a sacred undertaking. Indian diplomacy recognized that on a multicultural frontier, the making of peace required an act of commitment between two former enemies. The smoking of the calumet of peace sought to resolve this tension by invoking the larger forces at work in the affairs of human beings. A treaty sanctified by the smoking of the pipe of peace became, in essence, a sacred text, a narrative that committed two different peoples to live according to a shared legal tradition—an American Indian vision of law and peace.²⁰⁵

Apparently, Indian nations have made a solemn oath to live in peace with the colonists by performing this ceremony that turns former foes into relatives. Cook-Lynn critiques the United States for violating Indian treaties because she holds onto their sacredness. She discusses the nation’s domestic imperial practices and argues American usurpations of Indian sovereignty. Overall, her scholarship explores Indian treaty violations and raises disturbing questions about the status of tribal nations within the American and international political landscapes. In the end, Cook-Lynn argues that federal Indian policy is detrimental to Indian tribes.

Although the United States has always prided itself on possessing the best system of government the world has ever known, Cook-Lynn is appalled that it could not honor its Indian treaties. She uses a poetic language to sum up such a contradiction at the heart of American life:

... [To] honor agreements that threaten no one concerning the lands and rights of native peoples, yet upholding that honor has been the major resistance of White America; to know that land ownership rights are the crux of moral relationships between indigenous nations and others, yet those rights will not be defended by America; to know that land ownership rights are the key to the survival of tribal

²⁰⁴ Deloria and DeMallie, *Documents of American Indian Diplomacy*, 40; italics in the original.

²⁰⁵ Williams, Jr., *Linking Arms Together*, 47-8.

peoples everywhere, yet those rights are stolen by America, a powerful nation claiming an honorable place among nations throughout the globe.²⁰⁶

The United States has modified the status of Indian nations through political and legal maneuvering. Cook-Lynn argues that the United States has violated US-Sioux treaties and that these violations repeated themselves in many Indian nations. Cook-Lynn emphasizes the untrustworthiness of the United States in her Indianist version of U.S.-Indian history: “[T]here is not much of a track record in America that tells us this great democracy wants to uphold Indian Treaty Rights and acknowledge Tribal Sovereignty.”²⁰⁷ Likewise, Vine Deloria, Jr. ridicules America for lecturing Russia on treaty commitments: “America has yet to keep one Indian treaty or agreement despite the fact that the United States government signed over four hundred such treaties and agreements with Indian tribes. It would take Russia another century to make and break as many treaties as the United States has already violated.”²⁰⁸

Cook-Lynn keeps America’s untrustworthiness and hypocrisy in the fore of her discourse, because its treaty-breaking record affects Indian nations adversely. It is beyond comprehension that “American Indians, after two hundred years of the U.S. Constitution and one hundred years of state constitutional development, are in court on a continual basis defending their lands, rights, resources and religion,” Cook-Lynn comments.²⁰⁹ She equally critiques U.S. interference in Indian affairs, for it weakens the political, cultural, and social life of American First Nations.²¹⁰

Despite numerous machinations by the United States to elude Indian treaties, Cook-Lynn believes these legally-binding documents should be in effect, for they represent formal contracts

²⁰⁶ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 207.

²⁰⁷ Cook-Lynn, *Notebooks*, 60-1; I have quoted this statement in chapter I.

²⁰⁸ Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins*, 28.

²⁰⁹ Cook-Lynn, “In the American Imagination,” 47.

²¹⁰ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 63.

between the United States and Indian nations. To circumvent them is an expression of colonization. Cook-Lynn's scholarship is a wake-up call to the federal government to abide by the will expressed in these "sacred covenants." Perhaps, like Frederick Douglass, Cook-Lynn believes that:

If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightening. They want ocean without the roar of its many waters. The struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle.²¹¹

And I will add, an intellectual one, too. Cook-Lynn's intellectual endeavor to decolonize tribal nations must be seen in this light; her effort to pull Indians out of an oppressive colonial orbit must be understood in this context. An Indianist and anti-imperialist scholar whose writings advance a critical and oppositional view of U.S. colonization, Cook-Lynn seeks to acquaint the public with the context of U.S.-Indian treaties. As she hammers home the point in "Land Reform," America's acknowledgment of Indian nations as sovereign polities will validate the United States as a democratic nation. The invention of extraordinary doctrines to terminate them is not the solution to the so-called "Indian problem," Cook-Lynn challenges the mainstream ideology in her scholarship that equally dares the United States to fulfill its dream of annihilating Indian tribes.²¹² In sum, her works and activism urge that treaties regulate U.S.-Indian relations.

Finally, the land is another major issue for Cook-Lynn, as her advocacy for Indian land rights throughout this dissertation might indicate. Cook-Lynn unveils American internal imperialism by examining U.S.-Indian land conflicts. She places land dispossession at the heart of American colonization of Indian nations, connects the land back to the identity of the colonized, and makes it the essence of an indigenous people:

²¹¹ Frederick Douglass, as quoted in Eric J. Sundquist, ed., *Frederick Douglass: New Literary and Historical Essays* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 93.

²¹² Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 180.

If we cannot save our homelands, our Indian reserved lands where ancient ideas about god and the universe reside... we can never save our cultures or our languages. If we cannot save the land we will become extinct, for there is no more important value to a native people than the lands of their ancestors. It is in the land that the native finds his morality, his life, his origins, and his survival.²¹³

Moreover, according to Cook-Lynn, the land materializes Indian nations: "Without the possession of land, there are no tribal nations and there is no concomitant relationship between colonials and indigenists."²¹⁴ She endows the land with unique nurturing elements for the indigenous people, the dispossession of which entails their cultural, spiritual, and physical passing. As is evidenced in her concern with the illegal appropriations of Indian (Sioux) land, this concept grounds her diatribe against U.S. land-snatching policies and underlies her fight for land repossession. Her scholarship, which primarily calls for the return of the Black Hills to the Sioux nation, is rooted in this reality, as is her critique of the destruction of the Missouri River and the flooding of 550 square miles of treaty-protected lands for hydropower along this River.²¹⁵

Colonizing powers made themselves a rule to hold title to a territory if they defeat the native populations and formally annex their lands. However, title to Indian land by right of conquest was a rare occurrence, because Indian treaties of cession were mainly the result of negotiation and purchase.²¹⁶ However, as Vine Deloria, Jr. and Raymond J. DeMallie argue, a large number of treaties were formally negotiated but were never ratified by Congress or rejected

²¹³ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 103.

²¹⁴ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 199.

²¹⁵ Cook-Lynn discusses this flooding in her first novella, *From the River's Edge*, which is part of *Aurelia: A Crow Creek Trilogy*.

²¹⁶ Robert T. Coulter and Steven M. Tullberg, "Indian Land Rights," in Deloria and Cadwalader, eds., *The Aggressions of Civilization*, 193; and Cook-Lynn, "The Lewis and Clark Story," 21-33; *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 53-65; "Editor's Commentary," *WSR* 12:1 (1997), 5-7; Cook-Lynn and Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, 22-77.

by Indian nations themselves after the Senate amended them unacceptably. But the United States has claimed them to be signed, sealed, and delivered:

More critical to the status and rights of American Indians are treaties that were negotiated in good faith but were not ratified by the Senate. If Indian treaties have the same dignity – that is, legal standing – as the treaties of foreign nations, then the United States should not claim lands cited in treaties it formally rejected. A glance at Royce’s *Indian Land Cessions* shows several tracts of land, of not inconsiderable acreage, that are listed as having been ceded to the United States in treaties that were not ratified.²¹⁷

Cook-Lynn discusses unorthodox practices by the United States in its land acquisition and reclaims confiscated lands. She claims that Sioux Indians are solely interested in land reform and that no monetary compensation will be enough to deter them from demanding the return of the land. She incorporates this point in “The Black Hills Issue,” “Land Reform,” and *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, refining it in *New Indians, Old Wars*: “American Indians told a callous and greedy America that we are not vanished and **our lands are not for sale or trade.**”²¹⁸ Cook-Lynn is definitely an activist for Indian land repossession. Because the experienced materiality of colonialism is often grounded in the dispossession and repossession of land, her land repossession claim seeks to undermine the system. She exposes U.S. land frauds, confronts the colonial approach with which the nation is plundering Indian resources, and seriously worries about American colonial greed.

This ongoing American colonization of Indian nations, I must add, inscribes Cook-Lynn’s works in a colonial context; a postcolonial context remains beyond Cook-Lynn and other Indianists, in my view. If anything, *Aurelia* is a reminder of the ongoing interference of Euro-Americans in the lives and history of the Sioux. Cook-Lynn’s examination of broken treaties,

²¹⁷ Deloria and DeMallie, *Documents of American Indian Diplomacy*, 2nd volume, p. 745.

²¹⁸ Cook-Lynn, “A Case Study: The Black Hills Issue, A Call for Reform,” 1-17; “Land Reform,” 103-112; Cook-Lynn and Gonzalez, *The Politics of Hallowed Ground*, 170; and Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 7; my emphasis.

confiscated Indian lands and destabilization in the lives of Indian people, both fictional and real, justify my placement of her scholarship within the colonial rubric. Clearly, Cook Lynn is not a postcolonial critic and has yet to become a major voice in postcolonial studies. Her scholarship and other writings, which seek to acquaint the public with the continuous colonization of Indian nations, equally urge Indian scholars to focus on decolonization strategies. As she contends, the colonized should not “simply collaborate with the laws of their masters, make the best of it, sign peace treaties, and watch the lands and lives of indigenous populations be overtaken;” they must fight back.²¹⁹ Cook-Lynn fights back by advancing a critical and oppositional view of U.S. imperialism, both internally and externally. In addition to her numerous texts deployed throughout this dissertation, her viewpoints in the following conclusion equally underscore the intensity of her fight.

IV) CONCLUSION

Cook-Lynn represents the United States as a colonizing nation, both at home and abroad:

All of the nations of the past, one supposes, as one contemplates history, rose to empire as hard fighters, pagans, and adventurers. But none has been so successful as has the inchoate United States of America in convincing the world, and itself, of its own moral destiny, making believe that it has the right to colonize the resources of the world simply because it is good, pretending that it can impose world order on others who are bad by paying off its collaborators, declaring that it can decide who will be eligible to stake its claim and who will not.²²⁰

The United States is essentially a colonizing nation. Prior to the 1960s, however, the myth of American exceptionalism has led the public to view United States imperialism in benevolent terms. In particular, the business community and policy makers have taken the position that the United States seeks to liberate native people through colonialism. In an anti-

²¹⁹ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 20-21.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

imperialist rhetoric tainted with altruism, they have vaunted the nation as mending what its predecessors had broken. Apologists of American imperialism have even argued that the United States exempts Empire from the burdens of exploitation and domination.²²¹ Clearly, these advocates have downplayed U.S. imperialism.

Against the above views, revisionist historians have argued that every expansionist power has felt uniquely justified to colonize others. Williams, LaFeber, McCormick, Alstyne, Barnett and Beisner have interpreted American diplomacy as colonialist since the 1960s. Arguing that expansion is a polite word for empire, these revisionist historians have challenged the exceptionalism of United States imperialism, applying the same standard to assess the history of American imperialism. While they have brought a new perspective on U.S. overseas imperialism, they have neglected American domestic imperialism.

Cook-Lynn takes up the neglect of American domestic imperialism. In addition to foregrounding the U.S. colonization of Indian nations, Cook-Lynn's works underscore the American public's ignorance about United States domestic imperialism:

What is accepted by Americans is that it is an anticolonial country going about "freeing" others and promoting democracy around the world, promoting "rescue missions" in other sovereign territories for people "less fortunate." The truth about American history is this: *America is the first settler-colonial country to achieve great power in our time*, its power emerging from its earliest days as it spread political terrorism against the tribal nations; as it stole civilian and tribal property; as it coerced the support of its victims, turning them into proxies for their own agendas; as it eroded citizens' rights in tribal enclaves; as it committed atrocities among civilian populations; and as it claimed its political cover when the places of the victims became the breeding ground for chaos.²²²

She equally comments that the United States plays out its imperial destiny abroad:

If there is one policy behind the scenes that links the Iraq experience in the twenty-first century to the Lakota/Dakota Sioux experience of the nineteenth, it is the policy

²²¹ Barnett, *Roots of War*, 20; Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 335.

²²² Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 83; italics in the original.

of imperialistic dominance. Trampling on the sovereignty of other nations for most of its several centuries of nationhood has been the legacy of the American Republic's power. This is a history that American mainstream thinking ignores as it goes to war around the globe.²²³

Cook-Lynn does not refrain from critiquing the United States for claiming its innocence after wrecking Indian nations and creating chaos in their places:

Since America rarely admits to its crimes and since many of the major scholars both Indian and white do not analyze as criminal the events of a history of colonization in America, another major false idea about America's beginnings has, therefore, to do with America's "innocence." The western story, in particular, describes America's good intentions, America's innocence, nobility, grandeur, naivete, trust, optimism. America is, according to this false idea, a new and empty land, a land of hope and endless opportunity, a land of grand possibilities whose indigenous inhabitants have been and are willing, to sacrifice themselves for the new order. This theme of innocence and hopefulness is pervasive, but it says nothing about the fact that Indians are exempted from this hopeful vision. Indeed, Indians are often recognized—when they are recognized at all—as the "have-nots" and "the vanished."²²⁴

Considering her virulent criticism of the Iraqi invasion and given her oppositional stance on American imperialism at home and abroad, it is fair to assume that the above view goes beyond Indian nations. By extension, she blames American imperialism for creating social, economic, and political chaos in other nations as well.

Though the above texts are extracts from her essays, Cook-Lynn is equally critical of American imperialism in her fiction. *Then Badger Said This* and *Aurelia* do not sugarcoat the ongoing colonization of the Sioux nation. In Cook-Lynn's view, American history neglects U.S. domestic imperialism, even though it entails oppression. "The mutilation" of U.S.-Indian history, she comments, "encourages colonial America not only to see itself through rose-colored glasses but also, more significantly, to applaud its continuing infringement on its own principles of due process and fairness to Indian nations."²²⁵

²²³ Ibid., 72.

²²⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Anti-Indianism in Modern America*, 94.

²²⁵ Cook-Lynn, *New Indians, Old Wars*, 112.

In all, Cook-Lynn's scholarship and other writings narrate an alternative story about America, offer a unique insight into the U.S. culture of imperialism and connect its external and internal colonial practices. She underscores the pervasiveness of imperialism in American culture and magnifies the denial syndrome associated with U.S. domestic imperialism:

The unfeeling coarseness of America has rarely been exposed because the mainstream refuses to look at the Indian-white history of the early centuries, but the foreign policy of violence and expansionism has never been lost on American Indian experiences and lives. The elites who have shaped America and continue to do so receive scant attention from the media for their defects; and those who wish to reveal them are rebuffed in countless ways.²²⁶

As her text above insinuates, Cook-Lynn recognizes that some mainstream scholars are critical of Indian subjugation. She acknowledges the presence of anti-imperial forces in the United States and it seems fair to assume that her reading about U.S. overseas imperial activities contributes to her representing the United States as a global empire-builder. In addition to scholars who have interpreted American diplomacy as colonialist, Felix S. Cohen and Robert F. Berkhofer are included in her pantheon as reference scholars: they have defended Indians against American colonization. Also, Cook-Lynn's reference to Helen H. Jackson as a model intellectual confirms the coexistence of mainstream anti-imperial scholars alongside advocates of American Empire. For the record, as early as 1881, Jackson published a historical account of the U.S. government's injustice to American Indians in *A Century of Dishonor* and followed suit with *Ramona* (1884), which presented even more bleak condition of Indians. Nevertheless, scholars who have confronted American imperialism have never been the dominant force in the United States.

Cook-Lynn is unrelenting in her accusations of the United States in her poems, novels, and essays. As her opening text of this chapter indicates, she constantly accuses the United States

²²⁶ Ibid., 71-2.

of literally looking at the speck of sawdust in the eye of other countries when all the time there is a plank in its own eye. She seems unforgiving and does not take part in the pride of the United States. Humans are not perfect, nor are nations of people. Unlike Cook-Lynn, I hope for appropriate change in the United States and believe in its culture of democracy, though I remain perplexed by its manipulations of Indian nations. For now, I cannot square its acclaimed democratic culture with its continuous colonization of Indian nations.

In the end, while U.S. overseas imperialism is documented, United States domestic imperialism is neglected in mainstream scholarship. Cook-Lynn argues this internal colonialism by examining U.S. invasions of Indian nations. Her study of U.S. domestic imperialism, which sends a loud and clear message about the daunting task of Indian decolonization, equally acknowledges the limits of her works to affect it. Cook-Lynn's call to Indian scholars, for that matter, is a demand for collective effort to achieve it. The following concluding chapter evaluates my view on her work and speculates on the likelihood of Indian scholars' heeding her pleas.

CHAPTER FIVE:
MY EVALUATION OF COOK-LYNN'S WORK

This investigation into the intellectual history of Cook-Lynn has been a personal challenge and a self-fulfilling experience. For a reason, I started off this investigation into her resistance discourse to the U.S. culture of imperialism with Stuart Hall's remark that a history and a culture inform any discourse and that a scholarship is always in context, positioned. The bio-critical chapter, for that matter, stakes a claim that Cook-Lynn's family deeply fosters her political identity, which, in turn, grounds her nationalist discourse. Her political socialization channels her nationalistic feelings and underlies her organic intellectualism.

Along with her family's influence, the socio-political situation of Indian nations shapes Cook-Lynn's absolutist views on Indian nationhood. She believes fundamentally that Indian nations are for Indians to save or destroy. As a result, she engages the decline of Indian sovereignty and confronts the injustice heaped upon Indians. Cook-Lynn advocates for sovereign indigenous governance, devises means to revamp tribal governments, and focuses on Indian collective agency to revitalize native communities. She does not apologize for defending tribal nationalism and sees no room for negotiating Indian sovereignty and indigenusness. This triumvirate is non-negotiable because it essentially defines Indians, she contends.

Cook-Lynn strategizes Indian decolonization; her inflexible anti-colonial stance aims to liberate Indian nations from America's tight grip. Her admonitions to native intellectuals to fight for Indian treaty rights fit into the same agenda, as does her vision of the Native studies discipline as an empowering instrument for tribal nations. As a matter of fact, Cook-Lynn's conviction that native scholars must defend the survival of Indian nations against the odds of Indian vanishing views popularized in anti-Indian scholarship accounts for her huge investment in *WSR* and academic Native American studies. Besides her long editorship of *WSR*, the influence of Cook-Lynn's chosen triumvirate in academic Indian studies bears witness to her role

in the discipline. Cook-Lynn invests Native studies with articulating the alternative story of the United States, a discourse of conflict that could interrupt the dominant monologue about America. She insists that this oppositional knowledge production of indigenous intellectuals who resist absolute assimilation into academia is necessary to the vitality and well-being of tribally connected Indian communities. Clearly, Cook-Lynn presses the field to promote a pan-Indian geocentric epistemology. While this seemingly legitimate concept sets Native studies on an oppositional course, it equally shields it from likeminded academic disciplines. In this sense, at least, Cook-Lynn projects an idealistic disciplinary vision, as does her intentional elevation of its grounding principles to the status of Deity, while she downplays concrete challenges facing Indian students.

Cook-Lynn represents the United States as an imperial power and connects its Empire-building practices back to practices by other colonial nations. Although the United States disguises its colonial activities under the banner of bringing justice to bear upon injustice throughout the globe – Indian nations included – Cook-Lynn positions America as a colonizing power. Given the U.S. occupation of the social, physical, and political spaces that Indian communities claim, she argues that the United States denies Native Americans the right to be indigenous people in a meaningful way. Her scholarship and other writings purport to ensure the survival of Indian nations and ultimately seek to rekindle Indian nationalism so that these communities can thrive into the future.

Cook-Lynn's urging Indian scholars to undertake the decolonization task might suggest the limits of her individual scholarly intervention to bring any significant change to the Indian situation. Therefore, she summons the Indian intelligentsia to participate in the fight, making it a collective project. Her call to action is that native scholars must tackle land dispossessions,

advocate for tribal sovereignty, and promote the economic development of Indian nations. In particular, the distortion of Indian history fuels her activist demand that native intellectuals stand up to the U.S. colonialism in order to liberate Indian history. To salvage the history of Indian nations, then, Cook-Lynn urges native academics to militant actions, admonishing them to adopt an adversarial stand and challenge the corrupt university leadership that distorts the historical and cultural legacies of Indian communities. She definitely holds that the entire history of America's indigenous people has to be rewritten and enjoins native academics to rewrite it in the nation's institutions of higher education. For Cook-Lynn, indigenous intellectuals located on the inside of academia are in the best position to counter the lingering residue of earlier academic colonization and the tendencies among non- native academic intellectuals to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors. Because such a position led her to resign, one might wonder the usefulness of her dogma.

Cook-Lynn kept herself busy defending Indian interests during her professional life and continued this work after her untimely retirement from teaching. Her scholarship consistently underscores one thing: American Indians are still alive. She keeps this spirit up thanks to her faith in a native voice. Moreover, her resolve to make this voice widespread explains her contributions to *WSR*. As it turns out, this journal privileges Indian alternative stories of the United States and supports the indigenous radical imagination, in general. *WSR* makes a difference: it reconfirms Native American existence.

Cook-Lynn is not only a challenging Indian voice but cherishes this voice as well. While I laud her resignation from a tenured faculty position for the sake of native voice and treasure her urging native scholars to turn away from Western academic standards and implement Indigenist paradigms in Indian studies, I think her effort to impose a one-dimensional view on the discipline

goes too far. I applaud her insistence that Indian philosophy is a philosophy in its own right and wholeheartedly accept that Indian studies must not emulate Eurocentric or minority centered models of disciplines. However, I object to her effort to impose a monolithic direction on the field by silencing what she calls “tribeless voices” for failing to meet her prescriptive criteria of a tribal scholarship. In her view, a native scholarship must offer **constructive criticism, raise a tribal consciousness, and regenerate Indian nationalism**. She stands ready to be the bearer of the standard and squarely rejects any work that fails to meet the above guideline. While this ideological stance might be justified to some extent, excluding the views of a large number of “tribeless” tribal intellectuals from Native studies is still, I contend, detrimental to the discipline. To believe that non-radical native scholars are unfit to speak in the discipline is a dogmatic view. And, indeed, this attitude has caused an internecine battle: “I am at odds with the so-called mainstream of Indian studies,” Cook-Lynn remarks. “I happen to think that Indian studies is about indigenous rights, the treaty rights of those Indian nations that have survived the holocaust of the nineteenth century. I realize that’s a narrow-minded view.”¹ For me, her purification policy harms the discipline; I charge her with pushing countless native intellectuals away from it. Her categorization practices lead to more counterproductive views in her intellectual history.

Cook-Lynn’s advocacy for Indian nations is praiseworthy. I prize her insistence that native scholars be accountable to their respective nations and admire her demand that tribal nations be treated as separate nations in agreement with Indian treaties. While Cook-Lynn seeks to undo U.S. colonialism, she equally holds that scores of contemporary native scholars fail to confront it. Worse still, she maintains that most Indian intellectuals are serving U.S. imperialism directly or indirectly. In her estimation, Indian scholars who ground their works **outside** the tribal world are disconnected from their tribes. Cook-Lynn equates this choice with high treason

¹ Cook-Lynn, “Keynote Address: Indian Studies,” 181.

and alleges that they are part and parcel of the establishment. It is worth noting that native scholars who do **not** ground their works in the tribal world outnumber those who produce tribally centered scholarship. Although native intellectuals who set their works outside the tribal world reside in the United States, she believes that they behave like people who are removed from their native countries. Cook-Lynn strongly feels that most indigenous scholars are in exile in American culture, their roots damaged, their maps lost, and their visions clouded. In sum, she represents this group of native scholars as traditional intellectuals, positioning them as servants of the status quo. She is leveling an outrageous charge, in this particular instance. This stance leads to what I consider another blunder in her intellectual history.

While Cook-Lynn invites the Indian intelligentsia to the decolonization fight, she wittingly excludes native scholars who do not fall into the nationalist or Indigenist category, i.e., cosmopolitan critics. Arnold Krupat details their roles in his preface to *Red Matters: Native American Studies*. While nationalists use tribal (or national) sovereignty to examine Indian cultural production, Indigenists foreground “what is instantiated as a pan-Indian geocentric epistemology, a knowledge different from that of dispersed Europeans and other wanderer-settlers.” Cosmopolitan critics, on the other hand, take the position that “it is unwise to be bound too rigorously by either the nation or traditional knowledge” and cobble their criticisms out of a variety of perspectives, including the nationalist and Indigenist insights. This eclecticism of cosmopolitan critics, Krupat argues, can lead to critical and political irresponsibility.²

Cook-Lynn’s attitude vis-à-vis cosmopolitan critics is troubling to me, though I understand where she is coming from. How many native scholars are blessed with the politically rich history of Cook-Lynn’s family? How many American Indian intellectuals can claim her

² Krupat, as quoted in M. A. Jaimes’s review of *Red Matters*, *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 16:3 (2004), 93.

political capital? How many of them proudly refer to themselves as “a daughter [son] of tribal politicians,” as Cook-Lynn does? Our history and culture shape our particular vision of the world. As Hall and Spivak contend, a given problem, or a subject position, is always “situation-specific,” that is, the product of the history which informs it.³ Cook-Lynn wants Indian scholars to be accountable to their respective nations, and yet forgets that each nation has its specific history, besides their shared victimization history. Oblivious to this reality, she sanctions the nationalist and Indigenist critics and unceremoniously dismisses the cosmopolitan perspective in her assessments of American Indian literatures.

Cook-Lynn calls herself an Indianist; her scholarship actually combines the Indigenist and nationalist approaches. Her absolute belief in the supremacy of Indian sovereignty and subsequent nationalistic views alienate other native intellectuals. For instance, she flatly states that Indians avoid talking about encroachments on their sovereign rights. She even makes a sweeping accusation that most Indians will walk away once treaty-related discussions are brought up. They will not concern themselves with improving tribal governments, she alleges, contending that trivialities hold center stage in their conversations. Such declarations are antagonistic and divisive. If anything, Cook-Lynn’s tendency to alternately laud and then denigrate Momaday’s ambivalent voice indicates the danger of her game. Worse still, she bashes countless Indian scholars, completely ignoring their contributions to tribal nations.

Another flaw in Cook-Lynn’s approach remains her nondiscriminatory deployment of a collective binary in its most essentialist form. Cook-Lynn’s commitment to decolonizing tribal nations is beyond doubt; her advocacy for Indian self-determination makes her a stakeholder in the decolonization process of these nations. I honestly believe she has secured a prominent place on the list of indigenous intellectuals whose works are pushing for a paradigm shift in the

³ See Spivak’s interview with Sara Danius and Stefan Jonsson in *Boundary 2* 20:2 (1993), 34.

conceptualization of American Indians. In this respect, her scholarship becomes what Patrick Taylor calls a “narrative of liberation.”⁴ However, her essentialist position can potentially weaken her mission.

A struggle over power has caused the socio-political imbroglio of Indian nations. There is no disagreement that America’s indigenous people have known U.S. colonization, which, unfortunately, continues to this day. To differing degrees, scholars across-the-board concur that Indians are victims. Land confiscation and distorted representations of American Indians are two basic colonizing tools employed to subject them. Taken aback by such a demeaning situation created by some rapacious people, American Indians are offering their responses. In engaging their reactions, one should bear in mind that regardless of their subject position and whether the dominant culture works to their advantage or not, the consciousness (and unconsciousness) of all subjects is influenced by the dominant culture. This phenomenon creates what Gramsci calls the “common sense,” i.e., the uncritical and unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world in any given epoch.⁵ Gramsci equally believes that the mass media simultaneously enforces people’s common sense – by teaching them to do things in their everyday lives – and supports the power structures.

Additionally, Hall theorizes the role of social location in the interpretation of mass media messages, which ranges from uncritical acceptance, to negotiated acceptance, to resistance. Moreover, he argues that individuals not only utilize different decoding strategies according to topics and contexts but also shift stance from one context to the next.⁶ One should consider these

⁴ Patrick Taylor, *The Narrative of Liberation: Perspectives on Afro-Caribbean Literature, Popular Culture, and Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

⁵ Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith’s comment to Gramsci’s *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 321-322.

⁶ Stuart Hall, “Encoding/decoding,” in Hall et al. eds., *Culture, Media, Language* (New York: Routledge, 1980), 128-138.

parameters when apprehending the positions of Indian intellectuals regarding Indian issues. It is my contention that Cook-Lynn has downplayed the positioning of American Indians to media messages. This shortcoming has resulted in a sharp and hyper-racialized distinction on her part between “White” and “Indian” representations of Indian nations, in general.

Scholarly mentors are known for passing along essential, valuable gifts to their acolytes, including wisdom and inspiration. It is no secret that Vine Deloria, Jr., “one of the patriarchs of American Indian scholarship,” as Beverly R. Singer dubs him, has influenced numerous Indian intellectuals.⁷ In appreciation of Vine Deloria, Jr.’s mentorship, some of these indigenous scholars have explored his varied and challenging contributions in a book dedicated to him.⁸ I also am an admirer of Vine Deloria, Jr. Still, while I commend his works for dismantling the sacrosanct Euro-American scholarly worldview and clearing away some of the “comfortable fictions” about Indians, Vine Deloria, Jr. mostly relies on essentialism to drive his points across. Essentialism is bad in its application, Spivak cautions, and its uncritical deployment is dangerous.⁹ Take, for instance, these two statements: 1) “The next generation of American Indians must find a way to transcend the barriers of communication and provide sufficient information on Indians so that the next generation of Whites look at us realistically and we will not have to face bitter Whites who create fantasies about us and then turn against us;”¹⁰ and 2) “White scholars will not, as a rule, defend Indians against the attacks of their colleagues because it is assumed that Indians are unworthy of defense. So any challenges to anti-Indian articles must

⁷ Singer, *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens*, 7.

⁸ The book is *Native American Voices*; edited by Richard A. Grounds et al. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003).

⁹ Spivak’s interview with Danisus and Jonsson, 24-50.

¹⁰ Vine Deloria Jr., “Comfortable Fictions and the Struggle for Turf,” in Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*, 81.

come from Indians themselves.”¹¹ Vine Deloria, Jr.’s scholarship is full of these White-Indian binary opposites. These statements completely ignore that some non-Indian scholars have defended Indian visions. Cook-Lynn represents Vine Deloria, Jr. as a role model. Apparently, she cannot avoid the Delorian pitfall in her nondiscriminatory use of Manichean categorizations. She has fallen into the Delorian trap by uncritically deploying a White versus Indian binary in the entirety of her scholarship.

The United States craves domination and may never willingly relinquish its colonization of Indian nations. Under these circumstances, Indian decolonization will be a long process. It is therefore wise to avoid essentialist positions during the decolonizing task. I take the stand that the lack of systematic theorizing hinders the real debates on Indian decolonization.

Cook-Lynn’s ideological stance primarily suggests a Manichean division, even though she sometimes commends some non-Indian scholars for taking up Indian causes. For example, she recognizes Felix Cohen as a foremost scholar who “assisted an academic culture in understanding the importance of defending the moral and legal rights of minority populations in America and in defending the situation of American Indian populations, indigenous populations, in specific ways.”¹² She praises Robert F. Berkhofer for showing in *The White Man’s Indian* how the Indian was created and for arguing to move beyond that condition.¹³ She cautiously acknowledges Dee Brown for examining Indian victimization in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*.¹⁴ These acknowledgements are rather rare instances in Cook-Lynn’s huge intellectual production, which mostly places Whites in one box and Indians in another. This habit of categorizing substitutes race for power, both of which are tricky concepts.

¹¹ Deloria, “Marginal and Submarginal,” 23.

¹² Cook-Lynn, “American Indian Studies: An Overview,” 16.

¹³ Cook-Lynn, “Who Stole Native American Studies,” 15-16.

¹⁴ Cook-Lynn, *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Steigler*, 51.

As Cook-Lynn's scarce recognition of non-Indian contributions to Indian causes might indicate, targeting *Indian-ness* and *White-ness* is a flawed strategy. If it is plausible that some Indians "by blood" lack a native voice per Cook-Lynn's concept, it equally remains true that some non-Indians have defended Indian causes and have spoken authentically on their behalf. These non-Indian intellectuals have, as Fixico argues, "articulated an Indian voice, an Indian version of the history of the American West" and humanized American Indians.¹⁵ Their deeds definitely suggest that *White-ness* or *Indian-ness* is not the source of the problem. For that matter, Cook-Lynn should be theorizing power and its poetics, instead of racializing the debate.

I am inclined to think that Cook-Lynn is a convinced nationalist, but she is an educator, after all. I question the goal of her communication strategy as well as the aim of her teaching style regarding the defense of Indian nations, her life mission. I have wondered, at times, whether her rhetoric of accusation, exposure, whistle-blowing, and muckraking can entice native intellectuals into the liberation struggle of Indian nations. Indian intellectuals must decolonize themselves before they can participate in this decolonization mission. I presume Cook-Lynn intends to achieve that goal, first and foremost. However, her way of communicating it is likely to turn most Indian intellectuals away. Despite Cook-Lynn's commitment to Indian causes, her target Indian audience may oppose her message, or ignore her altogether, unless she turns her blaming approach around. Worse, the majority of native intellectuals could end up representing her as a propagandist, if she pursues this same communication strategy. They will assume that Cook-Lynn shows only scorn for those who are not as nationalist or Indianist as herself. These unintended consequences might well result from her approach. Clearly, there is no doubt in my mind that Cook-Lynn has a strong voice; however, she undermines her position and limits her ability to have an impact on Native American scholars because she made other Indian scholars a

¹⁵ Fixico, *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World*, 108-9.

target of her diatribes as much as non-Native-American scholars. In so doing, she ends up undermining her position, I believe.

Why is it that works by other Indian intellectuals – Vine Deloria Jr., N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko and Gerald Vizenor – have received significant attention, including scholarly publications and dissertations and Cook-Lynn is not often referenced? I think she alienates herself by critiquing almost everyone who disagrees with her dogma, including myself. In an email dated December 11, 2007, she thanked me after reading the proposal of this dissertation, stating that “this kind of criticism (because it is so rare to say nothing about how relevant and insightful it is) needs to be published. This is the kind of work that more of our native graduate students need to do.” However, she seemed unhappy about my critique of her dogmatic view on native voice.

I think that the battle is not between races. Race is not the driving force behind the problem which Cook-Lynn targets in her body of work. As Gramsci argues in a different context, it is not just the ideas that need to be confronted but the social forces behind them. Confronting the power-hegemony-ideology nexus that generates the so-called “Indian problem” will prove more effective. Uncritical deployment of color/race can be a pitfall in theorizing Indian (mis)representation and (de)colonization. It could overshadow the main objective of Cook-Lynn’s decolonization project. In the end, it may backfire.

This chapter definitely suggests the limits of Cook-Lynn’s dogma. Throughout this dissertation, I have used her polemics – fiction and non-fiction – to establish the kind of scholarship she promotes and that defines her status as an Indianist and organic intellectual. Another study might consider the American Indian scholarship that falls outside of Cook-Lynn’s program to argue for its relative strengths and weaknesses. Within Cook-Lynn’s view, such

scholarship is of little value. While it has not been the purpose of this dissertation to challenge this stand, which dismisses scholarly projects whose aim is not to seek sovereignty for Indian nations, I believe that it merits investigation.

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