

CONFLICTING AGENDAS:

EXCLUSION AND ASSIMILATION IN 19TH CENTURY U.S. INDIAN POLICY

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1. Introduction

In the nineteenth century—that extended century that ran from the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, United States Indian policy vacillated between two seemingly mutually exclusive polarities, that of assimilation and that of exclusion. The assimilationist pole attempted to bring Native peoples into the larger national framework through detribalization, enfranchisement, and education. The product of well a meaning liberal/progressive mentality, assimilation often meant the virtual kidnapping of Native American children into boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak their own languages, dress in their customary ways, and eat their customary foods. The idea that Native Americans could be made into “real” (white, or semi-white) Americans by breaking up common holdings, closing reservations, eliminating tribal status and forcing men and women to become independent farmers or urban workers emerged not from any intentional inclination to harm, but from an opposite desire to include the subjects of these arbitrary actions into the larger commonwealth.

At the same time there existed a deep, widely accepted, and often brutal racism which tended to be directed first and foremost at African-Americans, but also toward other ethnic minorities (Jews, Irish Catholics, Asians, and, of course, Native American Indians). This strain of the American social-political agenda worked at odds with the progressive strain. It was consciously exclusive and in Indian policy this translated into forced expulsion on to reservations situated in the least productive and most deprived regions of the country. Strongest in areas with the largest Native American populations, it was

motivated by the basic racial dogmas of the times along with the craving for cheap land, access to mineral wealth, and other economic considerations.

These competing impulses led to a confused, contradictory, and often toxic policy on the part of the federal government toward native peoples. The constant attempt on the part of state and territorial governments to circumvent and override federal policy when it seemed to be “favoring” the Indians only added to the confusion. The voice that was most often not heard, though not for lack of trying, was that of the Indians themselves.

The polar tensions and marked inconsistencies in US Indian policy, though in some ways uniquely American, were informed by the larger issues of inclusion vs. exclusion, assimilation vs. expulsion, that arose throughout the Euro-American regions of dominance during the nineteenth century. Inspired by the liberal, humanist, and progressive ideas that both prompted and resulted from the American and French Revolutions, assimilationist movements in the Americas sought to bring native peoples into the national fold while similar movements in Europe sought to include Jews and other minorities within the larger cultures around them. Equally inspired by pseudoscientific theories that pretended to see humankind almost in terms of separate species based on color, culture, and/or, ethnicity and borrowing from new evolutionary theories in biology, radical racists moved in the opposite direction. The political, moral, and social policies developed and imposed by the proponents of these opposing ideologies had, and still have, immense consequences for the Native American communities in the United States. Either way, the identity and integrity of Native American peoples—individually and communally—was severely compromised

during this period; both the assimilationist trends and the exclusionary trends in the social-political system aimed to erase the separate identity of American Indians.

2. The Science of Race

Racism and ethnicism certainly were not inventions of the nineteenth century but the “scientific” justification of these pathologies was. The period saw the rise of what was called “scientific racism”—essentially a rational justification for the suppression of the rights of “inferior races” (non-whites, with varying definitions of what that meant) by “superior races” (white Euro-Americans). The very idea that there can be a science of race, never mind a science that justifies racism, will seem to be an oxymoron to the majority of modern Americans. It is easy to forget that until the genocidal implications of the theory were brought to the forefront by the Nazi regime in the mid twentieth century the acceptability of racial science was widely accepted and respected by the intellectual, scientific, and political circles of all the Euro-American states. To this day racism and ethnicism remain powerful forces over wide areas of the globe as witnessed by the periodic outbursts of genocidal violence in regions as disparate as Rwanda, the fractured states of the former Yugoslavia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Middle East. Yet, in these regions there is little evidence of attempts to make hatred scientific; differences in religious beliefs, language, customs, and contention over land and resources are enough to “justify” the bloodletting between groups. In this sense interracial and interethnic strife has returned to its historic, or, perhaps, prehistoric, roots.

The scientific justification of racism in Euro-American culture during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries seems to be, in part, an attempt to circumvent the Christian

understanding that there is a fundamental equality of all human beings in the “image and likeness” of God. While Christians tolerated and often embraced political and social inequalities, including slavery, there was a profound reticence about extending this to the ontological plane. Thus, there was a deep tension between socio-political practices and the concept that all human beings are equal in the sight of God.¹ John Locke’s secularization of Christian anthropology in his theory of natural (human) rights further challenged any idea that the debasement of one group of human beings by another could be justified on any level. This was the source of a major intellectual and moral crisis for the Founders of the American Republic, many of whom were slaveholders living on land forcibly expropriated from its original inhabitants. The invention of a justification for the economic exploitation of millions of involuntary laborers and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of others from their ancestral homelands provided a way out of the dilemma—at least for some.

Science in the nineteenth century was emerging as an acceptable alternative to the Christian world view. In reality, the conflation of the two world views, leaving conflicts between them ignored or unresolved was perhaps more common than the outright rejection of one for the other—at least on the popular level where most politicians lived. Thus, in both Europe and the Americas, ‘scientific’ justifications for racial and ethnic oppression coexisted with traditional religious views in the minds of what may well have been the great majority of the population. Real tensions existed among and between liberal, Marxist, and traditional conservative intellectuals on the one hand, and an emerging group of Social-Darwinists on the other. Yet, the majority of the population and the political elites that led them were relatively content to adopt a syncretistic and opportunistic combination

¹ (Horsman May 1975, 154)

of disparate ideas that supported contemporary prejudices while serving their own particular economic interests.

The application of “racial science” to the American Indians is spelled out very clearly in Reginald Horsman’s article entitled, “Scientific Racism and the American Indian in the Mid-Nineteenth Century”. Horsman traces the stages of the development of the theory and its increasing acceptance across a broad section of American scientific, popular, and political culture. Without going into too much detail, Horsman contrasts the generally positive and optimistic attitudes toward Native Americans (not “inherently inferior”, racially) in the period from 1800-1840 through a near complete reversal of those attitudes by 1850.² Of course, even within the earlier period there were powerful voices advocating against the Indians, most noteworthy in the expulsion of the so called Five Civilized Tribes from their homelands in the Southeast during the Jacksonian era. Likewise, there were voices of moderation in the later period. What has to be noted, however, is that racial “science” and social-political exigencies were closely bound together. The period after 1840 and up to the Civil War was a time in which Southerners were attempting to rationalize slavery as more than an economic necessity; it was to be regarded a positive good in and of itself for all concerned—including the slaves. To do this they latched onto the racial theories of the likes of William Stanton, Rembart Patrick, Charles Caldwell, and others³. Most of these men published in the South but their influence was felt nationwide. Indians, as “dark people”, were drawn into the polemics about race.

² (Horsman May 1975, 153ff)

³ (Horsman May 1975, 155, and footnotes)

It is also necessary to assert that even those voices raised within the dominant population to defend the inherent equality of the races, and of Indians in particular, emphasized their potential for *change*. Native peoples could be “civilized”, made like white people, and brought into the larger society. There was little, if any, appreciation of the rights and desires of Indians to determine their own cultural path—especially if it didn’t correspond with what the majority determined to be the right one.

One final note to touch upon with regard to the “science” of racism during the nineteenth century is the pre-Darwin theory of “polygenesis”, meaning the separate creation of the races in distinct regions of the planet. This idea was opposed by Christians for both anthropological and theological reasons and would be opposed and disproved from a Darwinian evolutionary perspective after the middle of the century. It is worth mentioning, though, because it is tangentially related to the anthropological/religious theories that tried to explain the American Indians in terms of a “lost tribe” of Hebrews, or Egyptians, etc., which played a part in religious movements such as Mormonism. The point here is that even conflicting theories about American Indians (polygenetic, lost tribes, or other) sought constantly to relate the Indian to the Euro-American experience and perspective. The question was, “how do they relate to us? What do they mean to us?”, not “How do they relate to themselves? How do they describe themselves?” This is crucial because it reveals the depth of Euro-American cultural imperialism at the time even among those who considered themselves “friends of the Indian”.

3. Education, Assimilation and/or Cost Effective Extermination

At the Friday July 17, 2009 morning session of the Abby Kelley Foster TAH Summer Institute, Dr. Doughton discussed the process of assimilation through education in a lecture entitled, “*To Kill the Indian, To Save the Man: Friends & Others Educating for Extinction*”⁴. The lecture paralleled and built upon readings assigned for the Institute in David Wallace Adams’, “*Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875-1928*”⁵ The premise of both the book and the lecture was that even well meaning “advocates” for the Indians did much to damage and destroy American Indian culture—especially belief systems, language, and common property traditions.

Even the term, “advocate”, can be called into question (both as a verb and as a noun) when one considers the motivations of Henry Pancoast , Carl Schurz , and Secretary of the Interior Henry Teller, who seem to have reasoned that education would be a more effective means of annihilation than outright butchery!⁶ The reasoning of these men might fairly be called “cost effective extermination”—relying on cultural extermination to accomplish what the politically and morally objectionable choice of physical extermination would realize at a much higher monetary cost. It should also be noted that physical extermination

⁴ (Daly, Summer 2009 NOTES_first_draft 2009, 17-21)

⁵ (Adams 2007, ch 1, 2,5)

⁶ Pancoast was quoted to have written in 1882, “We must either butcher them or civilize them and what we do we must do quickly.” Shcurz concluded that the cost of killing a single Indian in warfare was a million dollars while the cost of education (with the aim of assimilation) would cost \$1200. Secretary of the Interior Henry Teller estimated the cost of waging war against American Indians over a ten year period would be 22 million dollars but that 30, 000 Indian children could be educated for less than a quarter the cost.

was discussed publicly, if peripherally, by the likes of L. Frank Baum, the author of the “Wizard of Oz”⁷.

In all fairness, it is clear that the majority of persons involved in the Indian education programs —especially the Protestant (and some Catholic) missionaries that ran most of the boarding schools for the Bureau of Indian Affairs—did not advocate physical extermination of any kind and did not see their work in terms of being a cost effective means of destroying Indian people. For the missionaries and teachers who worked in the boarding schools education was a means of *saving* Native Americans and giving them the chance of joining “civilized” society. They understood their work to have both religious (converting the Indian to Christ and saving his/her soul) and civic (bringing the Indian into civilized society) dimensions. Indeed, as time went on they found a good deal of support from within the Indian communities themselves—if not always for the same reasons.⁸ Education had always been a double edged sword, as witnessed in the 18th century by Samson Occom and others and as anticipated by the 20th century when graduates of the boarding schools would become instrumental in the movement to restore sovereignty.

All that being said, the boarding school experience for many, if not most, Indian children and their families was terribly disruptive. Even children who attended day schools (versus long term boarding schools) were generally forced to wear clothing that met the dominant society’s standards, forbidden to speak in their native language, and in other ways taught not to “act Indian”. In the boarding schools themselves these practices were nearly universal and contributed much to the virtual extinction of Indian language except

⁷ (Hastings unknown)

⁸ (Daly, Summer 2009 NOTES_first_draft 2009, 19-20)

among a few tribes like the Navajo and Hopi who managed to be somewhat more successful than most in fending off the BIA and the missionaries.

It is probably worth looking at the rationale put forth in Richard Pratt's (in)famous "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" speech (excerpts below).⁹ Pratt was instrumental in the creation of the boarding schools and in US Indian policies in general at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁰ His experiments with Indian prisoners of war led him to the theory that Indians could be "saved" from savagery and made into productive citizens if they were taught, or forced, to take on the styles, language, mannerisms, behaviors, and religion of the dominant majority. In his speech he lays out his game plan:

"A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one....In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, save the man"

"We have never made any attempt to civilize them with the idea of taking them into our nation, and all of our policies have been against citizenizing and absorbing them...."

"We make our greatest mistake in feeding our civilization to the Indians instead of feeding the Indians to our civilization...We invite the Germans to come into our country and communities, and share our customs, our civilization, to be of it; and the result is immediate success. Why not try it on the Indians? Why not invite them into the experiences in our communities? Why always invite and compel them to remain a people unto themselves?"

"It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like all the rest of us...Transfer the infant white to the savage surroundings, he will grow to possess a savage language, superstition, and habit. Transfer the savage-born infant to the surroundings of civilization, and he will grow to possess a civilized language and habit."

".....The school at Carlisle is an attempt on the part of the part of the government to do this. Carlisle has always planted treason to the tribe and loyalty to the nation at large. It has preached against colonizing Indians, and in favor of individualizing them....Carlisle fills young Indians with the spirit of loyalty to the stars and stripes, and then moves them out into our communities.....It says to him if he gets his living by the sweat of the brow, and demonstrates to the nation that he is a man, he does more good for his race than hundreds of his fellows who cling to their tribal communistic surroundings...."

⁹ (Pratt, Richard H.(1892), Harvard University Press (reprint, 1973) 1973, 260-271)

¹⁰ (Daly, Summer 2009 NOTES_first_draft 2009, 19-20)

Pratt goes on to suggest that the Land in Severalty Bill (the Dawes Act) ought to be used to put Indians and whites in close proximity, "...by assigning land so as to intersperse good, civilized people among them...so...that two or three white families come between two Indian families". In so doing, he exhibits the "best" of the liberal spirit of his day. Pratt's simple premise is that Indians, as they were, must be transformed into something else made in the image and likeness of "acceptable" white Protestant society, because white Protestant society is by definition, *civilized*. He never for a moment considers any other alternatives; the choice is stark—savagery or civilization—and the definitions of each are equally stark. The schools, far from being a means of "colonizing" the Indians, were seen as a means for liberating them.

The forced changes of language, clothing, religion, and culture in the schools were literally meant to "kill the Indian" and make him, "a man". But Pratt and thousands of other do-gooders like him never considered the implications of telling Native Americans that until they killed off their "Indian-ness" they were less than men (meaning, human beings).

Herein lays the crux of the problem in terms of the actual results of Indian boarding schools like Carlisle. When one kills a person's language, religion, customs, and culture one commits a form of bloodless genocide. The victim is left with nothing of his or her own and is forced to become someone else. In theory this can be done without doing harm—indeed it was being done for the better in the minds of its advocates—but the actual experience of the person who is subject to it is very often psychological and spiritual devastation. Degraded and deprived of the symbols that defined them, Native Americans had an

experience very similar to that of a rape victim. The forcible violation of one's person is by definition, rape.

Of course, none of the well intentioned perpetrators of the late nineteenth century assimilationist policies saw it that way. In fact, they saw themselves as rescuers of the Indians—saving them from isolation and victimization by those who would happily deprive them not only of their land and culture, but of their very lives. As has often been the case, the voices of Native Americans were not heard, or, only partially heard. And, in fairness, a fair number of Indians saw the Pratt solution as the only realistic one. Everything else had failed; they had been deprived of their land and their ways, they had lost every time they had resisted, so why not finally surrender—everything? If it meant the physical survival of their children, then so be it. Others, of course, continued to resist, if only passively and a considerable number fell into the depression, alcoholism, and internal violence that continues to plague Native American communities until today.

Yet, for all the harm the assimilationists unintentionally did, they also trained the first line of defense against further depredations. By teaching Indian children the ways of the dominant society, they ensured that some would use those lessons to defend Native American rights. Paradoxically, Pratt's schools would raise up a literate and capable group of men and women who, in the pattern of Samuel Occom and others in the past, would be able use the law as a weapon and shield to ensure at least some degree of native survival. Thus, Tom Doughton's assertion that the boarding schools, while devastating for some—perhaps most—Native American children, also provided a means for others to reformulate

the ongoing struggle to retain their identity. They embodied both “victimization and empowerment”.¹¹

4. Identity and Representation

From the mid nineteenth century on we are presented with an incredible richness of actual representations of the Native American experience in the form of photographs. However, even here we must employ the “hermeneutic of suspicion” when interpreting the sources. The vast majority of the images from this period come from sources outside the native community—namely, from Euro-American photographers, often working for the United States government, or one of its affiliates. That being said, the sheer volume of the record, if employed carefully, allows for their use as legitimate interpreters of the Indian experience. During the course of the Summer Institute participants were broken up into small groups to look at photographs taken in various places (from Virginia in the East to the Plains in the West) and times (1870’s-1930’s) with the aim of interpreting their content. What did they tell us about the experience of Native Americans—in their own context, in the context of the dominant culture, in the expectations of those portraying them, and so on?¹²

Depending on the images, participants noted a wide range of socio-economic positions, from destitution and defeat in pictures of prisoners taken in the Indian Wars, to well dressed and highly placed tribal petitioners to Congress. Facial expressions—from despair to quiet indignation to sober pride—we noted by many. “Racial” features were also

¹¹ (Daly, Summer 2009 NOTES_first_draft 2009, 18)

¹² (Daly, Summer 2009 NOTES_first_draft 2009, 16,17)

noted—from those who looked as much “African American” as “Indian” to those who fit the expectations for what an “Indian” should look like—whatever that might be. Varying degrees of integration into the dominant culture could also be seen, from reservation Indians in “native” dress to urban Indians in Virginia—wearing symbolic feathers and furs for some sort of gathering along with the very contemporary suits and skirts that could be found on virtually any middle class man or woman of the streets of Richmond.¹³

We are always presented with problems when attempting to interpret apparently straightforward images from the past; that of the intention/purpose of the composer, that of the understanding of the subjects (their interpretation of why they were being presented), and that of our own cultural points of views (biases or prejudices). For instance, in the thousands of images we had available to us in the files that Dr. Doughton made available to us, we find Indians presented in many different contexts, as mentioned above. What we don't know, at least in most cases, is the identity of the photographer, his or her affiliations, and his or her intentions in the presentation/composition of the photo. To be sure, sometimes it is relatively easy to make an intelligent guess, but very often it is more complicated. Was a photo of a powwow (see the appendix) taken by a native person for private purposes, or was it taken by an outsider—perhaps from one of the government departments or an educational institution—for purposes of recording a “vanishing” race? Was the photo of the Indian prisoners taken to record the perceived “baseness” and “savagery” of the subjects, or, to inculcate sympathy for their fate? Does it even matter, since the final interpretation is always in the mind of the perceiver?

¹³ (Daly, Summer 2009 NOTES_first_draft 2009) Images in the appendix

To this last question, I will answer: yes, the interpretation matters and thus, the initial purpose for creating the image matters, when we can uncover it. We are confronted here with the “ocular” vs. “specular” conundrum that Alice Nash illustrated so well in a workshop on October 2, 2008.¹⁴ Ocular in this context means to look a person or culture from within that person’s or culture’s particular experience; specular means to perceive it from the outside—as a spectator. The vast bulk of the material we have about Native American peoples from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, whether written or representational, falls in the “specular” category. We have the documents and images created by outsiders looking in, and these outsiders almost always had a very clear agenda—one that was rarely sympathetic to Indians as they actually existed in the world, rather, one that would change them into something altogether different.

For instance, Indian spirituality was nearly always portrayed as “superstition” and regarded with suspicion. The outlawing of the “Ghost Dance” as potentially subversive and the suppression of other religious practices in the boarding schools as “un-Christian” are examples of this attitude. The United States government, without establishing any one particular denomination as the State’s favorite, heavily supported Protestant missionaries to the Indians and doled out boarding school monies to these organizations.¹⁵ The mindset that contributed to this is well expressed by Adams:

¹⁴ (Daly, October 2, 2008 Workshop Notes 2008)

¹⁵ The power structure of the United States in this period was overwhelmingly “Protestant” in terms of religious persuasion. Catholic missions and schools existed as did Orthodox Christian missions and schools in Alaska. In the last instance there were a number of conflicts as Protestant missionaries and schools competed with the well established Orthodox—often considering the later practically non Christian and a further source of ‘superstition’. This little studied era is well presented in Michael Oleksa’s, “Orthodox Alaska: A Theology of Mission” (Saint Vladimir Seminary Press, 1993).

“Because the philanthropic movement drew its moral energy from the reformers’ quest to create a Protestant America and because ethnocentrism caused them to look upon native religious practices as primitive and barbaric remnants of a precivilized existence, it is not surprising that the Indians’ religious conversion should surface as a major educational objective. As one Indian educator noted, “ A really civilized people cannot be found in the world except where the Bible has been sent and the gospel taught; hence, we believe that the Indians must have, as an essential part of their education, Christian training”¹⁶

It is important to note that the conversion of Indians to Christianity was not seen only as their deliverance from perdition (though it was certainly that in the minds of the missionaries) but as a means of truly civilizing them. We are dealing with an historical period in which “(Protestant) Christian culture” was synonymous with civilization in the minds of virtually the entire elite of the English speaking Euro-American world. The U.S. government was less concerned with religion, as the Constitution compelled it to be, than with the establishment of a common national order based on a common understanding of what it meant to be a civilized people. Outside the reservations a battle over the “Protestant” nature of American education would begin to rage between the establishment and the millions of new Catholic immigrants and their leaders. Though this did touch tangentially on Indian education, it is outside the parameters of this paper. Let it suffice to say that “Christianity” here means the established Protestant Christianity of the day, (which, interestingly, excluded many of the new evangelical/fundamentalist groups emerging at this time).

The schools were not content to teach the Native Americans English and the basic skill of “reading, writing, and arithmetic”. Their goal was nothing less than the total transformation of the Indians in to what counted for “real Americans” of the times. Haircuts, clothing styles, the foods to be eaten and when they were to be eaten, the keeping

¹⁶ (Adams 2007, 23)

of rigorous schedules, and a change of religion all were meant to “kill the Indian” in order to “save” the person. It was a conscious effort to destroy a people’s identity from the ground up. Many of the images we have of Indians in this period contrast the “savage”, wearing the traditional clothes, with long hair and often in front of a teepee (real, or, painted in the background), with the “civilized” person in the clothing, hairstyles, and permanent homes of the dominant society. In other cases, when Native Americans are portrayed in their traditional clothing and habitats it is to record of “last” of a “vanishing race”. Either way, virtually no one among the Euro-American elites, and, ever fewer of the Native Americans themselves, expected the “savage” image, noble or otherwise, to survive for another generation. The “Indian” as whites understood him/her was to be exterminated. The only real debate was whether they would depart by way of assimilation or by way of expulsion and physical annihilation. As the nineteenth century progressed those who would “kill the Indian” by way of assimilation were clearly the winners of the debate. It could be argued that the Indians were losers either way. Of course, what was not taken into account is that some of the Indians who were intended for assimilation would learn the lessons taught in the boarding schools well enough to turn the tables and become leaders of a Native American movement to preserve their “Indian” identities and cultures. That, however, for the most part is a tale for the twentieth century and beyond.

5. Conclusion

If we use the terms, “assimilation” and “exclusion” to define US Indian policy, then we can say that the nineteenth century began on a more assimilationist than exclusionary note. Thomas Jefferson noted that there was a “coincidence of interests” between the

rac¹⁷ and Congress created a “Civilization Fund” to promote the process of Indian integration.¹⁸ However, by the 1820’s and 1830’s a more radically exclusionist policy rapidly took over as white settlers moved into the regions inhabited by “civilized” tribes in the Southeast and the interests of the frontier and southern white planters began to coincide (the Jacksonian era). The expulsion of the so called, Five Civilized Tribes, from the Southeast to Indian Territory is the grossest and most brutal example of the change in policy. Exclusion, though, was never universally approved and liberals—especially those from the Northeast where Indian populations had already been rendered invisible by the dominant population—continued to push for a policy of inclusion. It was this policy that would come to the fore again after the Civil War, when assimilationist attitudes had an impact on everything from African American civil rights (and, by implication, Indian civil rights) to the absorption of huge numbers of non English speaking Europeans. By the end of the last of the great Indian Wars assimilation became the predominating policy of the US Government.

Whether “assimilationist” or “exclusionist”, though, the price for the American Indians was essentially the same—cultural liquidation. Outright physical annihilation, though it had a few proponents, was far too extreme a policy for a nation built on the values expressed in the Declaration of Independence and, even more deeply, on Christian values regarding the nature of the human person as the “image and likeness of God”. The “killing of the Indian” would require a different set of tactics, tactics which would consciously draw in the values laid down in the Declaration of Independence and in Christian culture. The

¹⁷ (Adams 2007, 7)

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

equality that Jefferson alluded to could only be provided in the context of “civilization” which in turn required the acquisition of the hallmarks of civilization—religion being one of them. The front line in this ultimate “Indian War” would be education—as it was across the board in the attempt to assimilate those who came from different cultural backgrounds during this time period.

The great difficulty in analyzing the time frame in question is the problem of “specular” versus “ocular”. No matter what angle we try to take in our analysis we are confronted with the fact that we are outsiders not only to the world of the Indians of the period but to that of the dominant society, too. A measure of sympathy toward both parties in the struggle is required if we are to hope to acquire any real understanding of the experiences and motivations of the individuals and communities involved. It is easier for a twenty first century person to feel sympathy for the Indians, who were hounded from place to place, deprived of their means of survival, made utterly dependent on their persecutors, and then pressured into a way of life foreign to them. Yet, the motivation of the assimilationists was one of “inclusion”, a word very much in vogue in our own times. In their own minds, the reformers who pushed for Native American assimilation into the larger culture were not depriving them of anything of value; rather, they were bringing them from poverty to wealth, from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light. Their intentions were beyond question, good, though they paved the road to a living hell for thousands. And, perhaps, it is here that we can find some common ground with them and look for a moment at their world from an “ocular” lens. The dominating intellectual, political, and social elites of our own time and place are equally intent on bringing “enlightenment” to those they understand to be in the darkness of “superstition” and

“ignorance”. And, like the reformers of the nineteenth century, they are using education as the foremost weapon in their arsenal.

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APPENDIX



Pamunkey Tribal Powow 1920's (Source: Thomas Doughton's downloaded collections of images—available on website and CD)



Indian representation to Congress? (Smithsonian Collection)



Indian POWs (?) Smithsonian Collection