# DEMILLE INDIANS: THE NATIVE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD

By

JACOB FLOYD

Bachelor of Arts/Media Arts Studies
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah
2008

Master of Arts/Cinema Studies
New York University
New York, New York
2011

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
May, 2018

DEMILLE INDIANS: THE NATIVE AMERICAN

EXPERIENCE IN CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD

Dissertation Approved:

Jeff Menne

Dissertation Adviser

Lindsey Smith

Graig Uhlin

Louise Siddons

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

A complete list of the people who have made the completion of this dissertation possible would resemble the long end-credits of a major Hollywood epic. As I have performed research, solved conceptual problems, and written this project I have routinely been reminded of lessons I have learned throughout my educational life from so many valued teachers at all levels, many of whom may be unaware of their impact on my life and career.

I am grateful for the guidance and support of my Dissertation Committee throughout this process, especially my advisor, Dr. Jeff Menne, for his comments and suggestions. I am also thankful for Muscogee (Creek) Nation Higher Education for providing me with a Doctoral Grant to support me with financial assistance while I wrote the bulk of this dissertation. I also wish to acknowledge the L. Tom Perry Special Collections at the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University and the Margaret Herrick Library where I performed the majority of my archival research.

Finally, and most importantly, I am grateful to my parents, James and Carol Floyd, not only for their enthusiastic support throughout this project and my educational career, but for instilling within me a love of history from a young age. Through their lessons and examples, they demonstrated to me the value and vital importance of preserving and perpetuating my Muscogee (Creek) culture and history.

-Mvto

Name: JACOB FLOYD

Date of Degree: MAY, 2018

Title of Study: DISSERTATION

Major Field: ENGLISH (SCREEN STUDIES)

Native American actors in Studio Hollywood were engaged in extensive work to form and shape their persona through extensive off screen performance. An outsized presence in studio publicity provided Native actors with notoriety and they leveraged their status as public figures to advocate for better conditions for Native film workers in Hollywood. In addition to labor advocacy, Native actors used their statuses as public figures and their connections to the industry to build and advocate for a Native American Community in Hollywood and Los Angeles. Native Americans in Studio Hollywood were involved in complex negotiations about identity in an urban, modern industry. While films exploited the depiction of a supposedly "vanishing people," in the 1930s and 40s, Hollywood became home to a large and vibrant Native American community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

# INTRODUCTION:

## NATIVE AMERICAN FILM HISTORY

"Everything about being Indian has been shaped by the camera"[1] writes Paul Chaat Smith. As a Native American in film studies, whose own life and identity has been shaped by the camera (as viewer, creator, student, and scholar), I could relate many personal experiences that have informed this work. However, its direct genesis began years ago in an undergraduate film history class when the professor made a passing mention of Native American extras during the production of a Western. This anecdote was a paradigm shifting moment for me. I did not know that Native Americans had a film history; I thought that Native Americans were relatively new to using film, and that we had not played ourselves on screen until the 1970s. For me, this revelation fundamentally changed the relationship between Native Americans and film. It is a striking moment to realize that you have a history when you thought none existed. To me, the presence of Native Americans in early film production meant that a history of Native film workers and a Native tradition in film must exist somewhere.

At the time, I was a student in film production with hopes of becoming a director. Most of my prospective film projects were based in my Native heritage, but I was beset

by a representational anxiety that prevented me from pursuing these projects because I felt unsure how I could comfortably and responsibly present my heritage to largely non-Native audiences. These concerns about Native identity and its presentation in media is what led me to pursue film studies as a graduate student. Additionally, as someone who grew up largely in front of TV and movie screens, I had developed a healthy skepticism towards media representations of Native people in general. The Indians I saw on screen were, to me, not images of reality but negative images that needed to be resisted and denied. I was fascinated, and troubled, that these Native actors had seemingly embraced the stereotypes I had become self-conscious about and had portrayed them in the very kinds of films that I resisted the most.

The questions that guide this project all appeared at this early stage. I wanted to know basic questions like what their careers were like, if they were part of the Studio System, if they were exploited, where they lived, and how they arrived in Hollywood. Yet, the overarching question was "why"? Why did they act in roles that solidified the stereotype of the Hollywood Indian? From what I knew about Native culture and history, our ability to not only survive but adapt and transform all aspects of colonization used against us, I could not believe that these actors were simply dupes or sell outs. They must have gotten something out of the industry. There must have been some traces of resistance, but I was unsure where to look for them.

I narrowed my focus in graduate school after reading about Chief Thundercloud and the DeMille Indians in Beverly Singer's *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens*, one of the first surveys of Native Americans in film history. Singer spends only three short paragraphs relating the "attempt by Indians in Hollywood to be recognized by the federal government as a tribe"[2] led by Chief Thundercloud. This story resonated with me and I decided to focus on these DeMille Indians, a group of actors and extras who appeared together in a series of films from the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s. This period was also attractive to me for historical reasons: it was the Golden Age of Hollywood and its Studio System production model. It was also a significant time for change in contemporary American history with the Great Depression and, specifically for Native Americans, with the so-called Indian New Deal.

As I began to watch these actors' films and conduct my initial research, I encountered a problem: the actors were barely on screen, and the content of the films did little to help answer my questions about their lives and careers. I was left with a nagging question: how does one tell a film history that does not exist on film? This question is explored, along with my initial research into Chief Thundercloud, in my short, impressionistic documentary "Tonto Plays Himself" (2010). In that film, my approach to the visual absence of Native agency on screen was to reuse, manipulate, and modify the existing film record. By parodying and negating the existing stereotypical images, I was able to present a counter-narrative of Native participation in film, to imagine history as it

might have been. This approach solved a problem in presenting a persuasive story, but did not provide a solution to problems I encountered in investigating and writing a Native film history. As I continued my academic study, I attempted to develop a methodology for my project, and in surveying existing studies about Native Americans in the film industry, I encountered two general, fundamental problems for investigating and writing a Native American film history. These problems also account for the absence of Native people in traditional histories of media: a problem of expectation and a problem related to the object of study. I will first describe these problems and then present my own methodology that I developed as a solution to them.

## Film History and Native Americans

As Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery note, "every piece of film historical writing…implicitly is based on a set of assumptions about history."[3] The absence of Native Americans, and especially Native agency, in the history of media may be attributed to a lack of assumption or rather, expectation. I use "expectation" in reference to Philip J. Deloria's use of it in his book *Indians in Unexpected Places* where he argues that expectations about Native people in culture and history are "the products and the tools of domination and…are an inheritance that haunts each and every one of us."[4] These inherited cultural expectations have informed the history of film, intentionally or not. Whether or not bias is present, it is understandable that non-Native historians, as products of American colonial culture, would not expect a Native presence in media

history; a person generally does not undertake a search for something they do not expect to find.

These expectations result in gaps and unfollowed tracks in media history related to Native peoples. A favorite example of this problem at work appears in a book by a pioneer of film history (whose work has been an influence on mine) who writes about a photograph depicting the cast and crew of *The Squaw Man*. Front and center in the photo appear to be a Native man, woman, and child. However, the writer's focus is on a barn in the background that became part of the Paramount studio backlot. The missing identities (uncredited Indians in production stills is its own genre of archival document[5]) go uninterrogated, not because the historian had a prejudice towards Native people, but because his history was interested in the development of the studio system and its infrastructure. Questions cannot be answered if one does not ask them, and generally, one does not ask if one does not expect an answer. While this should be encouraging for future projects by Native scholars, it is also troubling, as time passes, to imagine what avenues have been closed off forever and missed because no one was looking to follow them.

A myopia of certain historians is not limited to Native Americans. Throughout history, film and otherwise, there has been an expectation about whose stories are worth telling. Film history has largely charted institutions (studios, organizations, conglomerations) and the "great men" of its history. Untold are the countless stories of

the individuals and labor that built and operated those institutions, or supported those "great men." Even when studying production itself, the collaborative nature of film is simplified through discussions of "auteurs," be they directors, actors, or screenwriters. In part, this is a result of an expectation about the studio system. Auteurs were celebrated for being the rare individuals who were able to leave personal touches on the products of corporate entertainment enterprises. Still, even if one expects a history among the often anonymous others of film history, one is confronted by a research problem: what can one examine to tell these histories? Expectations aside, history has told the story of auteurs because it is ever-present in films. As such, the history of Native Americans and film is also the history of Native Americans as they appear on screen.

*The Object of Study*

Regarding Native actors, Michelle H. Raheja writes that "Native Americans in mass media have occupied a twilight zone existence in which they are both hypervisible in ways overdetermined by popular and nostalgic representations and completely invisible because Native American actors are often uncredited, unpaid, and cast in ancillary, sometimes demeaning roles."[6] At times, this invisibility has extended from cultural and narrative space into film scholarship. While there is much encouraging recent scholarship, research on Native Americans and film history has largely focused on the image of Native Americans on film as opposed to the lives of Native workers involved in

filmmaking. Absent of Native life, there is a danger in a scholarly emphasis on the image of Native Americans which results in a form of narrative described by Gayatri Spivak where "two senses of representation are being run together: representation as 'speaking for'…and representation as 're-presentation', as in art…"[7] In these narratives, the fascination is about how others represented Native Americans; the dominant discourse of Anglo-American culture. The risk is that the discussion is framed by and discusses Native representations as dictated by non-Natives.

The second problem serves as an explanation for Native actors' inhabiting this "twilight zone" in scholarship. Historically, film studies' common approach has been to examine films as texts in the tradition of literary studies, where scholars examine the film text as the primary "site for the production of meaning."[8] This approach was beneficial in the field's attempts to find institutional legitimacy within the academy, and can be useful in studies charting the developments of film aesthetics and narratives; however, this approach can also overlook the variety of experiences that inform the work of film production. Film studies centering texts as the principal object of study have limitations for telling a history of Native American participation in filmmaking. The narrative requirements of the Western film genre pushed Native figures to the margins, and these actors, involved in Studio Hollywood's rigid method of production, worked within a hierarchy of creative control that limited their input into how their images would appear on-screen. Additionally, in filmmaking, the edit operates as a control mechanism

designed to excise any unwanted elements; images or performances that deviated from expectation or directorial orders were edited-out from films and lost to history.

The Native American experience in Studio Hollywood provides several other important limitations to a traditional film-based study. Compared to non-Native actors, Native Americans had extremely limited screen time and peripheral screen presence. At times, it is difficult, if not impossible, to locate a particular Native actor in a scene. In addition, actors' filmographies are incomplete, in part because many Native film workers were uncredited, credited unevenly, or even when credited, names were misspelled. In the westerns from this period there is one particular industry practice that complicates the notion of what it means to be in a film: at times, large action set pieces were re-used in several films. How does one account for an actor's appearance if their image was repeated as stock footage? Lastly, the survival rate and availability of these films is rather low. Westerns, and especially the B-westerns and serials that comprise the bulk of these actors' filmographies, were and are not a high priority in preservation. Many films are only available in special collections, others exist in fragments or survive only in international release prints that may differ from the original American release, and some have been lost. If the film text is not adequate for this study, what else might be examined?

In recent decades, a growing number of film studies scholars have argued for a more holistic, historically-situated study of cinema. Richard Maltby summarizes this

"historical turn" as a move to understand cinema and Hollywood through "the social, cultural, and institutional contexts that surround it."[9] To appreciate these surrounding contexts, new film history has expanded study from the film text to include "anything existing or posited to exist outside of the cinematic text and the inferred conditions of its reception."[10] This approach presumably opens a limitless field of study, and is helpful in examining the careers of Native film workers because the culture they produced and the traces they left are most visible in off-screen material.

## A Native American Film History

My approach and methodology in this dissertation is largely an attempt to find solutions to these two historiographic problems. In regards to the problem of expectation, it builds around an explicit assumption that Native Americans have a film history to tell and that Native film workers had their own desires and goals within the film industry. In contrast to studies of Native Americans on film that ask how Native Americans were represented on screen, I want to know how these Native American actors represented themselves. To move them from the objects to subjects of film history. While I expected that they left traces of their activity in Hollywood, I was not sure where those traces were left or what that activity looked like.

To begin this study, I narrowed my focus through the "DeMille Indians" article and the period of roughly 1930 to 1948, the Hollywood Studio era. I began with the

filmography of Chief Thundercloud and used it to find other Native actors, in turn looking at their filmographies and generating a list of more names. I then searched through essentially any material I could find related to these names, and the additional names I then found in new material. The search material can be categorized into four categories: production material, publicity material, newspaper and trade publication articles, and other cultural material.

The production material largely comes from the Cecil B. DeMille archives at Harold B. Lee Library Special Collections at Brigham Young University (BYU) and the Margaret Herrick Library and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS). Framed by the "DeMille Indians" article, I began with an extensive reading of production materials related to *North West Mounted Police* to see if the production provided traces of the events reported in the article. Materials examined include studio research material, transcripts of story conferences, personal correspondence, studio memos, schedules, call sheets, and financial records.

This material was useful in understanding how DeMille and his associates viewed the film and did provide some insight into the experience of Native film workers on set. Yet, I realized there are limitations in this material for studying Native film workers. The majority of the production notes, correspondence, and studio memos surviving in archives belong to the powerful, non-Native figures in film production. They document the film as experienced and understood by studio heads, directors, producers, production

managers, and agents. With few, rare exceptions the machinations of studio Hollywood, the socio-economic effects of United States Government policies, and racial hierarchies in the early 20th century, limited Native film workers from these positions of creative control. Centering research in the production of Native images by non-Native creative forces risks suggesting a dynamic in which Native film workers did not exert agency, or were not involved in meaningful cultural production. If production materials could also obscure Native presence in Hollywood, I needed to expand my search.

The production of a film is one of the three branches of studio power that correspond with the metaphorical life of a film. Looking at production texts expands our understanding of a film, but still examines it at one stage and in one industry branch. After production, the other two branches are distribution (delivering a film to theaters and audiences), and exhibition (showing/watching a film). To these traditional branches, Mark Miller adds a fourth: "promotion," or publicity, from which the other three branches "borrowed and relied."[11] While a separate branch among the major studios, publicity departments were involved in a film's production, distribution, and exhibition. In the case of Native American actors, it is this branch, publicity, that is a significant and underutilized resource for understanding their work in Studio Hollywood. Publicity materials constitute the most significant source of material for this dissertation because it is where these Native actors are most present.

In fact, the article that I had used to narrow my focus, the "DeMille Indians" article, itself turned out to be a work of publicity for *North West Mounted Police* written by John Del Valle, a press agent for Paramount Pictures.[12] Finding the article in the *North West Mounted Police* pressbook during archival research was discouraging because in my mind, as publicity it suggested this was a work of fiction, and that perhaps this important trace of Native agency never happened. However, as I came to understand the nature of studio publicity in the film industry and the importance publicity played in the careers of actors, the article--and other publicity articles--led to valuable insights about the complex negotiations these actors performed and the avenues of potential agency and critique publicity provided. This negotiation is described in detail in the second chapter, but as illustrated in the DeMille article occupies a complex register of fact and fiction.

In reading publicity articles, I focused on two aspects: first, for potential traces of history verifiable in newspaper, trade publications, or other more reliable documents. These were found largely through the archives of Newspapers.com and the Lantern media history archive. Second, I focused on how the publicity constructs, or deconstructs, the actors' persona. The value of publicity for researchers is that in publicity we can see traces of actors' off-screen work that helped create, shape, and reinforce personas. This work can be considered a kind of cultural production that existed intertextually with their films.

Other materials consulted include memoirs, government documents (notably through the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center), genealogical records, and existing literature written by Native film workers. The most notably absent source is oral histories. While I have talked or corresponded with a handful of people connected to the Native Hollywood community during this period, I have not yet performed any official oral histories. While none of the film workers mentioned in this study are living, family members or members of the community who were children at the time would still provide significant insights into the experience of Native Americans in Studio Hollywood.

## Summary

The first chapter follows the career of the Demille Indian's namesake to contextualize the Hollywood system and genre conventions in which these Native actors worked. Specifically, it examines DeMille's initial success within the Indian picture in the 1910s and his revitalization of the Western genre through the western epic in the 1930s. In both instances, he found success by appealing to a civic pageantry that ascribed a cultural use value to his films. This approach extended to large, elaborate premieres and ballyhoo to promote these films, an approach that left open intertextual spaces for Native agency to assert itself.

Related to this ballyhoo, Paramount developed an elaborate and streamlined publicity department that became a model for the rest of the industry. The second chapter examines the place of Native American actors in film publicity. Inspired by the work of

Danae Clark in *Negotiating Hollywood,* this chapter argues that Native actors were engaged in extensive work to form and shape their persona through extensive off screen performance by examining how Chief Thundercloud's (Victor Daniels) offscreen persona critiqued and shaped his onscreen role in *Geronimo* (1939). An outsized presence in studio publicity provided Native actors with notoriety and they leveraged their status as public figures to advocate for better conditions for Native film workers in Hollywood. Chapter Three looks at the labor advocacy of Chief Many Treaties (William Hazlett) and Jim Thorpe during the fight for studio unions in the 1940s. In addition to labor advocacy, Native actors used their statuses as public figures and their connections to the industry to build and advocate a Native American Community in Hollywood and Los Angeles which is examined in chapter four. In turn, Native community groups modeled an urban Native modernity for non-Native Americans that countered both on and off-screen narratives about Native life and culture. As an example, this chapter showcases the remarkable career of White Bird (Mary Oliver) as she organized and facilitated a Native Community, and modeled a Native modernity to the Hollywood community.

The four chapters provide four different spaces relative to film: its premiere and exploitation, its publicity and intertexts, its labor history, and its community spaces. In each, we see Native Americans actively involved and utilizing the industry and their positions in it to achieve their own career goals and to advocate for Native American cultural, economic, or political causes. Where the on-screen Indian could not adapt to

modern progress, these Native Americans were involved in complex negotiations about identity in an urban, modern industry. While films exploited the depiction of a supposedly "vanishing people," Hollywood became home to a large and vibrant Native American community.

## Notes on Terminology and Names

As with any work on Indigenous peoples, terminology can be imprecise and laden with colonialist connotations. In this work, I will primarily use "Native American" since I am discussing members of Native nations, or individuals of Native ancestry from nations located within the contiguous United States. "American" is also a significant modifier from a film perspective because these film workers were involved in the American film industry and in larger conversations with American popular culture. I will also use the term "Native," my own preferred term, interchangeably to describe these people. I use "Indian" to describe the Native characters in the films as a reference to the Hollywood Indian, a well-documented and coded stereotype and genre descriptor (i.e. "The Indian Picture"). Uses of "Indian" outside of the films or "Indian-ness" refers to the ways in which Native peoples referred to the Hollywood Indian or the performance of Native culture performed to the expectations of non-Native audiences.

Individual actors are referred to by their performing names (e.g. Chief Thundercloud instead of Victor Daniels), a decision discussed more in-depth in Chapter two but made primarily for two reasons: First, as a study of narratives and negotiations,

these personas were the rhetorical creations these Native peoples used to negotiate the narratives that surrounded their careers. Second, it is impossible to determine where the actor ends and the persona begins. A large part of this work argues that these actors performed off-screen as much as on, and to try and determine what actions were performed by an actor separate from their performed personas, or the interests of creating these personas, is nearly impossible and any attempt would require a more intensive philosophical analysis than I am qualified to provide. Largely, my decision came from the fact that these actors themselves preferred to be called by these names.

## NOTES

[1]. Paul Chaat Smith, *Everything You Know About Indians Is Wrong* (Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 2009). 4

[2] Beverly R. Singer, *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).19-20

[3]. Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery, *Film History: Theory and Practice* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985), 4.

[4] Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 4.

[5]. For more on the history of missing Native identity in photography see "Before-and-after" in Joanna Hearne, *Native Recognition: Indigenous Cinema and the Western*, Horizons of Cinema (New York: SUNY Press, 2012).

[6.] Michelle H. Raheja, "Reading Nanook's Smile," in *Native Americans on Film: Conversations, Teaching, and Theory*, ed. M. Elise Marrubio and Eric L. Buffalohead (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 2013), 71.

[7] Gayatari Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. C Nelson and L Grossberg (New York: MacMillan, 1988), 271–313.

[8.] Richard Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema*, Second Edition (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 502.

[9.] Ibid.

[10.] Robert C. Allen, "Relocating American Film History," *Cultural Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 48–88, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380500492590.

[11.] Mark Stuart Miller. "Promoting Movies in the Late 1930s: Pressbooks at Warner Bros." (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1994), 322.

[12.] Khan Red, ed., "John Del Valle," *The 1951-52 Motion Picture Almanac* (New York: Quigley Publications, 1952).

# CHAPTER I

# DEMILLE, PARAMOUNT, INTERTEXT, AND CIVIC PAGEANTRY: THE SPACE OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE WESTERN EPIC AND ITS BALLYHOO

## Overview

The connection between Cecil B. DeMille and Native Americans extends beyond the "DeMille Indian" tribe publicized by John del Valle to promote *North West Mounted Police*; in fact, if any filmmaker would have had a "tribe" named after them, even in publicity, DeMille makes the most sense. From his early life to his film career, DeMille was fascinated with Native themes and utilized them in films that marked important developments in his own career and in the development of American cinema. Examining the namesake of Thundercloud and his contemporaries' "DeMille Indian" group provides important insights into the industry's generic conventions and other practices, especially in how publicity operated at Paramount**.**

Unlike many of his contemporaries in early Hollywood, DeMille had a successful career across multiple decades and developmental changes in American film. By the time of his celebrated cameo in 1950's *Sunset Boulevard* DeMille had become a living symbol of Hollywood's history, a connection from its grand silent past to its studio glory and,

perhaps in Wilder's film, a somewhat degraded, ironic form reflecting its industrial uncertainty post-Paramount Decision. While popularly known for his ambition and bombastic personality the one characteristic that explains DeMille's long success within the industry was his ability to utilize cultural intertext.

Sumiko Higashi argues this point most prominently, writing that DeMille found success by connecting his films to the "parallel discourses" and "cultural commodities" of American culture to imbue his products with significant cultural capital and resonance.[1] Higashi uses "intertextuality" differently from its popular connotation. Rather than the interplay between two or more film texts, her use of intertextual refers to the "congruence" of film with "cultural forms" such as contemporary discussions of race, class, and gender.[2] In this case, Higashi's use of the term is more in line with Robert Stam's application of Bakhtin's dialogism, and his explanation of the concept helps elucidate Higashi's use of "intertext" (a term popularized in the 1960s by Julia Kristeva's that was actually a translation of Bakhtin's "dialogic"). Stam prefers dialogism to intertext because while one suggests a connection between only texts, dialogism "refers to the infinite and open-ended possibilities generated by all the discursive practices of a culture."[3] A dialogic view of film would see films "rooted in social life and history" comprising "all cultural production, whether literate or non-literate, verbal or non-verbal, highbrow or low-brow."[4] In such a process the filmmaker "becomes the orchestrator, the amplifier of the ambient messages" that are present in culture.[5] DeMille's talent as a

producer was to orchestrate the cultural messages and practices of his time on screen. While DeMille was not always an innovator in filmmaking practice, his attention to cultural intertext in making and selling his films makes a study of his career illustrative of contemporary discussions, in this case regarding Native Americans.

In this chapter, I will first examine how DeMille orchestrated the cultural messages regarding Native Americans in his early plays and films to great success, and how this success largely established the generic expectation of Native Americans in film that limited the roles for the "DeMille Indians." However, DeMille's intertextual relationship with culture, particularly how he viewed films in relation to their cultural use value, and the need to articulate this use value to audiences through publicity, resulted in films with unstable meanings. By examining the pre-production and later exploitation of *North West Mounted Police* we are able to see how these meanings changed for DeMille and others at Paramount. Lastly, DeMille's intertextual orchestration is displayed in a particular strain of ballyhoo that became popularized at Paramount and replicated in other non-DeMille releases in the 1930s and 40s. Studying the ballyhoo related to the premiere of *Geronimo* (1939) we are able to see how this ballyhoo provided space for Native Americans to challenge their depiction on screen.

## The Native American Play

An underemphasized aspect of DeMille's life and career is how he was influenced by Native American themes. DeMille would return to Native-themed works at some of the

most significant points in his career, as a struggling playwright and later as a filmmaker. The prevalence of Native themes in his work can be attributed to two reasons: first, it appears that both Cecil and his brother William DeMille were fascinated with imagined Indianness. Simon Louvish writes of Cecil's play *Son of the Winds*, that "the mythological world appears to echo with old childhood fantasies shared by the brothers…: the primeval landscape, the exotic-sounding names of the characters—Moanahunga (the Wanderer), Wa-Saw-Me-Saw (Roaring Thunder), Kee-O-Kuk (the Running Fox), Otaka (the Scalp Taker)—and the battleground of Good and Evil."[6] A review in *The Bookman* for William's 1905 play *Strongheart* connects it to the brothers history with Native themes:

> Even in his college days when de Mille[7] appeared in college theatricals he took the part of an Indian. A little later he wrote a one-act play, 'Forest Flower,' in which the principal character was also an Indian. Then came 'Strongheart,' and finally in conjunction with his brother 'Son of the Winds,' a play in which all the characters are Indians.[8]

*The Bookman* reviewer continues, "it would seem from this that de Mille was going hard after 'the American play,'"[9] which highlights the second reason Native themes in the brothers' plays: they utilized Native themes in dialogue with a significant conversation about American theater and literature in the first decade of the 20th century.

*The New York Times* situated William's work along that of John W. Broadhurtst and Clyde Fitch as three playwrights who, responding to developments in European theater (principally Ibsen), were attempting to discover a uniquely American version of

the Great American Play: a "Native Drama." In 1907, in a forum with *The New York Times*, DeMille argued for an Ideal American Play that featured uniquely American content, and what could be more American than Native American themes?[10] William's sentiment was in dialogue with popular culture. As Shari M. Huhndorf notes, changes in American culture and society in the late 19th and early 20th century:

> Led many European Americans to 'remember' Native American life with nostalgia. Indians, now safely 'vanishing,' began to provide the symbols and the myths upon which white Americans created a sense of historical authenticity, a 'real' national identity which had been lacking in the adolescent colonial culture.[11]

Because of this, the imagined Indian moved from fodder for dime novels to an important marker of authenticity for nascent national culture. Both DeMille brothers utilized Native themes and characters within plays that sought to establish great American drama, but the two brothers differed on the purpose of their plays. William felt that the ideal American play should "get down underneath the veneer of society and convention and show human souls and human emotions in native strife."[12] Cecil argued that a message was important, but "the play must entertain first, and after that, if it teaches, all the better"[13] stated: "I believe the man who writes the best stuff makes the most money. The converse is also true. This is, I mean the stuff must be good in its class…must be good for that public to which it is meant to appeal."[14] This passage summarizes the approach of the filmmaker DeMille would become. The content and quality of film would attract a similar level of audience. His ability to place film into the discourse on edification and class would be significant in his career and in the development of the film industry.

In 1907, the DeMille family fortunes changed. As collateral damage from her connections to Evelyn Nesbit and the Stanford White Murder Scandal, Cecil and William's mother, Beatrice, was forced to close her girl's school and filed bankruptcy for her play-brokering agency. As a result, as Louvish writes, "it was now up to the De Mille sons to save the family's reputation."[15] The pressure to economically support his extended family resulted in Cecil's willingness to take a chance within the film industry, then considered a questionable, low-brow media form that he would play a significant role in gentrifying for middle-class audiences.

In a way, Cecil himself was his first cinematic intertext. While the DeMille family was now in dire straits, the DeMille family name, because of the success of his playwright father, still carried significance in New York social and artistic circles. This influence was partly why Jesse Lasky partnered with DeMille, as he would later write to Samuel Goldwyn, "Cecil has proved his value to the firm…I think it is a very good business move for us to build up his name."[16] For Lasky and Goldwyn, DeMille as name brand was a smart business move, and while this branding became more common among other directors in the film industry, DeMille's had the added benefit of prior association with an existing, legitimate form of entertainment.

DeMille's position in genteel society played a central role in his success in the early film industry, particularly in two aspects: the cultural legitimacy his family name

lent to his films, and his ability to exploit his understanding of middle and upper class tastes by adapting popular, "highbrow" texts:

> DeMille, who represented cultural capital as a member of a distinguished Broadway family, quickly won acclaim by producing feature film adaptations of stage melodramas, novels, and short stories as intertexts familiar to middle-class readers. The director, in other words, inserted the photoplay into genteel culture by exploiting parallel discourses deemed highbrow in an era characterized by conspicuous racial, ethnic, and class distinctions.[17]

Higashi notes that while American culture was "fairly homogenous" in the first half of the 19th century, in its later half there was "a process of sacralization accelerated by an increasingly professionalized culture industry and by the impulse of the genteel classes to distance themselves from urban workers and immigrants."[18] During this period, culture was separated into "highbrow" and "lowbrow" forms, terms "based on cranial shapes to equate racial types with intelligence."[19] It was in this context that cinema arrived, and among these "urban workers and immigrants" that it became the most popular form of entertainment.

The racism and xenophobia inherent in discussions of American culture found their way into discussions of American cinema. As Steven J. Ross notes, "early movie theaters were fluid social spaces in which working people were able to shape moviegoing experiences to serve their own ethnic, class, gender, racial, and political needs."[20] Cinemas were diverse social spaces that reflected their audiences:

> Theaters in African-American neighborhoods…offered customers black vaudeville acts…and movies with all-black casts…Ethnic exhibitors on New

> York's Lower East Side screened Yiddish films and Yiddish acts for Jewish audiences, and select Kalem comedies for Irish patrons. Theater owners in Little Tokyo…showed features produced for Japanese moviegoers[21]

In the late 1900s and early 1910s, American cultural and political leaders faced a "a growing 'crisis of anxiety' over the construction of an American identity"[22] among recent immigrants. As Richard Abel notes, during this period there was a "virulent debate over whether the so-called process of assimilation supposedly so crucial to Americanization was in jeopardy."[23] The prospect of diverse populations, especially recent immigrants, women, and children, congregating in spaces outside of the control of mainstream American cultural forces alarmed these leaders who worried what images and behavior viewers were seeing on screen.

Cinema became the focus of a larger "cheap amusements problem," which itself drew from this larger discourse surrounding American identity and assimilation.[24] For reformers, cinema could act as a powerful force for educating recent immigrants as "the new mass culture" to "generate positive models of imitation."[25] The arbiters of culture now sought films that appropriately modeled the American character, recalling the debate William was engaged in in the theater world; an approach on screen similar to William's on stage was to feature Native American themes and stories. By 1909, "Indian and Western subjects"[26] became "the quintessential 'American subject.'"[27] In these years, "the Indian was presented as visual spectacle, commodified for mass consumption, within a nationalistic ideology of 'racial progress.'" To immigrant audiences, Native characters acted "as a model of assimilation"; that if Indians could assimilate and "could acquire,

embody, and enact the values of an 'American'…so, too, could the newly arrived immigrants."[28]

It was in this context that, just as DeMille turned to Native themes in his attempt to become a legitimate, popular playwright, he turned to Edwin Milton Royale's popular 1906 Native-themed stage play: *The Squaw Man*[29] as the material for his first film. *The Squaw Man* (1914) drew upon the twin anxieties of assimilation at the time: assimilation of immigrants and assimilation of Native Americans. The story tells of an English aristocrat, Jim, who is exiled after being wrongly accused of embezzling money. He attempts to make a new life in America as a rancher, where he has an affair with Nat-u-Ritch, the daughter of a Ute chief, whom he then marries despite racial prejudice, and the two have a son. When Jim is cleared by a deathbed confession, he hopes to return to England but fears his wife will never be accepted. He proposes to return with his son, a prospect rejected by Nat-u-Ritch. After authorities close-in on Nat-u-Ritch for a run-in with an outlaw from years before, she commits suicide to avoid capture and allows her son and husband to return to White society.[30]

In his autobiography, DeMille said that he adapted the play because:

> It was a western…that appealed to us because it meant that most of it could be filmed outdoors at less expense than in a studio. It was a good story too, virile and exciting. Its dramatic value had been tested on the stage. Its title was known to that part of the public which followed the theater, and that was a part of the public we wanted to attract.[31]

At the time of the play's premiere, writers pointed to its success as evidence of a new form of the Western genre that moved from the dime novels to "better-appointed theaters catering to the middle class,"[32] and DeMille had hoped that the adaptation would translate a similar cultural legitimation from stage to screen. It is important to note that the story itself was not new. As Smith writes, "it would be hard to overemphasize the importance of the "squaw-man" story to early America cinema. Filmmakers retold the story hundreds of times, and it was the dominant plot of the Indian western genre."[33] DeMille and Lasky's intervention was to make the story into a 90-minute feature-film, the first made in Hollywood.[34]

Lasky favored feature films because "features…have accomplished what the 'one reel' subjects failed to attain in fifteen years…to interest the classes."[35] One way that features attracted higher-class audiences was by exploiting intertexts, particularly newspapers. Feature films "prompted critics to write reviews comparable to those of stage plays in newspapers and periodicals."[36] *The New York Times*, which at that time did not regularly write film reviews, published a review of *The Squaw Man.*[37]

Lasky's feature film gambit paid off. Feature length films drew a "better class" of audience and "the cultural legitimacy of feature films meant increased profit."[38] In addition, longer films required greater capital to produce, and in turn, this often required the adaptation of existing, legitimized texts. This development drastically changed the film industry, pushing marginal and independent producers out of the industry. Higashi

also ties these changes in cultural legitimacy and industry standardization to the content of the films themselves, and their ideology:

> DeMille demonstrated…that to the extent narrative conventions were articulated with respect to established forms of genteel culture, stylistic advances in film language were integrated into status quo discourse. The evolution of feature film aesthetic in relation to existing cultural practice thus meant that cinema became a vehicle for the articulation of middle-class ideology.[39]

DeMille's film addressed anxieties about the possibility of Native American assimilation, which resonated with anxieties about cultural diversity and assimilation in America, while inaugurating an approach to film practice that would gentrify the cinema, claiming it as middle-class cultural space. The methods DeMille and Lasky used to successfully court middle-class audiences with this film would become the significant methods DeMille would use throughout his career: appealing to a brand name (here an appeal to cultural capital of his family reputation), a multi-media publicity campaign (in this case, newspapers), the attraction of a technological novelty that promised increased realism (here, the feature film), and appealing to cultural intertexts related to the use-value of cinema in culture.

*James Young Deer*

At this point, I want to briefly focus on one of the filmmakers negatively affected by Hollywood's move to features with its attendant standardization of industry practice: Winnebago filmmaker James Young Deer. The relative diversity of early cinema and the

popularity of Indian pictures opened doors, albeit rather briefly, to Native Americans in creative roles within the film industry. Young Deer was not only able to find work as a director, but also to work his way up to become the head of a major production company. In addition to the popularity of Indian pictures as attractions, Young Deer's success in more powerful positions within industry can be attributed to the discourses surrounding Americanization and assimilation**.**

As part of the anxiety about American culture, reformers worried, in part informed by nationalism and economic interests, about the prevalence of French films. Pathe had been the most successful distributor of films in the United States, yet it began to suffer from pushback against French film product in American media as part of the so-called "Red Rooster Scare." The studio had also struggled to produce Westerns that resonated with American audiences. As a result, in 1910, the studio hired Young Deer away from the New York Motion Picture Company, placed him in charge of his own production unit, and sent him to California. Pathe hoped that a Native American producing "quintessentially American subjects" would both help the company appear more American and capitalize off the Indian and Western picture craze.[40]

Young Deer's films draw from many of the same intertexts as DeMille's *Squaw Man*, but according to Hearne, "reinterpret Native assimilation as the work of systems and policies of colonization and rupture rather than the inevitable result of natural evolutionary progress or racial hierarchy."[41] His disconnect from the implied

evolutionary racial theorizing in conversations about Americanization was one reason his films were not major successes. His films also featured somewhat happier endings that promoted "interaccial unions" that "were more liberal than what…critics could tolerate."[42] In 1913, Young Deer was also caught up in an early Hollywood scandal.[43] However, the reason for Young Deer's short career is more than anything the result of industrial changes. Pathe entered Western productions too late compared to its competitors[44], and most importantly "the financial success of *The Squaw Man*…eventually drove the shorter tales of Young Deer and his contemporaries out of the movie business."[45]

Ironically, Young Deer's wife and creative partner Red Wing (Winnebago actress Lillian Margaret St. Cyr) starred as Nat-u-Ritch in DeMille's version of *The Squaw Man*. While the role was the biggest of her career, it marked the abrupt end to the career of her husband. In addition, the success of DeMille's version, which was considered more faithful to the original's source material (in part because its feature length nature allowed for subplots) than previous adaptations, helped to crystallize many assumptions and binaries related to Native American characters in the Western genre, which would exist for decades after. M. Elise Marubbio writes that in contrast to the ambivalent or even sympathetic portrayal in earlier Indian pictures:

> DeMille's three Squaw Man films…build upon racializing ideologies to underscore a decidedly more antiassimilationist narrative…[DeMille's] Squaw Man films promoted classist and nationalist themes of supremacy and antimiscegenation mingled with an imperialist nostalgia for the Native American

> and the frontier American west…Each also underscores the racializing theme of social regression, in which violence is endemic to the Native characters, the displacement of Native Americans by whites is inevitable, and the superiority of western European culture is unquestioned…DeMille emphasizes this theme…in ways that reflect the shifting climate of American society's attitudes, fears, and assumptions about Native Americans.[46]

Other versions of *The Squaw Man* may have had some or most of these elements, but DeMille put them together in a film that also served as the model for feature filmmaking, and an entire film genre. The success of *The Squaw Man* announced the arrival of the silent Western epic, with its central formula being "the Indian-as-obstacle."[47]

## Civic Pageantry: The Use Value of Cinema

Lasky and DeMille understood the effectiveness of intertexts in appealing to genteel culture. The adaptation of popular stage plays was one form this appeal took. Another was utilizing the language of progressive and reform-minded discourse about cinema. In off-screen texts, DeMille emphasized the "realism" of his pictures on direct response to reform-based conversations on the potential power of cinema to educate and edify the masses, or more particularly to educate the working-class and immigrant audiences to the accepted morals and culture of middle-class society. For DeMille, cinema had a cultural use value. To contextualize his view, Higashi argues that DeMille drew upon the tradition of 19th century civic pageantry, a form of public civic performance that was "an intertext that defined public history for the genteel classes but excluded the urban 'other.'"[48] It was:

> A movement that attempted to transform recreation into a celebration of local history to instill patriotic, aesthetic, and moral uplift, pageantry was an antimodernist phenomenon in its nostalgic invocation of civic culture as a bulwark against modernization…pageants reinforced existing hierarchical relations and projected a conservative view of social change in representations of history as linear progression….a selective and pragmatic approach to history in terms of its present usefulness.[49]

Partly informed by political and cultural views, and partly recognizing that historical themes proved attractive intertexts to middle-class audiences, DeMille situated his films as part of a cultural project of edification and uplift. He contextualized cinema as a "titanic engine for popular education…[and] for the cultivation of the human mind."[50]

Understanding civic pageantry also helps to understand what DeMille meant when he talked about "realism" and "authenticity." While these were key concerns for DeMille as a director, and significant narratives in advertising his films, in practice, DeMille appears to abandon historical fact in favor of melodramatic formula. However, framed as continuing the civic pageant tradition, when DeMille talks about the historical "realism" or "authenticity," he is talking about the specific use value of history to serve the contemporary good. DeMille provided further insight into his view on the value of film for historical education in a 1938 speech at Columbia University shortly before pre-production work began on *North West Mounted Police*:

> It [the motion picture] is probably today the greatest teacher in the world, but its first function is to entertain. Therefore, it teaches through entertainment…The teaching of history through the medium of the screen is perhaps the greatest joy that a producer or a director can have, because he has an inspiring subject…he knows he must condense periods and years to construct a properly historical picture; that he cannot take the printed form and follow that. It is a new method of

> teaching. With the motion picture you can convey the spirit of the character of the times. It is not dates that make history. An audience is not interested in dates.[51]

With *The Squaw Man*, Cecil B. DeMille helped codify the Western by using the genre to tell useful histories that acted as intertexts with dialogues on national identity and mythmaking. This focus on intertexts and historical use value would guide his career through several historical and Biblical epics in the late 1910s and 1920s of varying success. In an attempt to capitalize off changing tastes in the Jazz Age, DeMille tried a series of divisive sex comedies which damaged his reputation with critics. Also during this period, the Western would begin to wane in popularity. However, both the genre and DeMille's career would be revived starting with his 1937 film *The Plainsman*. The film, and his Western epics that followed, used "brassbound morality and galumphing narrative...'to reaffirm…belief in the nation's future, especially its destiny as a great commercial power.'"[52]

DeMille, and the genre had once again found success in its appeal to intertexts and cultural use value. In the next section, I will examine the pre-production of his film *North West Mounted Police* (1940). Through production materials we find DeMille's interest in the use value of the film and its intertextual relationship with contemporary expectations about Native people. Tracing this material also demonstrates the significance of publicity in articulating the cultural use value of the film.

## *North West Mounted Police*

As preproduction for *North West Mounted Police* (*NWMP*) began, an overriding concern articulated in DeMille's memos and notes is "authenticity." In its immediate form, this resulted in a massive research project on behalf of DeMille's research assistant, Frank Calvin. The project was an actualization of what DeMille had described to the students at Columbia: "no author or historian since time began has had the money and the power and the concentrated ability to gain the facts that a motion picture studio has."[53] However, even while Calvin was assembling materials and consulting museums and experts, the idea of "authenticity" appears to shift as DeMille and Lasky worked to figure out the story for their film. As the story for the film became more divorced from history in favor of a melodramatic story, the preproduction process for *North West Mounted Police* illustrates DeMille's practice of useful history and suggests how the film had an unstable meaning which relied on intertext to articulate.

DeMille's concept of authenticity appears to have formed along with his other ideas about art and cinema, in the discourses surrounding American art and its cultural usefulness at the turn of the century. As Abel notes, a significant discourse in trade publications in the 1900s pitted a "feminized" aesthetic of high art against a "masculinized aesthetic of authenticity...so as to envision the cinema as an arena of 'realistic' storytelling, of 'character-building,' a new and influential form of 'virile' American culture."[54] Stories that would be told "intelligibly and simply…to plain

people."[55] Drawing from this discourse, DeMille viewed authenticity as a marker of an American cinema focused on its ability to develop American characteristics. There were also two other intertexts that may explain DeMille's focus on authenticity. First, DeMille was aware of and responded to, criticism by critics and audiences regarding authenticity in his films, and second, *NWMP* would be his first color film. The new technology resulted in a renewed focus on the visual look of his film.

In spring 1939, Calvin was sent to Regina, Saskatchewan, to perform research. Mirroring the threadbare nature of the film's plot at this stage, Calvin's research commission began with broad suggestions. In a May memo, Pine tells Calvin to "check on…half breeds" and "whites murdered by Eskimos."[56] On July 12, Pine informed Calvin by telegram that "we may switch to Reil Rebellion …therefore all information of that period costumes props etc. highly important."[57]About this same time, Calvin, with assistance from DeMille who had personally contacted the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Texas Rangers for book recommendations,[58] put together a working bibliography for the film. The initial, handwritten bibliography included eighty-four books, both fiction and nonfiction. By the time production began, *NWMP* had an official bibliography that was seventeen pages long and included: 250 books, eleven dictionaries and encyclopedias, fifty-four articles from periodicals, fifteen "other" sources of information including the archive and museums, and 1326 photographs.[59]

While the bibliographic materials covered a substantially broad amount of history, DeMille was interested in, and involved in, researching minute details regarding aspects of the film. In a letter to Calvin in June of 1939, DeMille requested information on: the steps to joining the RCMP, the daily recruit training schedule, the varieties of gun training, and asked, "do they do their own laundry? Where do they put their clothes when they go to bed? What kinds of beds do they sleep on?"[60] Similarly, DeMille not only wanted to know how Riel and "the half breeds got ammunition" but also specifics on "by what means was it transported there."[61] DeMille would ask Cliff Lewis, of the Royal North West Mounted Police Veteran's Association, about the bugle calls and specifics for flag lowering, and the Saskatchewan game commissioner about particulars about the domestication of caribou and questions about the types of syrups extracted from maple trees in the area.[62]

In his speech to Columbia, DeMille paints a defensive picture of the screen historian who must "properly construct an historical picture," for the audience even though "he knows he is going to be mercilessly mauled by those who go to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and quickly look-up the subject before going to see the picture."[63] A similar worry can be found in the transcript of an early story conference regarding *North West Mounted Police*:

> Ms. MacPherson: Why can't it be Riel himself? Why does it have to be—
>
> CB: Definitely not, I would think, because, if it is, you are up against a constant check of history: did he speak this, was he there, is he a man of record.[64]

This anxiety, to have an audience member note and criticize an historical error, was one that preoccupied the director and drove his research. DeMille was personally invested in the critical response to his films evidenced by the many personal scrapbooks in his archive comprised of reviews for his films, as collected by a clipping agency. Phil Koury, a DeMille assistant would reminisce that, "the barbs hurled at DeMille's pictures by what he called 'big city critics'…sent him into reflections of such bitterness that a deep caution was bred in all of us…too often we faced the ordeal of handing DeMille a clipping of a story twitting him."[65] Koury depicts a DeMille obsessed with his reputation, expecting his assistants to be continuously aware of what was said in the press and public about his films. DeMille told his staff, "there's one thing I won't stand for, and that's for DeMille to look foolish." One DeMille researcher named Henry Noerdlinger was placed within "earshot" of DeMille's office so that he could present him with questions immediately as they came to him:

> The process was one of the most familiar in the bungalow—DeMille opening his office door and in a voice that boomed down the hall and into every cellular office—'What is the Taj Mahal made of? …DeMille, popping his head out of his office would let fly as many as a dozen teasers in the course of a day.[66]

Aware of the critical assessment of his films, DeMille would respond directly to critics. While these letters were often written by office staff, DeMille often micromanaged the very tone and word choice in these letters.[67] DeMille was particularly sensitive to criticisms regarding the historical accuracy of his films. Shortly after the premiere of *NWMP,* he responded to *NY Post* critic Archer Winston's review of the film

in which he questioned the English oratory skills of Big Bear, an Indian character in the film. DeMille responded by providing an excerpt from an article in *Harper's Magazine* describing Crowfoot (one of the historical figures used to create the composite character), a speech from Indian Commissioner Edgar Dwedney, and a speech reported in Steele's *Forty Years in Canada*. DeMille then closed the letter with a rather progressive, and given the depiction of Native characters in the film, puzzling passage:

> The Indians of the North American continent have produced some great men, and I fear we are all a little apt to confuse these fine philosophers and statesmen with the Indians of the comic strip, whose accepted rhetorical attainment is "ugh!" With all good wishes, sincerely, Cecil B. DeMille.[68]

It is interesting that in his response, DeMille places the blame for Native stereotypes on another medium: the comic strip, particularly since the stereotype mentioned is one based in speech. Perhaps DeMille bristled at the cultural association with a lower cultural form. However, the connection, even by antagonism, demonstrates that on some level DeMille had an awareness of the connection between media texts and stereotypes, and believes that his films were more authentic and legitimate. It should be noted that in *NWMP*, Big Bear is played by celebrated stage actor William Hampden. As in most films of this period, while Native American actors play supporting roles, the lead Indian parts were given to white actors. Yet, the narratives DeMille and Paramount publicity chose to tell about Hampden's role points to the stakes of color in visual authenticity.

One of the most repeated, and reprinted stories in the publicity for the film was that through effects, DeMille changed the colors of Hampden's eyes from blue to brown

for increased historical authenticity. One such article from *The New York Sun* reported that:

> Blue-eyed Indians, the director remarked, are one of Hollywood's sorrows…Mr. De Mille would not cast Walter Hampden as an Indian chief until that celebrated Shakespearean actor discovered a trick that would make his blue eyes photograph as brown. The director was most pleased, both before and after making the picture.[69]

This particular publicity narrative drew from what was the most prevalent advertising aspect of *North West Mounted Police*: it was DeMille's first film in color, a fact that is usually the first thing mentioned in any interview or article about the film.[70] Stories also publicized how Paulette Godard and Lon Cheney, Jr. underwent makeup to look like Indian characters. These publicity narratives demonstrate the applicability of "authenticity" to different intertexts. In this case, authenticity becomes a means to satisfy a technological need.

*The Demille Formula: Useful History*

In his return to epic Westerns, authenticity had become part of the DeMille brand. Understood by its usual definition, it would seem counterintuitive for DeMille to focus so heavily on "authenticity," to expend so much time and resource into research to then, when it came to develop his narrative, take profound liberties and shoehorn events into well-worn narrative formulas. However, authenticity for DeMille was an intertext that was equated with the DeMille brand. The research and attention to detail, as intertext,

would legitimize his narrative purposes. He believed that he was faithful to the spirit of the history, rather than its details. This meant that despite the massive research into Native cultures of the United States and Canada undertaken by the production, in the final product the film's Indigenous characters fall into familiar melodramatic tropes. We can attribute this to essentialist, and prejudicial, conceptions about Native experience espoused by DeMille and his associates during the preproduction phase of the film, but on a practical level it can be understood as a byproduct of DeMille's storytelling: once he had the story in mind, he would not alter it despite outside fact, a tendency documented by Koury who wrote:

> It was often a matter of regret that Mr. DeMille would insert into the script customs and events of a bygone era…Of course Delilah had to be shown in a bra and it was up to Henry [Noerdlinger] to look into the books for something that would justify decking out the girl so fetchingly. Henry felt he could not wrongfully hypothecate history, so having produced evidence in a dozen books that did not support the boss's position, it was up to the boss to make his choice. Faced with the weight of evidence against him, DeMille had been known to settle for a single reference in a single volume, aware as he was of the vagaries of historians and of the mutations of passing centuries.[71]

In that instance, DeMille found a picture of a Minoan woman in a dress that had something resembling a bra and that was good enough for him.[72]

DeMille's stubbornness also resulted in the refusal of Metis and Indigenous input. In August 1939, after seeing a news article announcing the production of *NWMP*, Samuel A. Nault, the president of the Metis Society of Manitoba, wrote to Z.M. Hamilton, the head of the Saskatchewan Historical Society in Regina, who had worked with Frank

Calvin on his initial research, and expressed his worries about the film: "I hope you will see to it that the facts are not too distorted and that our people are not pictured as 'dirty villains."[73] Hamilton forwarded the letter to Frank Calvin adding, "there have been so many distortions of the Riel story perpetuated even in history and school books that it is quite easy to understand Mr. Nault's anxiety."[74] For whatever reason, Calvin never responded to Nault, so he wrote directly to DeMille:

> We take it that your intention is to reproduce as accurately as possible the struggles of Riel for democratic liberties in Western Canada….We do not expect, of course, that you will be able to adhere strictly to the historical facts, but if the main theme is as above indicated, we would be very pleased to cooperate with you in the fullest manner and we could no doubt be of real assistance to you.[75]

Frank Calvin, not DeMille, responded to both letters in December. Calvin attempted to quell Nault's anxieties by suggesting that the film was "sympathetic." Seemingly missing Nault's larger point, Calvin noted that the "Louis Riel does not play a prominent part in the picture as most of the story is concerned with the efforts of fictitious characters."[76] Calvin closed his correspondence by relating the following from DeMille: "Mr. DeMille asks me to thank you for your interest and kind offer of material, which we will be unable to use as we have completed our script."[77]

This missed opportunity for Indigenous input occurred as the film was about to go into production, after DeMille had settled upon his story for this film. However, because of the historical details, and changing views about Native peoples in American culture, DeMille had difficulty deciding its cultural value. These challenges are evidenced in the

transcripts of several story conferences during the summer of 1940. These conferences show how DeMille, his producers, and screenwriters' attempted to make sense of history in terms of contemporary intertexts. They also convey the attitudes the film's producers had toward the Native people in the film, attitudes largely drawn from cultural intertexts regarding Native life.

*The Story Conferences*

In its final form, *North West Mounted Police* is the story of Dusty, a Texas Ranger who follows the outlaw Corbeau to Canada during the Riel Rebellion. Dusty teams with Jim, a Mountie, to capture Corbeau who is fomenting trouble with Metis rebels and Indians. Despite their love for the same woman, Dusty and Jim capture Corbeau, broker peace, and succeed in "preventing a 'war that might have torn Canada to fragments.'"[78] In its development stages, the film presented the producers and writers with a number of conceptual problems, and their attitudes towards the film, and its Native characters varied. The changing attitudes of DeMille, Lasky, and the film's screenwriters towards the film is evidenced in the changes to the film's opening narration. The first version was supposed to be read by DeMille standing in front of a screen displaying the Northern Lights and read:

> Three-hundred years ago, a scattered vanguard of white traders penetrated [original word crossed out and replaced with "unmapped"] Canada. From the

> union of these adventurers with Cree and Blackfeet sprang a Half-Breed race which, for two centuries thrived and multiplied in lawless land.
>
> But surveyors and home-builders pressed westward. In 1885 the half-breeds rebelled against the new order, believing their lands were to be taken from them. And—the flame of a great revolt was kindled in a little Montana schoolhouse.[79]

A July 12, 1939, meeting between DeMille, Jesse Lasky, Associate Producer William Pine, and screenwriter Alan Lemay illustrates one difficulty they had in conceptualizing the story: the fact that Riel's rebellion was comprised of "half-breeds" challenged their desire for a simple narrative of White settlers pitted against Indigenous resistance to progress. As Pine states at one point, "these guys were not savages; they were at least half white."[80] His racist, determinist view of Native blood is one shared by DeMille and others during these story conferences and seems to act as a stumbling block as they attempted to fit the history into a DeMille story formula: as people of mixed heritage, the Metis complicated any simplistic, essential statement about the Indigenous characters.

Lasky suggests that the film should be about how "one thin red line stands between the settlers, the poor people who came from the East and these half-breed trappers and Indians who might well have held them out forever." Pine also suggests that the story of the film should be similar to the themes from DeMille's *The Plainsman*: that lands "must be made safe for settlers: that's why they went out there, the police." As the narration reflects, Lasky and Pine viewed this as a classic tale of "lawless" Indians preventing settlers, here phrased as "home-builders," from establishing civilization and order in what Lasky describes as "one of the richest plots of earth in the world"[81] Alan

Lemay puts forth a more nuanced, sympathetic approach suggesting that "our complaint against the rebels must be against their methods." He also refutes Lasky's suggestion that the film might be a Canadian *Plainsman* by stating that, "there's one historical…hitch there…Riel's people were worried about their lands; they had farms too."[82]

In this conference, DeMille states that the goal at this stage is to find "some very simple statement as far as the rebels are concerned, because your sympathy is with the mounted."[83] Towards the end of the conference, DeMille concludes that "it seemed to be a resurveying of the land that brought about the trouble,"[84] a comment that previews the first way the DeMille would frame the film politically; his initial use value of this history: that the rebellion was the result of government mismanagement and inefficient bureaucracy. It is understandable that DeMille, one of Hollywood's most vocal conservatives, would be drawn to framing the rebellion this way. The criticism of a central, faraway government attempting to regulate the affairs on a local level was a popular conservative criticism of the New Deal.

Regarding the return of the Western film to popularity in American culture during the Great Depression, Terry Cooney writes "cowboy films were 'almost national pageants' in an America still struggling against depression, they were 'metaphors for the country's unity."[85] Summarizing Alfred Hayworth Jones, Cooney writes that during the period there was "an intellectual reframing of American historical writing in the 1930s that sough neither to condemn nor to flee to the past but to examine 'usable' national

traditions with a 'meticulous attention to authenticity.'[86] Such a phrase could appropriately double as a description for DeMille's filmmaking approach.

In regards to Native Americans, during the 1910s, DeMille's presented a vanishing Indian; during the 1930s, as national myths were being reevaluated, there was a desire for continuity which necessitated the survival of the most "authentically" American of all: the Native American. In addition, while in the 1910s DeMille responding to intertexts regarding the development of an homogenized culture, in the 1930s intertexts, shaped by the reevaluation of American myths during the Depression, allowed for "variety and contradiction" in definitions of American. Cooney writes that "the relationship of past, present, and future for Americans of the 1930s was seldom simple. At any given moment, many impulses were possible, and an accommodation of variety and contradiction proved a stronger cultural need than unity of outlook and imagery."[87] These intertexts appear to inform the early development of the story, as DeMille's concept of the Royal Mounted Police is not simply as the extension of government, or as the keepers of civilization, but rather as the force which kept a multiethnic community in check. After receiving a research report from Frank Calvin, DeMille attempted to articulate his view of the film's story as a:

> Little band of men each thinking it is the greatest on earth and each finding that the other is just as good, maybe a bit better…the patience it requires for 200 men to handle all of those different nationalities that have poured in there and then bred together and have made, between savages and civilized people, have made half-breeds—and between foreign fanatics that have come over, have made

> Doukboors; and this melting pot of human flesh that they have to stir and keep from boiling. That's their [The NWMP] sacred duty.[88]

These views find reflection in the revised narration for the film dated February 2, 1940, which reads:

> The Canadian North West! Here the adventurous sons of the Old World came to trade with the native of the New, and stayed to inter-marry with them. This union created a new Half-Breed race—the Metis.[89]
>
> Here for two centuries they lived and prospered, a law unto themselves. Then civilization moved eastward. Surveyors and land speculators came and brought with them laws of land and property. In 1885, resentful and confused, the Half Breeds rebelled.
>
> Only a handful of fearless, hard-riding men in scarlet coats, the North West Mounted Police, stood between Canada's future and the rebellion that was kindled across the border in a little Montana school house.[90]

The initial conflict of "civilization" versus Indians still exists, but there are nuances and contradictions. While throughout the conferences and meetings DeMille still perpetuates blood-based essentialisms, he does show respect for Riel and his people, if nothing else because a rebellion against a foreign force seemed attractive to him as a story. At this stage, DeMille's story frame, the rebellion as tragedy caused by an out-of-touch federal government, continues to take shape, an approach best illustrated in a September 1939 conference between DeMille and producer C. Gardner Sullivan, in which DeMille says that, "these men were not unjust in their demands; their demands were right...and the government was very stupid and very late and very busy with something else."[91] In its final script form the narration resembles the second draft but with some notable differences:

> The Canadian Northwest. Here the first traders of the Old World intermarried with the Indians of the plains and the forests to found a new race—the Metis of Canada. Here for two centuries these half-breed hunters and trappers multiplied and prospered—a law unto themselves.
>
> Then surveyors and home builders pushed westward, bringing laws of land and property which threatened to end forever the free ways of the wild trails. In 1885, resentful and confused, the half-breeds under the leadership of Louis Riel, revolted against the advance of unwelcome law. In that hour, a handful of hardriding men in scarlet coats, the North West Mounted Police, stood between Canada's future and the rebellion that was kindled across the border in a little Montana school house.[92]

Perhaps most significantly, the word "civilization" was abandoned while "home builders" returns to replace the "speculators" of the second draft. The battle here is not between civilized progress and Native resistance, but rather an "unwelcome law" which leads to misunderstanding, and an unbalance among the multiethnic communities.

Producing the film in the summer of 1939, the filmmakers had to consider the value of its history not only for the present but potentially for a world at war. Angela Aleiss notes two significant ways the looming war effort altered the portrayal of Native Americans in Westerns from this period: the first, was that "a national campaign to purge the land of its Indian inhabitants smacked of fascist genocide."[93] Second, that Native Americans were needed as part of the war effort. Thus, in *North West Mounted Police*, the "allies" includes "Indian allies as well."[94] As such, the villains of *North West Mounted Police* are not the Indians per se, but the French and Metis.

## The Promotion of *North West Mounted Police*

While the potential war shows up in the story conferences, it was not the major concern or the major frame through which DeMille viewed the story. Yet, when DeMille discusses the film after its release, as the war looms closer, he portrays the film as a useful metaphor for allied cooperation in the face of evil. In a radio address given to promote the film, DeMille focuses on the RCMP and repeatedly ties the heroism displayed by the Mounties to current events. In October 1940, DeMille wrote to David E. Rose, with Paramount Film Service in England, to highlight the contemporary resonance of the film:

> The story of the *North West Mounted Police* is one chapter in the great saga of the British people themselves. I believe it is a timely story and apparently, Mr. John Grierson, commissioner of films for Canada, shares that opinion, for after seeing it on the screen he has predicted that it will "prove of inestimable value to the present relations between Canada and the United States.[95]

As the promotion for the film continued the tone of its publicity on far more patriotic fervor. In a radio spot which aired on the British Isles (and given verbatim on Australian radio that same month) in January 1941, DeMille suggests that:

> One of the most important scenes in the picture is laid in a turbulent Indian war camp…to me, that scene exemplifies the whole spirit of the British Empire—the spirit that is being demonstrated so magnificently today—in London, Coventry, Dover, Southampton, Cardiff, Liverpool, and throughout the whole British family of nations. That spirit is the spirit of victory!

If the speech itself was not enough to stir patriotism, the speech ends with a cue to "play out to God Save the King."[96] In his speech at the Chicago premiere of the film DeMille emphasized the contemporary relevance of the film: "In these times, when the two great English-speaking countries of North America are closer together than ever before he [Dusty, the film's Texas Ranger character] seems to be a symbol of hope—and I hope a promise."[97]

In the few short months between production and its premiere, while the content of the film remained the same DeMille, through press releases, radio spots, speeches, and premieres, had repurposed the film's cultural use value to respond to current events and changing intertexts. This approach demonstrates DeMille's ability to effectively articulate a film for his audiences; however, such approach results in an unstable text, one that holds different meanings depending on its context. An approach where publicity becomes significant in framing the meaning and use value of a film.

*Balaban and Ballyhoo*

In 1936, Paramount appointed Barney Balaban as its new leader. Prior to his promotion, Balaban had been the head of Paramount's most successful theater operation, Balaban & Katz[98] and perhaps because of his experience operating theaters, focused on publicity and exploitation. Gomery writes that to promote a film that cost $1.5 million to make, he "might add another $1 million for promotion." To promote a film, "the Balaban goal was

to maximize the crowds during the opening week."[99] This resulted in lavish, increasingly elaborate stunt premieres that sought to saturate all media: newspapers, magazines, and especially radio, to exploit Paramount's radio holdings.[100] Paramount's head of publicity, Bob Gillham also favored ballyhoo practices. Ballyhoo in this era of film, according to Atkinson, occurred "in the guise of the cinema proprietors staging newsworthy events in order to ensure their capture, recording and reporting by the press and guaranteeing subsequent attention and publicity for the film."[101] As Gillham would advise, "theaters therefore should make every effort to obtain the maximum newspaper space…keep punching with newspaper space."[102] During Gillham's tenure, Paramount developed, in conjunction with DeMille's epic films, a reputation for immense, expensive, premiere stunts. Paramount's premiere pageantry fit nicely with DeMille's civic pageantry. Cooney writes that, "the movie premier by the end of the decade…had exchanged the pursuit of 'carnival splendor' for a spirit of 'civic festival,' with the energies generated flowing into an affirmation of public, and often patriotic, values."[103]

The three-day premiere of *North West Mounted Police* embodied this civic tone. Held in Regina, Saskatchewan, it was reportedly "Canada's first world premiere." An entourage of the film's stars and Paramount executives, accompanied by local dignitaries, visited and held radio broadcasts from historic locations related to the RCMP. The contingent met with Air Force officers, christened a new airport, held a charity luncheon, attended a church service at the RCMP barracks, held a Gala ball, and staged a parade

through the town where stores decorated their fronts "to resemble log forts."[104] In addition to all of this, "an Indian encampment housing 100 Indians pitched in the heart of the business district."[105] I have yet to find more about this encampment aside from this mention in *Boxoffice*; however, Gillham had done something similar the previous year to promote Paul Sloane's *Geronimo*. In the ballyhoo surrounding *Geronimo,* and the Native involvement in its promotion, we are able to see how Native performers and audiences used the space available to them to challenge depictions of Native Americans on film and provide their own intertexts.

*Ballyhoo and the Exhibition of Geronimo*

"Ballyhoo means business!" proclaimed a two-page color Paramount advertisement in *Film Daily*. The ad featuring a sketch of Geronimo bursting through a map of Arizona on a horseback was not advertising the film itself but instead informed exhibitors that the full force of Paramount's publicity arm would support the film; "wherever fans eat up outdoor action thrills…they'll go for 'GERONIMO!'…especially when it's backed up by one of those famous Paramount exploitation campaigns."[106]

This section does not attempt to quantify the reception of *Geronimo* by cinemagoers. Rather, it addresses the intersection between publicity and off-screen intertexts with exhibition and the potential ways exploitation complicated the reception of the film. I will first examine the role of publicity in the exploitation and exhibition of

*Geronimo* in the ballyhoo filled pageantry of the premiere. I will then examine specific instances of how local theaters utilized exploitation practices. In both instances, I focus on exploitation at work in areas that had substantial Native American populations. In addition to providing space where Native film workers could negotiate and contest their images, theater exploitation also provided spaces for Native audiences to counter the negative images displayed on screen.

*The Premiere*

The three-city premiere of *Geronimo* continued ballyhoo techniques Bob Gillham had used on previous major Paramount releases. According to the trades, Gillham's "elaborate and novel stunts" had helped "to make the nation Paramount-conscious."[107] This statement, like the *Geronimo* ad, reflects the dominant discourse about the film's release in the trade papers that say very little about the content or quality of the film. Instead, the coverage focuses on the novelty and impressive logistical power of Gillham and Paramount's publicity department.

*Geronimo*'s premiere was the highlight of a three-day Valley of the Sun Festival held from Thursday, November 23rd to Saturday, November 25th, 1939. While the location-based, civic pageantry of the premiere bore the hallmarks of Gillham's work with DeMille, Governor Robert Taylor Jones took the credit for the "original idea that the celebration of the premiere should be state-wide."[108] Whereas Gillham was utilizing the

premiere to showcase the capabilities of Paramount's publicity department and multimedia connections in radio, the Governor likely saw the premiere as an opportunity to celebrate state pride. The Governor elicited the support of thirty-one Arizona mayors, and according to the *Arizona Republic*, "nearly every community in Arizona will have a part in the three-day" event.[109] The festival became a way to reflect on the state's recent past. The festival committee took out ads in Arizona papers asking for the "participation of anyone who participated in the Indian Wars against Geronimo…or who has any relics, souvenirs or old photos of those stirring days in Arizona's History."[110] Next to an article about the planned premiere, *The Arizona Daily Star* did not run a photo from the film but instead an actual photo of Geronimo and a piece noting that the film was "no fiction here."

Each of the three premiere cities, Phoenix, Tucson, and Stafford, held separate celebrations and parades. Connecting the premieres was a live radio broadcast from the Orpheum Hotel in Phoenix which aired over sixty-five Mutual radio stations with Hollywood gossip columnist George Fisher acting as the master of ceremonies.[111] While Paramount and Jones had their own interests and goals in the pageantry surrounding the film so too did Native Americans involved in the premieres in Phoenix and Stafford.

*The Geronimos*

The most publicized aspect of the *Geronimo* premiere was its guests of honor: "three generations of Geronimos," Geronimo's son Robert Geronimo, his seven year old son Robert Jr., and Sam Chino, the seventy-four-year-old nephew of Geronimo who had fought with Geronimo. The three travelled to Phoenix from the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico along with H.L. Newman, the superintendent of the reservation.[112] It is unclear in reports what Newman's role in the visit was, whether he was acting as a chaperone or advocate.

Most of the news reports take a patronizing tone to the Geronimos portraying them as fish-out-of-water or to illustrate the modern changes in Arizona since the time of Geronimo. They note that Robert, Jr. was "overawed" by seeing elevators for the first time or that Robert Sr., when served Brussel sprouts, called them "the smallest cabbage I ever saw." One *Arizona Republic* reporter called Robert Sr., "probably the most confused person within the states' borders."[113] This confusion can be ascribed to more than just culture shock, or being overwhelmed with experiencing a city and a massive Hollywood premiere. The family most likely did not know what to expect or how they would be received; it was reported that Robert carried a "sawed-off Winchester" rifle with him into Phoenix.[114]

The relationship between the celebration and the content of the film likely compounded this confusion. How does one act when celebrated as the guests of honor for

the premiere of a film that depicts their father as one of the great villains in American history? One can only imagine what their response would be to being the grand marshals of a parade leading to a theater playing a film that's a "semihistorical version of some of the bloodier escapades in the life of Arizona's worst Indian badman,"[115] a film where "Geronimo himself wouldn't have recognized some of the deed's he's charged with."[116] According to one reporter, "what any of them thought of the pictured version of the Apache warlord's career was difficult to determine from their facial expressions as they steadily watched the film unreel." Instead of attempting to sympathize with the family's complicated viewing situation, the reporter attributed the silence to cultural expectations: "anything they may give vocal expression to will be some time coming, in the fashion of the Apache."[117] Quoting this *Arizona Republic* report in his own gossip column, Phil M. Daly added "now wouldn't you think those redskin guys…would be decent enough to at least say…'ugh!'"[118]

The press reports and circumstances of the visit suggest the situation may have been exploitative. However, we must assume that the Geronimos had their own interests in taking the trip. Aside from travel, meeting stars and dignitaries, and the amenities provided by a major film studio, they also leveraged the trip to serve at least one of their own purposes. While in Phoenix, the three visited Robert's nephew who was a student at Phoenix Junior College.[119] Regarding his trip to Phoenix, Robert said, "It was a good trip…but we're glad to be here now. I think I'll take a bath and go to bed."[120]

*The Phoenix Indian Village*

Another major aspect of the festival premiere provided opportunity and visibility to the area's Native population. A popular attraction of the festivities, drawing hundreds of visitors each day, was the Indian Village constructed in downtown Phoenix. While Paramount appears to have managed the parade, the broadcast, and the premiere itself, the village was sponsored by the Indian Club of Arizona and planned by Enoch Walkingstick, the club's president, and Lloyd Henri New the head of the art department at the Phoenix Indian School.[121]

The village was located on a city block "blocked off with heavy logs and bailed hay to give the appearance of a coral [sic]." Inside the corral were "wickiups, hogans, tepees" to approximate a village wherein "Maricopa potterymakers, Pima basketmakers, a Pima bow and arrow maker, Navajo silversmiths and rug weavers" practiced and displayed their crafts. While the club promoted the traditional nature of their arts and performances within the village, things "never before…performed off the reservation," New's art students also had space to display their own "modern art work." Members of the club performed dances each evening, and the main event on Saturday was a performance by a group of Apache dancers who were also showcased on the national radio broadcast.[122]

The Phoenix Indian Village demonstrates the ability of a Native community to negotiate a stereotypical cultural product and utilize it for their own purposes. The Indian

Club was not expressly a cultural or art club, but rather devoted to activism and policy. At the time, the club was attempting a study about what legislation could be enacted to remedy problems facing Native Americans on Arizona's reservations. According to New, "the Indian village is an excellent opportunity for us to show what we are doing and what the Indian can do and will present the Indian and his problems to a great many people who might not otherwise have an opportunity to see him at his work."[123] The Indian Club used the publicity surrounding the premiere of a stereotypical Hollywood Indian film, and drew non-Native visitors by appealing to traditional cultural expectations in order to educate these visitors on the needs and activism of contemporary Native people.

*"Back to the Indians"*

From the outset of the promotional campaign, Gillham planned for a "back to the Indians world premiere." Initially, the plan was to premiere the film in Geronimo, Arizona on the Apache reservation.[124] After realizing there was no theater in Geronimo, the plan was to show the film in a tent, but ultimately, Stafford was chosen due to its proximity to Geronimo, Arizona and the Fort Apache and San Carlos Reservations. While not on the reservation itself, Stafford did achieve Gillham's goal to "shift the scene to the Indian Country."[125]

To accompany the premiere, Stafford's Mayor instituted a "Geronimo Day" celebration that featured performances by "one thousand Apache from nearby

reservations," a 2,000 person barbeque, "riding events, archery contests, and other exhibitions."[126] As in the other two premiere cities, a parade preceded the radio broadcast that featured "Indians, school children, and old-time citizens." Many of the Native participants remembered "Geronimo and some of them had ancestors who fought with the chieftain." *The Arizona Daily Star* added "some of the persons in the audience will recall vivid and first-hand experiences" of Geronimo.[127]

To the largely Native audience at the premiere in Stafford, the studio sent Chief Thundercloud and Monte Blue, the former leading man of Osage and Cherokee ancestry who had become a Western character actor and had a supporting part in the film. While in the state capital, the narrative surrounding the festivities celebrated Geronimo's capture as marker of a transition from territory to state, in Stafford the focus was on Geronimo himself. In a speech before the premiere, Blue "described Geronimo as a 'much maligned' man who fought in defense of his home and native land."[128] Thundercloud, appearing in full regalia, was "lionized by the crowd."[129] Where the civic memory in Phoenix remembered Geronimo as an obstacle to the state's modern progress, judging from the response to the actor who played him, in Stafford Geronimo was celebrated as a hero.

*Variety* suggested the choice of an Indian Country premier was "for color."[130] The prospect of Apache viewers watching the film exploits of their most famous leader made for compelling media content. For instance, *The Motion Picture Herald* imagined the film

screening "to the shrills of all the wild whoopings that the few remaining store-clothed Apaches can command on their Arizona reservation."[131] Unlike the case with the Geronimo family, no report appears to have attempted to cover the response to the film in Stafford. We are left, like *The Motion Picture Herald*, to imagine; but informed by the actors present at the screening and the composition of the audience, we can be comfortable in imagining a far different reception than in the other premiere cities. Each group saw the same film, but to Gillham, Jones, the Geronimos, the members of the Indian Club, and the Apache audience in Stafford, the meaning of the film's release, and their experience with the film was markedly different and served different purposes.

*Local Exploitation*

The majority of moviegoers would not view *Geronimo* accompanied by the ballyhoo surrounding its Arizona premiere (though they had opportunities to experience the premiere via the national radio broadcast or be aware of its events through newspaper reports); however, local theater exploitation influenced their local cinema experience. While Paramount, like all studios, submitted detailed exploitation ideas in the film's pressbook, the decision of how to exploit and publicize the film in local communities was ultimately up to theater managers. Publicity departments took pride in being able to find ways to attract all audiences.[132] It was up to the theater managers to pick which ones would drive their patrons to the theater.

Theater managers were the eyes, ears, and representatives of studios in the community. They provided studio publicity departments with reports and suggestions. Theater managers also were encouraged to become important, respected figures in the community and were warned to avoid the appearance that the "theater 'takes' from the community without giving something back along with the entertainment."[133] In a manual on theater managing published by the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, Walter Cutter compared the work of theater managers to that of a psychologist: "It is he who must interpret the psychology of the theater to the community." Because the theater manager "is there, he knows what he must do, and what he can refuse to do if he is to maintain good community relations."[134] The application of certain publicity stunts and exploitation in some theaters and communities suggest the conditions and expectations in which a viewer watched the film. These conditions varied depending on the decisions of the theater manager and their understanding of the community in which the film was shown.

*Living Trailers*

According to Karen Wallace, the stereotyped figure of the Hollywood Indian "represents a stage through which the American must pass."[135] This evolutionary mindset was evident in the discussions surrounding the film's premiere relative to a modern Arizona; with a figure like Geronimo gone, the state could enter a more modern era. The fundamental concept in this evolutionary model is that the Indian has vanished. As

Raheja notes, the inherent paradox in films featuring the Hollywood Indian played by actual Native Americans is that "Native Americans in redface countered the national narrative that Indigenous people have vanished," and "subverted representations of Indians in colonial discourses through their divergence from stereotype."[136] Yet, these actors were limited by the medium-specific qualities of film. They were presented to the audiences already filmed, typically in silence, and unable to respond to the viewer. It is in publicity stunts that Native Americans found their ways into the theaters to potentially further challenge on-screen stereotypes.

*Motion Picture Daily*'s "Tips on Exploitation" section about *Geronimo* reported, "the Broadway Paramount is conducting a search for a real Indian girl to appear in person at the theater as a living trailer for "Geronimo," which will open in a few weeks."[137] The concept embodied by the term "living trailer" was that a flesh and blood Indian was an ideal way to publicize the film's screening, and in response, theaters placed ads looking for Native Americans. The Rex Theater acquired a pony and employed an "Indian to ride astride with a banner advertising Geronimo, walking up and down the streets, and stranding in front of the show," noting that this stunt "caused much curiosity and added patronage."[138] A theater owner in Santa Fe, New Mexico hired two men from the local Teseque Pueblo to advertise his showings of *Geronimo*.[139] If actual Native Americans could not be found, theaters dressed their staff in regalia advertised as authentic or

historical. A theater owner in Hobart, Oklahoma, dressed his cashier in Kiowa pow-wow regalia borrowed from locals.[140]

Understandably, theaters in "Indian Country" had greater access to Native participation than those in the rest of the country. In one of the most elaborate stories of Native participation in exploitation for *Geronimo*, the owner of the Erie Theater in Hugo, Oklahoma:

> Received cooperation of localites [sic] and Indians from nearby reservation to enact scenes as scalping warriors attacking settlers' homes, war dances, etc., all as part of his advance exploitation on "Geronimo" Boys with cameras were on hand to shoot pictures…since local prominents [sic] dressed in colorful Indian garb formed part of the little company making the pictures much interest was aroused. Entire group in costume paraded about town, visiting newspaper offices and winding up at theatre opening night, where members of the Indian band gave a concert.[141]

The performances that accompanied the Erie's theatrical run of *Geronimo* mimic the violent, stereotypical images seen in the film: scalping, attacks, etc. Yet, these off-screen performances, while embracing damaging stereotypes had the potential to undermine the film they advertised.

For instance, theaters that advertised *Geronimo* by posting articles emphasizing Paramount's research department and displaying authentic Native artifacts in their lobbies framed the film as historically accurate for their audiences. The atmosphere in Hugo framed the film for its audiences in a different, far more performative, canivalesque register. According to the article, not only might Erie patrons have known the Native

performers, some were prominent members of the community. Erie patrons who observed and knew or recognized members of the community in these performances understood that scalping and attacking homes was not something their Native friends and neighbors actually did; this was a performance. The potential is that these viewers received what they saw from the Native performers on screen in the same register as the Native performers off-screen: as a form of Indian play. In addition, because Hugo is an historically Choctaw town, located in the center of the Choctaw Nation, we must assume that the audience included Native moviegoers as well.

The presence of Native Americans in exhibition, as performers, advertisers, or moviegoers, complicates simple understandings of how a film was received and viewed. Examining the role of publicity and exploitation as they relate to exhibition provide insight into the varied ways a film may have been received. As Allen and Gomery write, "the history of film exhibition does…afford us some feel for the particular conditions of reception at a given place in a given time," and that studying exhibition "is especially important when we undertake historically grounded interpretations of specific texts, i.e. how a certain movie or genre functions culturally or ideologically."[142] There has been a temptation to write about the experience of Native Americans and film in overarching cultural and ideological frameworks. However, examining the "historically grounded" ways these films were presented, framed, and screened to audiences and communities challenges such overarching paradigms. Given the personal and subjective nature of film

spectatorship, we are unable to ever confidently state how a film was received. At best, studies "afford us some feel" of their reception. Yet, this uncertainty is important when studying Native Americans and film history because the varied forms of exhibition and reception provide spaces for Native American agency. While films may, on the surface, appear as closed texts, these examples of exhibition and reception demonstrate how Native performers and audiences opened them and utilized them to serve their own purposes.

## NOTES

[1.] Sumiko Higashi, *Cecil B. DeMille and American Culture: The Silent Era* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 1-4.

[2.] Higashi 6

[3.] Stam, Robert, *Film Theory: An Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000). 201-202

[4.] Stam 2000, 203, 206.

[5.] Ibid.

[6.] Simon Louvish, *Cecil B. DeMille: A Life in Art* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2007), 26.

[7.] Contemporary records alternate between "DeMille," "De Mille," and "de Mille." I will use DeMille unless quoting.

[8.] Ibid

[9.] Ibid

[10.] Louvish 23

[11.] Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 22.

[12.] Huhndorf 23

[13.] Huhndorf 34

[14.] Quoted in Ibid

[15.] Louvish 29

[16.] Higashi 19

[17.] Higashi 1

[18.] Higashi 8-9

[19.] Ibid.

[20.] Stephen J. Ross, *Working-Class Hollywood: Silent Film and the Shaping of Class in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 24.

[21.] In addition to Ross' description of the diversity of early cinema audiences quoted above, Smith also notes that "many" Native Americans attended films (see Smith 84).

[22.] Richard Abel, *The Red Rooster Scare: Making Cinema American, 1900-1910* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 119.

[23.] Ibid.

[24.] Miriam Hansen, *Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991), 63.

[25.] Abel 121

[26.] Abel 164

[27.] Abel 152

[28.] Abel 168-170

[29.] It is noteworthy that DeMille would remake the film two more times, in 1918 and 1931.

[30.] Hearne 55.

[31.] DeMille 71

[32.] Angela Aleiss, *Making the White Man's Indian* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2005), 52.

[33.] Andrew Brodie Smith, *Shooting Cowboys and Indians: Silent Western Films, American Culture, and the Birth of Hollywood* (Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press, 2003), 91.

[34.] Hearne 54

[35.] Higashi 26

[36.] Ibid

[37.] Higashi 13, 26

[38.] Higashi 19

[39.] Higashi 62-63

[40.] Abel 173

[41.] Hearne 97

[42.] Aliess 8

[43.] Aleiss 16

[44.] Abel 174

[45.] Aleiss 20

[46.] M. Elise Marubbio, *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 49.

[47.] Marubbio 20

[48.] Higashi 120

[49.] Ibid.

[50.] Higashi 28

[51.] Speech to Columbia University, Jan 1938, BYU Box 562 Folder 6

[52.] Phillip Kemp, "Cecil B. DeMille," in *The Oxford History of World Cinema*, ed. Geoffrey Noel Smith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 34–35.

[53.] Speech to Columbia University, Jan 1938, BYU Box 562 Folder 6

[54.] Abel 126

[55.] Ibid.

[56.] Memo May 18 1939, Box 552

[57.] Telegraph July 12 1939

[58.] Letter, Box 554 Folder 5

[59.] NWMP Bibliography, Box 552 Folder 2

[60.] Letter to Frank Calvin June 16, 1939

[61.] Ibid

[62.] Box 553 Folder 3, Oct 1939

[63.] Speech 1938

[64.] July 12 1939 2:40 pm Sort Conference, BYU , Box 544 Folder 14

[65.] Phil A. Koury, *Yes, Mr. De Mille* (New York: Putnam, 1959), 46.

[66.] Koury 55-56

[67.] Koury 153

[68.] Letter to Archer Winston, 11/28/40 Box 563, Folder 17

[69.] NYC Sun, 10/29/1940 Eileen Creelman, in North West Mounted Police Scrapbook BYU.

[70.] As example see the reviews collected in BYU Box 562, folder 11

[71.] Koury 55-56

[72.] Ibid.

[73.] Letter to ZM Hamilton, Aug 25 1939

[74.] Letter to Frank Calvin Aug 28 1939

[75.] Letter to CB DeMille Nov 22 1939

[76.] Letter to Nault Dec 20 1939

[77.] Ibid.

[78.] Marubbio 107.

[79.] BYU box 559 folder 1

[80.] Ibid

[81.] Story Conference July 17, 1939 BYU Box 554 folder 14

[82.] Ibid

[83.] Ibid.

[84.] Ibid

[85.] Cooney 81

[86.] Ibid.

[87.] Cooney 25

[88.] Luncheon Notes 7/31/39

[89.] The use of the name Metis was mandated by a DeMille memo

[90.] BYU Box 559 Folder 51

[91.] Story Conference Transcript Sep. 19. 1939 Box 555 Folder 14

[92.] Released Dialogue Script September 18, 1940

[93.] Aliess 62

[94.] Aliess 65

[95.] Letter to David E Rose 10/17/40 BYU Box 563 Folder 5

[96.] BYU Box 562 Folder 7 For the British Isles Jan 21, 1941

[97.] BYU Box 562 folder 14 Speech for Canadian Opening 9/25/40

[98.] Gomery, Douglas, *The Hollywood Studio System: A History* (London: The British Film Institute, 2005), 81.

[99.] Gomery 85

[100.] Gomery 85, 92

[101.] Sarah Atkinson, *Beyond the Screen: Emerging Cinema and Engaging Audiences* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2014).

[102.] "Newspaper Ads Still Lead, Says Gillham," *Showmen's Trade Review*, January 27, 1945, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[103.] Cooney 89

[104.] Bruce Peacock, "Hectic Premiere Days Now Regina History," *Boxoffice*, October 26, 1940, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[105.] Ibid.

[106.] "'Geronimo!' Is on the Warpath and He Means Business!," *The Film Daily*, November 30, 1939.

[107] "At the Rialto with Phil M. Daly," *The Film Daily*, Friday, July 14, 1939

[108] "State-Wide Participation Is Arranged for 'Geronimo,'" *Arizona Republic*, November 21, 1939, First edition, sec. 1, Newspapers.com.

[109] Ibid.

[110] "WANTED!," *Arizona Republic*, November 19, 1939, Newspapers.com.

[111] "Indian Picture to Show Here," *Arizona Daily Star*, November 17, 1939, Newspapers.com.

[112] "Geronimo, Carrying Rifle, Reaches City," *Arizona Republic*, November 24, 1939, Third edition, Newspapers.com.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

[115] "Arizona Holds Gala Picture Premiere," *Arizona Republic*, November 26, 1939, First edition, Newspapers.com.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Daly, Phil M., "Along the Rialto," *The Film Daily*, November 28, 1939.

[119] "Geronimo, Carrying Rifle, Reaches City."

[120] Ibid.

[121] "Indians Plan Village for 'Geronimo' Show," *Arizona Republic*, November 23, 1939, first edition, Newspapers.com.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Quigley Publishing Co., "Governors, Rivers, Orphans, Ships, Indians, All in Paramount's Plans," *Motion Picture Herald*, July 15, 1939.

[125] Ibid.

[126] "Stafford Plans Geronimo Day," *Arizona Republic*, November 24, 1939, Newspapers.com.

[127] "Valley Pioneers to See Geronimo," *Arizona Daily Star*, November 26, 1939, Newspapers.com.

[128] "Arizona Holds Gala Picture Premiere."

[129] Ibid.

[130] "Exploitation Showings For Par's Fall Films Set on Land and Sea," *Variety*, July 12, 1939, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[131] "Paramount Calls out Indians for 'Geronimo'; MGM Pre-Dates 'Wind,'" *Motion Picture Herald*, November 25, 1939, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[132] In Miller

[133] Walter A. Cutter, "Psychology of the Theater," in *Moviegoing in America*, ed. Gregory A. Waller (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002).

[134] Cutter 229

[135] Karen Wallace, "The Redskin and the Paleface," in *Classic Hollywood Classic Whiteness*, ed. Daniel Bernardi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 111–38. 118

[136] Michelle H. Raheja, *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 73.

[137.] "Tips on Exploitation," *Motion Picture Daily*, January 22, 1940, http://lantern.mediahist.org/catalog/motionpicturedai47unse_0151.

[138.] "Geronimo," *Motion Picture Herald*, March 2, 1940, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[139.] "E. John Greer," *Motion Picture Herald*, February 17, 1940, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[140.] Quigley Publishing Co., "Round Table in Pictures," *Motion Picture Herald*, April 1, 1939.

[141.] "Manager's Round Table." *Motion Picture Herald* March 23, 1940, 61.

[142.] Ibid.

# CHAPTER II

## NEGOTIATING PUBLICITY AND PERSONA: THE WORK OF NATIVE ACTORS IN STUDIO HOLLYWOOD

In a memoir about his childhood at the Corriganville Movie Ranch, Edwin Collin recalls his friendship with his neighbor, Chief Thundercloud (Victor Daniels).[1] In the early 1950s, Thundercloud, famous for playing Tonto in the original *Lone Ranger* serials, was living and working on the ranch that had shifted from a prolific movie backlot to a tourist attraction just north of Los Angeles. Collin writes that one day, when he visited Thundercloud's home Daniels "opened the door almost immediately. He was not in his 'Tonto uniform,' a term that I would sometimes hear him use when he was referring to his buckskin outfit that was so recognizable to all of us. Instead he was wearing a faded blue shirt, jeans, and moccasins."[2] For much of its existence, film history regarding Native Americans in Hollywood has focused on the "Tonto uniform;" the images and stereotypes presented in Western films and not on the actors who played these roles; actors who were real people, not stereotypes, who had their own career goals and reasons for working in the film industry. Oral histories and memoirs by film workers, and those who knew them, are the most direct way to retrieve this history. However, lacking access to these people, many of whom are no longer living, what other materials can shed light on the experiences of Native actors? In this chapter, I argue that film publicity can be

important material for film scholars who seek to understand the work of Native actors in Studio Hollywood (1930-1948). While at face value publicity material appears unreliable, its intertextual nature and collaborative construction carries traces of the work in which these Native actors were engaged; work that involved the creation of, and perpetuation of, off-screen personas that could affect their on-screen representations and their reception with audiences.

Thundercloud is illustrative of the difficulties in writing about Native actors in film history because he, as a person, is overshadowed by the images of the roles he played and that, aside from small glimpses like the one above, little is known about his life outside of film. Born in 1899, details related to his early life are a mystery, and there are questions about his ancestry compounded by press reports that consistently, and incorrectly, list him as full-blooded Cherokee. His genealogy has remained elusive, in part because there were two Victor Daniels born in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation in 1899, and there is little documentary history, or local memory, about either. Adding to the confusion, Thundercloud's social security application and death certificate provide different places of birth, and list different sets of parents.[3] Thundercloud appears to have maintained that he was Muscogee (Creek), told Collin that he was born in Indian Territory, and that "his mother was of the Muskogee tribe and his father was of the 'Heinz 57 tribe."[4] Thundercloud began his film career in 1928[5] and became one of the most prominent Native actors with starring roles in *The Lone Ranger* (1938) and

*Geronimo* (1939). Towards the late-1940s, with fewer roles in A-pictures he appeared in "poverty row" films, and eventually live-action performances, particularly at the Corriganville Movie Ranch where he lived until his death of stomach cancer in 1954.[6]

Thundercloud was the central figure in perhaps the most famous example of publicity regarding Native Americans in film and an article that demonstrates the complexity of publicity material as well as its potential value. The November 1940 article, "Umatillas Lose a Chance for Glory,"[7] reported that Thundercloud, frustrated with the economic prospects of Native Americans in the film industry, was attempting to organize Hollywood's Native actors into a federally recognized tribe called DeMille Indians.[8] The article has been reprinted in books on Native American film[9] because it suggests what oral histories and common sense suggest: that Native Americans resisted their treatment by Hollywood. Yet, the nature of the article becomes muddled when we realize that its author John del Valle was a press agent for Paramount Pictures[10], the studio behind *North West Mounted Police*, which also opened in November 1940 and featured Chief Thundercloud. The article, in turn, was based on pressbook material for *North West Mounted Police.*[11] This information may suggest that the article is a work of fiction, when we examine its construction in the context of studio publicity, three traces of history, and branches of the film industry, studios were involved and economically invested in each stage of film production, distribution, and exhibition, and at each stage decisions were influenced by potential "salability" within publicity.[12] Miller sees a

demonstration of "promotional feedback," a concept conceived by Sociologist Andrew Varnick where "promotion feeds back into the product's concept and design so that what is produced has already been conceived from the vantage point of the campaign wherein it will be promoted."[13] While films based on existing properties had a built-in level of salability, the key element upon which to sell a film to an audience was the actor. Films would come and go, but actors would remain a continual advertisement for the studios that employed them. As such, publicity at all levels focused primarily on actors and their off-screen lives. In this situation, actors who were successful as "marketable and attractive commodities" in publicity could enhance standing on film by their off-screen marketability.

## The Pressbook

The most significant artifact of studio marketing and publicity campaigns is the pressbook. In the 1930s and 40s, pressbooks, created by advertising divisions located in New York, "served as catalogues of promotional strategy."[14] Pressbooks contained four sections: "Publicity," which offered pre-written articles to plant in newspapers to provide to gossip columnists; "Exploitation," containing promotional strategies for theater managers; "Advertising," which sold the visual art for the film (posters and lobby cards); and "Accessories," which included promotional items theater managers could buy or rent

from regional studio exchanges.[15] Pressbooks are significant artifacts because they collect the traces of a studio's publicity campaign and from them we can infer how a studio, and those involved in the creation of a film, viewed the product they were making; the themes, people, and characters the studio, publicists, and theater managers believed would resonate with audiences.

At Warner Bros., months before a film began production, five employees edited the pressbook from "in-office materials, press releases generated in other departments, and the 'blue book' of publicity articles that were written and forwarded to the department by studio publicists. Publicists also supplied production anecdotes and star biographic material often in the form of 'Vital Statistics," typically "two or three pages of pre-production anecdotes, star gossip and biographic tidbits, usually presented as two or three sentences strung together between ellipses."[16] From these "tidbits," it was the job of pressbook writers to enlarge, and often make-up (or to "dream" as one writer put it[17]) enough material to turn this information into attractive ad copy. Retuning to the "DeMille Indians" article, it appears that del Valle's adapted material about Thundercloud forming a social club for Indian actors[18] and embellished it in a way that he felt would appeal to audiences. Del Valle's expansion also transposes Thundercloud's off-screen work into a register that parallels the thematic world on screen in *North West Mounted Police*; a world of Native rebellions and international political intrigue. Del Valle's article suggests an antagonistic relationship between Native actors and the film industry, yet acts as

evidence of the nuanced negotiations in which Native actors were involved within the industry, particularly through publicity. The article increased Thundercloud's profile and brought attention to his concerns, albeit in a figurative way that acceptably advertised the film for the studio.

The collaborative construction of pressbooks explains the many biographical inaccuracies found in studio publicity, but it also suggests these actors had small, but significant space to influence their personas. Actors could rarely influence their on-screen appearances or narrative roles, yet an actor could, with work, provide material for gossip materials, production anecdotes, and biographical material. It was also beneficial for Native actors that pressbooks were assembled before a film was completed. In most cases, the materials within the books, the very material that would drive the promotional campaign for a film, focused on the personas and biographies of those involved rather than the film itself because the film would likely change during its production. Aside from one or two supporting roles, and a handful of featured extras parts, Native actors were typically marginal characters on screen, but their personas and biographies provided writers with attractive material to fill pressbooks. Even Native extras, virtually unidentifiable on screen, have articles devoted to them in pressbooks.

Pressbook material was embellished, but industry checks on publicity material held it to a relative standard of truth. Beginning in 1933, publicity was heavily regulated by an enforceable Advertising Code (AAC), and to provide a sense of how important this

issue was to studios, "the AAC preceded the Production Code," which self-regulated objectionable film content, by a year.[19] According to Earlovich the code produced changes in how studios created publicity. Required to submit all advertising materials to the AAC for approval,[20] studios adopted a more streamlined approach to the production of publicity material for a film's advertising campaign, realigning "the production-distribution-exhibition structure of advertising by making advertising accountable to a central authority."[21] The bulk of the AAC's work responded to complaints about sexually suggestive movie posters, yet the code was also concerned with truth in advertising copy, stating that "we subscribe to a code of business ethics based upon truth, honest, and integrity. All motion picture advertising shall: (a) conform to fact, (b) scrupulously avoid all misrepresentation."[22] While the AAC did not enforce this aspect of the code as regularly as restrictions on visual promotion, it was enforced. For instance, the AAC famously rejected Howard Hughes' campaign for *The Outlaw* (1943), which claimed to be screened "exactly as filmed—not a scene cut," as false advertising.[23]

While rare, actors did sue studios over publicity material. James Cagney sued Warner Bros. over the pressbook material for *Ceiling Zero* (1936) after he felt that the material violated aspects of his contract.[24] While given creative license to fill out material, pressbook writers also had to ensure that their "dreams" fell within a legal realm of believability. Articles were embellished but still based on kernels of truth, at least enough to not attract AAC attention or legal attention from studio talent. We can also

imagine pressbook writers assuming audiences held horizons of belief regarding actors: subjects and actions in a pressbook article had to be believable to an audience familiar with the subject. In the "DeMille Indians" article, presenting Chief Thundercloud as the instigator is significant because his role in *North West Mounted Police* is incredibly peripheral. We can also assume that, absent of a lawsuit, Thundercloud accepted this addition to his persona; a persona crafted such that it was within the reader's horizon of belief that he could have formed a new tribe of film Indians.

## The Persona

The persona was the central creative product by actors and recent personal experiences have emphasized to me its importance to Native actors. Recently while in Los Angeles, I visited Chief Thundercloud's grave. Prior to this visit, I had referred to him by his birth name, Victor Daniels, believing this emphasized the actor behind the roles. However, I discovered he was entombed as "Chief Thundercloud." Additionally, documents from Thundercloud's life from his SAG card to his wedding announcement list him as Chief Thundercloud. In an interview with Alvin Deer, a Native child actor in several Westerns, I asked about Charles Brunner, another Muscogee (Creek) actor. Initially he did not know to whom I was referring. We shortly realized that he had known Brunner by his screen name, Chief Rolling Cloud.[25]

I was not the first to wonder what to call Chief Thundercloud. Collin remembers that when first introduced to Thundercloud he did not know whether to call him Chief Thundercloud, Tonto, or Victor Daniels, and writes that, "before I could say anything, he solved my dilemma, by saying, 'Hello…I'm Chief Thunder Cloud,'"[26] and Collin, and the others at Corriganville primarily called him "Chief."[27] Thundercloud's grave, Rolling Cloud's relationship with another Native actor, and the interaction between Thundercloud and his neighbor, could illustrate the ubiquity of their off-screen performance. Yet, that they preferred to be called by these names in private settings amongst friends, suggests that these personas were not burdens placed on them by the industry, but something they had crafted and valued.

While we may be tempted to separate person from persona, Danae Clark reminds us that the "actor as worker should not be construed as the true identity of the actor, but rather as an effective discursive construct."[28] Personas, even with their fictive elements, were the result of real work. Instead of attempting to separate Victor from Thundercloud, it is helpful to look at the discourse surrounding Chief Thundercloud and the ways in which he contributed to that discourse for his own benefit. "Stars are involved in making themselves into commodities," writes Dyer, "they are both labour and the thing that labour produces"[29] and this labor should be viewed as a creative act of work on the part of the actor.

Personas, as actors' labor, unlike roles in individual films, were the culmination of multiple film appearances, existed across media, and were intertextual in nature. While we may be tempted to think of intertextual multimedia experiences as a recent phenomenon, moviegoing was a sophisticated intertextual experience in the 1930s and 40s, and the studio's publicity material played a significant role in how audiences' received the films they watched. This took on added significance because during this period, audiences still went to see cinema programs not individual films. The Westerns in which these film workers were involved, were typically filler for larger cinematic programs. The pressbook for *Where the North Begins* (1947) advertises the 40-minute as "the perfect FILLER-INNER for that TOO LONG PROGRAM."[30] The film served a purpose in a larger context, to "fill-in" a theater's program of films. Another staple of programs were serials, and Thundercloud's big break came when he was cast as Tonto in *The Lone Ranger*, the most popular Western serial of the 1930s.[31] More than any other type of film, serials required and exploited intertexts.

In his study of *The Lone Ranger,* Guy Barefoot argues that audiences experienced serials in a doubly-fragmented fashion: first, as part of larger programs, and second in intervals days or a week apart. Producers expected audiences would likely miss one or more of the installments, thus intertexts were essential to the audience's comprehension of the serial. Intertexts concurrent to *The Lone Ranger* included a long-running radio broadcast, a syndicated comic strip, and novels.[32] Republic Pictures believed these

intertexts were so important for audiences that they were, "reluctant to release the serial in locations not receiving the radio programme, though this led to a successful drive to increase the number of radio stations broadcasting the show."[33] The significance of these intertexts, and the extratextual nature of publicity, fostered intertextual moviegoing experiences among audiences, especially fans of serial franchises.

While these intertexts helped satisfy fan appetites and filled-in gaps resulting from moviegoing habits, publicity and news reports were the other principal texts available to audiences. More importantly, these texts likely informed how these audiences viewed these Native actors off-screen. In this environment these actors, through their personas, were able to intervene by influencing these texts that shaped and countered their on-screen depictions. According to Miller, "the era's promotional culture…helped determine reciprocal links between production and promotion."[34] Films were created to be promoted, and promotion influenced future production.[35] Off-screen appearances, should they successfully promote the star and their films, had the potential to influence what would be made in the future. For the biggest stars, this meant star projects. For smaller actors, it may have influenced the roles available to them.

Actors vying for roles and better paying parts in an intensely competitive industry at an economically distressed time had to differentiate themselves. The most successful actors were those able to create personas that transcended their films. According to Barry King, "actors seeking to obtain stardom [would] begin to conduct themselves in public as

though there [was] an unmediated existential connection between their person and their image."[36] On one level this was a form of "eternal advertising,"[37] but there was a reciprocally beneficial relationship between actors, their personas, and studios. Actors with well-known off-screen personas helped the studio promote their films through regular appearances in the press and at public events. This off-screen work helped improve their standing and studios rewarded these actors with greater work.

Maintaining a persona in public was just one form of off-screen work, and actors performed in other capacities. For Native film workers these appearances and performances were often displays of a generalized Indian culture. Thundercloud performed regularly in Southern California in various kinds of performance ranging from headlining an operetta based on *The Song of Hiawatha* at the Hollywood Bowl,[38] performing at Santa Anita's "A Day in Old California," promoting TWA by "blessing" an airplane,[39] or performing "novelty numbers" for the Girl's Corner Club of Los Angeles.[40] He even lent his persona to political events, such as when he rode the horse Silver to welcome Wendell Wilke to California.[41] Each of these performances advertised Thundercloud, his films, and the studios that made those films, but these off-screen performances, and his interactions with fans, shaped his persona and fed back into the ways the studio utilized and promoted him.

In addition to personal benefit, off-screen appearances and performances were important avenues for Native film workers because, similar to performers in Wild West

shows they "gave native performers socially viable ways of maintaining and expressing their culture and identity."[42] In one of the few interviews that addresses his pre-film life, Thundercloud says that as a child he was "taken from my parents' home and sent to the schools for Indians run by white men" where "students were not allowed to speak their own language."[43] He recounts that the schools hoped that the students would forget their culture to become "more amenable to the white man's discipline**."** At 15, Thundercloud "understood and resented it. I determined that I would not return to a government school. I knew that I was an Indian not a white man, and preferred to be red because I was proud of my heritage and considered it superior to yours."[44] In addition to enlarging his persona, public performances allowed Thundercloud to explore and celebrate a Native identity that had been denied in other contexts.

Thundercloud's off-screen performances likely affected the ways audiences viewed his films. While Westerns generally reinforced the trope of the Vanishing Indian, his off-screen presence challenged it through his repeated appearances at contemporary events. In 1939, gossip columnist Jimmy Fidler wrote in regards to Thundercloud's ubiquity that, "it would take more imagination than I can boast to call Chief Thundercloud, who plays the title role in *Geronimo*, a Vanishing American."[45] Columns like Fidler's were located in the movie pages of newspapers, where a reader could see the ad for a film featuring Thundercloud next to an article or gossip column writing about his life off-screen, potentially informing their reception of that film.

Even if unfamiliar with his off-screen activities, audiences, particularly genre fans, would associate Thundercloud with his other roles. The iconic role of Tonto specifically shaped audiences' views of his roles in other films and modified their horizon of belief relative to his persona, influencing the roles he received and the publicity that could be written about him. Regarding his persona, it is significant to note that after *The Lone Ranger*, he remained "Thundercloud"; he did not assume the Tonto persona. Rather, the "Tonto" title was added to his existing persona, suggesting the success and promotional value of Chief Thundercloud's persona prior to the serial's success. Tonto was a character within a film, the Thundercloud persona, while still constructed, was the result of multiple films and numerous intertexts and in the interest of him, and the studio, worth keeping.

Native actors negotiated and leveraged their appearances in public to achieve their own interests, career goals, and cultural projects. These appearances were ways of building their persona and affecting publicity materials that could affect the way viewers viewed their films. Unlike the film text, created within the hierarchies of standardized film production, it was through extra-textual film materials that Native actors were able to exert some degree of control and agency over their image. On screen, Native actors were relegated to background roles in scenes that lasted for only fractions of a film's running time, but they inhabit an outsized role in the publicity material for these films, suggesting that promotion of these actors was successful. To use *Northwest Mounted*

*Police* as an example, there are only two relatively brief sequences involving Native characters yet of the seven pages of "publicity" in the original 1940 pressbook, three contain articles devoted to Native actors, and the film's exploitation heavily focuses on Native themes.[46]

While focusing on the agency of actors and their attempts to affect their own publicity, it is important to remember that publicity had the goal of selling films to audiences. As such, an actor's place in publicity materials was part of a complex, near constant act of negotiation between their persona, crafted on and off-screen, and the studio's ability to sell that persona. Richard Dyer suggests that actors "do not produce themselves alone," [47] that a star's persona was an aggregate of several works produced by different people and received in different ways by audiences. Even within the production of a film, Dyer notes that the image of the actor was the product of ideas negotiated by different departments. Screenwriters, hair and makeup artists, costume designers, and the director all contributed different attributes to actors' personas.[48] Outside of production, appearances in publicity, gossip columns, and in the press was the primary way actors developed their personas. Studying publicity allows us to see traces of this work.

## The Film Worker

A significant correction in the study of film actors has been Danae Clark's concept of "the film worker." On a descriptive level, the term "film worker" better describes Native Americans in filmmaking because while the majority of Native film workers were actors, many also participated in other roles, both credited and uncredited, as stunt people, technical advisors, unit directors, or contributed to the music, props, or costuming of a film. The term is significant on a theoretical level because Clark attributes greater agency to actors in Studio Hollywood. For Clark, traditional approaches to studying actors limit their agency by flattening them as images. Actors are studied as "star texts," either aesthetically or as commercial properties not as people with their own agency and desires. Clark does not focus on race or ethnicity, but the effects of a "star texts" approach is especially problematic when looking at Native actors because of the over-determined place of Native images and bodies in the cultural and racial thought of the period**.** Viewing Native actors on an image level risks reinscribing the same racial stereotypes and assumptions that informed the production of those images on screen.

It is crucial to re-center the study of actors from the images of their performance to the work they performed. According to Clark, actors were involved in complex work on and off-screen to negotiate and create their own personas in order to improve their careers and satisfy personal goals within the contextual limits of studio Hollywood. In this model, "the actor as worker becomes the site of intersecting discourses involving the

sale of one's labor power to the cinematic institution, the negotiation of that power in terms of work performance and image construction, and the embodiment of one's image (on-screen and off-screen) as it becomes picked up and circulated in film and extrafilmic discourse."[49] This "image," or "persona," was the result of the actors' labor to inhabit their persona on *and* off-screen. For Clark, the traces of this work is seen best in the "extrafilmic discourse," of which publicity was the most prominent.

While examining extrafilmic discourses, we must recognize the impossibility of defining a clear delineation between an actor as person off-screen and the role they play on-screen. Chief Thundercloud and Victor Daniels are not two, easily differentiated people. Rather they are points of reference in an ongoing discourse involving his on-screen performances, the associations surrounding the characters he played, his off-screen life as reported in the press and gossip columns, and the experience of an audience with all of these texts. Philosopher Stanley Cavell uses Humphrey Bogart as an example to illustrate this point: "'Bogart' means 'the figure created in a given set of films'…Humphrey Bogart was a man, and he appeared in movies both before and after the ones that created 'Bogart.'"[50] For Cavell, the actor and the cumulative effects of their roles, especially iconic roles, create a "presence" for the audiences**.** This presence is a collaborative creation as suggested by Cavell's chapter title, "Audience, actor, and star"; one does not exist without the other two, and the vital word in Cavell's short chapter on

actors is “creation”; a form of continual labor. Chief Thundercloud was a person. Chief Thundercloud was also a persona.

Clark’s study, like the vast majority of studies on actors, focuses primarily on stars, yet hopes to eventually move from star studies to “actors studies.”[51] Native actors during this period present an interesting and productive challenge to traditional star studies that may help support this move. For most of their careers, Native actors, even famous ones like Chief Thundercloud, worked in supporting roles, bit parts, and as extras. If judged by screen time alone, one might assume that these workers had a nominal presence in the industry and in popular culture. However, examining the extrafilmic discourse surrounding texts, these actors take on significant roles in the publicizing of, and discourses surrounding, the films in which they had meager parts. In studio pressbooks, in press reports, newspapers, society pages, and across other media such as radio, novels, and comic strips, these Native film workers are treated and discussed like stars. According to Allen and Gomery, “stars are actors ‘with biographies’…in some cases…their ‘biographies’ completely overshadow their ‘works.’”[52] The case of Chief Thundercloud and other Native actors push this definition to its limits; they are “movie stars” who are often not featured, at times even anonymous in their own movies: their screen roles only significant in conversation with other multimedia texts and off-screen appearances.

Clark's film worker theory is relevant to the historical Native American experience in film, and also describes a type of negotiation that has a tradition among Native American public performers in the first half of the 20th century. This negotiation is evident in a pre-cinematic antecedent, the Wild West show, and among Indigenous cultural performers who constructed their images in negotiation among the expectations of audiences and employers, and their own self-interest and cultural projects. The negotiation of the actor as worker described by Clark, appears to be a common experience for Native performers in the late-19th and early 20th centuries. Many Native film workers performed first in Wild West shows or in other forms of public entertainment; for example, Chief Thundercloud started out in rodeo and boxing, and moved to radio prior to his film career.[53] It is possible that these were more than similar approaches: that Native actors applied lessons learned from experiences with the dominant culture across cultural forms and media.

Linda McNenly's study of Wild West shows is also significant in quantifying the agency and activity of Native performers employed by entertainment industries capitalizing off regressive stereotypes. According to McNenly, Wild West shows were "spaces of interaction by multiple participants with various agendas involving unequal power relationships, but with the possibility of agency by the marginal group."[54] Since the possibility of agency existed, she wants to move beyond a simple view of "exploitation," in which we assume performers were taken advantage of, or were

complicit in perpetuating dominant stereotypes, to one of "negotiation" in which performers had their own "goals and interests guided by the social and political relationships that structure[d] their lives."[55] Lakota Wild West performer Black Heart articulated this contextualized agency when he argued that if an "Indian wants to work at any place and earn money, he wants to do so; white man got privilege to do the same—any kind of work he wants."[56] At this historical moment, for a Native performer earning a wage outside of the heavy restrictions enacted by the US Government toward Native peoples was a relative form of resistance. Viewing agency and resistance contextually is helpful when studying Native film actors. While in retrospect it may appear these performers were reinforcing stereotypes, they were involved in active resistance relative to the historical and industrial limitations in which they found themselves. In a heavily regulated industry, one that benefited from the depiction or racist stereotypes of Native peoples, traces of individual agency and resistance of any sort take on exaggerated significance.

*Indian Play*

In another performative context that parallels Clark and McNenly's negotiated work, Lisa Neuman's concept of "Indian play" illustrates the complexity and negotiation involved in the work of Native performers and their personas. Neuman's term derives from her study of Chickasaw performer and educator Ataloa (Mary Stone McLendon), who in 1927,

became a member of the faculty at Bacone College in Muscogee, Oklahoma. Ataloa, who had a Master's Degree from Columbia University, was hired largely by the college to head the institution's fund-raising efforts among white donors. Arriving at Bacone, Ataloa, a classically trained contralto, founded and led the Bacone Girl's Glee Club, which served to fundraise for the school and achieve Ataloa's goal of educating the public and promoting Native culture.[57] The nature of the Glee Club's performances may appear counter-intuitive to modern audiences, but illustrate the negotiation that is Indian Play. Ataloa and her students, mostly of Southeastern tribal heritage, performed in Navajo style blankets and sang popular Indian-themed songs composed by non-Native writers and played-up popularized images of Native American life drawn from dime novels, Wild West shows, and film. Neuman describes this "play" between romantic stereotypes and active Native cultural production and critique as: "creativity in publically engaging, articulating, and negotiating ideas about their own and other's Native identities…While playful and spirited, the Indian play of students at Bacone was dedicated to a serious purpose: challenging white stereotypes of Indians."[58] For Ataloa and her students, these stereotypical performances appealed to white audiences who donated money to help fund the school, and these performances were only part of a larger negotiation. The popularity of their performances provided Ataloa with a platform from which she drew attention to Native culture. Ataloa "knew how to use romantic images of Indians to Bacone's advantage, and she carefully wove them into performances that underscored the value of Indian 'civilization' to white America."[59] Similar to film

publicity, these performances have extratextual materials that challenge our initial impressions of them. In the Bacone student paper, Ataloa and her students wrote articles criticizing "simplistic stereotypical portrayals of Indianness" and "attempted to convince white audiences that 'Indians are not all alike."[60]

While contextual specifics between Native performers in Wild West shows, the Bacone Girl's Glee Club, and Native film workers in Hollywood differed, all three situations resulted in remarkably similar responses by the Native performers involved. In each, Native performers appealed to popular romantic images of Native Americans to attract white audiences, but used the attention they received to improve their own circumstances. Using texts in other media, they criticized those very same performances. Native Americans used Indian play to achieve collective and personal goals within systems of cultural production established to either eradicate or celebrate the eradication of Native people and culture. Central to these instances of Indian play was deploying stereotypes within specific performance contexts (Wild West shows, public performance, film) in order to critique and challenge those stereotypes in the margins and intertexts connected to those contexts: backstage interactions, pamphlets and lectures, publicity and off-screen performances.

Native workers in Classical Hollywood crafted their personas by negotiating their public image, the expectations of their audiences, and the needs of their employers. These actors provide examples of the complex ways these Native film workers were involved in

such negotiation in relation to image construction and labor power. They navigated the realities of the studio system, film production, and cultural expectations, to accomplish their personal goals and to further cultural projects. Such work was crucial to Thundercloud's long, successful career an active presence in public: off-screen, in other media, and in studio publicity. He negotiated his public and on-screen personas to further his career, but traces in the negotiation of his persona suggest that he also used his persona to critique the films in which he appeared**.**

## Case Study: *Geronimo*

Such a negotiation can be seen at work in the publicity for *Geronimo*. A major production for Paramount in 1939, the film, according to Maynard, was a "frightening Western…which did much to reinforce the ferocious savage stereotype of the Indian."[61] Paramount appeared happy with its box office, taking out a full-page ad in *Motion Picture Daily* to boast of "grosses shooting to high altitudes,"[62] yet the film was poorly received by critics, one of whom called it "gory…inaccurate and ludicrously off the mark."[63] Considering the film's presentation of Native people, what is notable about the publicity material for *Geronimo* is that it continually subverts the "savage," inaccurate representation found on screen.

Publicity materials, compiled months before the release of a film, focused on the personalities of a film's actors and on anecdotes about its production out of necessity. These anecdotes helped perpetuate actors' personas and the studio hoped that they would build anticipation for the release of the film. By conveying narratives about production, these stories also performed a "type of demystification of film production."[64] We may assume that Classical Hollywood as a "Dream Factory" would prefer to conceal the manufactured nature of its films, but here we see a trade-off where it assumed that publicity about production was worth more than total illusion. Generally, these production stories tend to avoid unflattering glimpses into film work and labor issues. As Earlovich writes, "the glimpse behind-the-scenes gives the appearance of film-making as a job, albeit a glamorous one."[65] Clark goes further, arguing that these production narratives, while ostensibly highlighting film work, "perpetuated a discourse of stardom that trivialized actors' labor"[66] and while studios welcomed the publicity these off-screen stories provided, they drew the line at publicity that revealed too much about the industry's apparatus or that might damage the financial viability of the film. Yet, the publicity material related to Thundercloud repeatedly cross these lines and draw attention to the films artificial nature. Such an approach appears to have been the result of the publicity department negotiating Thundercloud's persona with the presentation of Geronimo in their film.

Casting Thundercloud presented an opportunity and a challenge for Paramount. He was a well-known actor with whom audiences were familiar. The casting of a Native actor also presented an opportunity for promotion. "Authenticity" was a major selling point in film publicity of the 1930s,[67] and a particular point of emphasis in Paramount's campaigns. Publicity not only advertised the studio and its films, but also served as PR for the entire film industry and its usefulness to the nation.[68] Discourses concerning films' "authenticity" allowed the industry to suggest it had done important historical research and provided viewers with at least some form of educational value. The challenge for the studio was that known as Tonto, audiences viewed Thundercloud in a sympathetic and heroic light, and these were not the connotations the studio hoped he would achieve as *Geronimo*. This challenge is likely one impetus for the pressbook stories that challenge and critique the film's representation of its title character. Thundercloud's persona tempered the film in its production and allowed him to criticize it through its publicity. While in retrospect, Tonto is the most iconic of Native stereotypes, being associated with the character provided Thundercloud with cultural capital to challenge Native images on film. In turn, largely from the publicity related to *Geronimo*, Thundercloud's persona would acquire a reputation for critique and activism for the rest of his career.

"Only as Bad as They're Painted," a 1940 article written by John del Valle illustrates how Paramount attempted to balance Thundercloud's persona with the violent

material in the film. The article's title conveys its thesis: Native actors in Geronimo may be playing villains, but "his savagery is for pay, and when he goes on the warpath it is because it's in the script." From there, the article acts as a profile of Chief Thundercloud, differentiating him from the character he was playing in the film. This differentiation reinforces a prevalent assumption about Native actors found in Hollywood publicity and production materials: they did not understand how to act and working with them was difficult. "The aboriginal redskin is growing soft, and persuading the Hollywood Indian to put vim in his villainy is a feat," del Valle writes, and adds that "Indians are not ordinarily adept in the finer nuances of portrayal" but that "Jim Thorpe is an exception who proves this rule; Thunder Cloud now shares the distinction."[69] The article builds upon this narrative by detailing how the make-up department worked to make Thundercloud appear "meaner" through prosthetics that "should bring out the cold shivers."[70] This point worked to further another common narrative in production and publicity materials: that Indian actors did not look "Indian" enough. A note posted in the *Oakland Tribune'*s movie gossip page provides this brief trivia: "Chief Thunder Cloud, full-blooded Cherokee, wears a false nose in "Geronimo"…so he'll look more like an Indian!"[71] A similar anecdote appeared the same month in *The Los Angeles Times*. Entitled "Sunburning Indian," it reads, "Chief Thundercloud, although a full-blooded Cherokee, had to take a course of sun-lamp treatments to darken his body for the title role of Paramount's 'Geronimo.'"[72] Such anecdotes about actors undergoing elaborate physical changes or make-up effects for roles were a common subgenre in pressbooks.

Yet in these contexts, they take-on subversive aspects. In a generic sense, these anecdotes call attention to the construction of actors' physical appearances in films to fans who are eager to consume visual images of their favorite stars. In the case of Native actors, these do not just suggest that actors' on-screen images are manipulated and constructed, but that the audience's assumption about what an "authentic" Indian looks like is artificially constructed as well. That even a "full-blooded" Indian had to modify his appearance to live-up to the pop culture image of authentic Indianness.

If the studio's publicity narrative was that they felt Thundercloud did not look the part of the villain, there is another narrative that appears in the publicity of Geronimo that Thundercloud, as del Valle writes, "went into open rebellion against being made too much of a villain." According to del Valle, Thundercloud protested the depiction of Geronimo in the script because it could damage his career since "he also plays Tonto, a 'good Indian,' in the *Lone Ranger* series, and has quite the following among the younger set. He didn't want to disillusion them."[73] As a concession, the article declares that in response the film's director agreed to remove a scene of Geronimo killing a defenseless white woman. Regarding the deleted scene, Thundercloud says, "if I did a scene like that…every child in America would hate me."[74] This article demonstrates the significance of a persona in the studio's promotional feedback system. Paramount needed Thundercloud because he had been Tonto, but this persona challenged this film and required changes to keep Thundercloud's persona within the audience's horizon of belief.

Like his "DeMille Indian" article, del Valle's Geronimo piece was a work of studio publicity, but a syndicated article published nearly a year earlier by the *Associated Press* provides another view of Thundercloud's protests against the film. The article, by Dan de Luc (who would be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1943[75]), printed only weeks after Paramount announced it had cast Thundercloud in the role, details Thundercloud's problems with the depiction of Geronimo in the script, noting that it:

> hardly does justice to an Indian military genius. I've suggested some changes to the studio officials…Geronimo was pretty cruel, of course, but he wasn't a double-eyed villain…yet the opening montage of this picture, as now written, shows him tomahawking a pioneer woman and her child. I've pointed out that Geronimo began committing his depredations only after womenfolk of his own family had been massacred by renegade whites. It would be only fair, I think to give some of this background to show why he fought so long and so hard against such great odds. Comparisons, perhaps, are unfortunate, but didn't a movie make a hero of Jesse James?[76]

While his suggestion to include Geronimo's backstory was ignored, his suggestion regarding the opening montage, possibly the killing mentioned in del Valle's article, was accepted. The finished film shows Geronimo firing a rifle from horseback, while super-imposed above B-roll footage of Indians attacking wagon trains and news headlines documenting his massacres. The killings are only alluded to in newsprint.

The studio could sell Thundercloud's protests. A Native actor "on the warpath"[77] could sell a film about Geronimo, and the pressbook material highlights Thundercloud as a leader who routinely challenged the white crew. One article tells how the Native cast

members declined the help of the film's make-up artists. The actors had brought their own make-up, and felt they knew how to apply it authentically themselves. When "the studio experts" attempted to intervene "Chief Thunder Cloud, who is playing the title role, declared hands off."[78] This anecdote reinforces Thundercloud's persona while benefiting the studio. Thundercloud and the Native cast may have rejected the crew's help, but the studio could use this to advertise the picture's authenticity to audiences.

While the pressbook ran stories about Thundercloud protesting aspects of the film, the pressbook did not pick-up de Luc's story for its campaign. As seen in del Valle's pressbook article and in the above article about paint, Thundercloud as critic remains, but the purpose of the protest shifts. His objections could be exploited but only if they did not cause the studio, or the image of the film industry, harm; accusations of widespread inaccuracy and racism went too far. The stories that appear in the pressbook became more acceptable to the studio: that Thundercloud was worried about his fans and making the most "authentic" film possible. It is also not an either/or situation. Thundercloud felt the depiction of Geronimo was inaccurate and racist but likely also worried what the role would do to his persona amongst his young fans. This example demonstrates how studying off-screen news, studio publicity, and film provides a more complete idea about how these actors viewed their roles and the negotiation which took place between them and the industry. From the texts surrounding this film**,** a narrative of

disruption and critique became part of Thundercloud's persona and followed him until the end of his career.

Along with pressbook and newspaper reports, another important text in crafting personas were gossip columns. These columnists frequently borrowed from studio publicity for material, and in turn their original reporting was used by publicity departments. One such column tells of unnamed visitors to the set of *Geronimo* who are frightened by the "stony-faced" Native actors, and particularly the "dread Geronimo himself." However, just as they are about to witness a gruesome execution, the director calls "cut." At this moment, as "Geronimo" walks off set he bumps into the script supervisor: "I beg your pardon," says the torturer in solicitous tones. 'Geronimo' is Chief Thunder Cloud, graduate of the University of Arizona and obviously a most cultured Indian."[79] The column begins by presenting its readers with an image of the film's production similar in tone to *Geronimo*'s attitude towards its Native characters. Yet, the passage subverts both its initial set-up and the tone of the film. The reader discovers the scene is constructed and that Chief Thundercloud is not the character he plays on screen; he is polite, educated, and "cultured." This story features a common narrative structure in pressbook material that features a dramatic situation as a hook, and then a reversal that reveals to the reader the situation was manufactured and part of a day's work in Hollywood. This particular format was popular for articles about Native film workers with a particular wrinkle: they would begin by describing Native actors in stereotypical

settings, only to upend these assumptions with anecdotes that note their modernity. Instead of their on-screen stereotypes, the actors are presented as literate, talented, well-travelled, adept in business, and involved in politics.

A similar column begins with "Geronimo" nearly scalping a woman, only to be interrupted and chased away by the Calvary. In the scene, "Geronimo" escapes but the reporter finds him "sitting in a canvas chair and discussing opera with Preston Foster. It seems that both men have sung opera, and both are baritones."[80] The column achieves a crucial goal of publicity: it tells a memorable story in an engaging way, but also subverts the readers' expectations about its Native star. Yet, the column goes further. Mentioning Thundercloud's singing career, its author notes that he spent a year performing in a Hawaiian orchestra and "rather liked being a Hawaiian. It was scarcely more out of character than his current role, which is that of Geronimo, leader of the Apaches. Thunder Cloud is a Cherokee and for this picture he has to wear makeup."[81] Whereas the beginning of this column subverted expectations in a form of narrative suspense, this passage subverts misconceptions about Native Americans in popular culture. It asserts that Thundercloud is as out of character playing a Hollywood Indian as when he played a Hawaiian. It also alerts its readers to a difference in tribal nationalities, countering one of Hollywood's most egregious practices: the interchangeability of one nation for another.

*Geronimo*'s pressbook also includes material that challenged misconceptions about Native Americans. For instance, one pressbook article quotes Thundercloud

explaining that in tribes, "Heredity…is never the basis for succession," but that chiefs are selected.[82] Another article challenges one of the most significant Western themes about Native peoples proclaiming that the "'vanishing Indian' is a misnomer, research for 'Geronimo!' proves…The Bureau of Indian Affairs at Washington D.C., reported that the latest Indian census discloses an increase in the redskin population."[83] These articles provide Thundercloud with a space to critique and correct his films; however, in an illustration of the negotiation that took place between actors and studios in publicity, the studios use his critiques to promote themselves. The articles about chiefs and the Native population are spun to advertise Paramount's research department and to demonstrate how Paramount valued accuracy in their films.

A remarkable piece of publicity from Universal's campaign for the 1947 comedy *The Senator is Indiscreet*, which featured Thundercloud in a supporting role, demonstrates this negotiation and shows that nearly a decade after *Geronimo*, Thundercloud was still critiquing the depictions of Native Americans on screen. The studio utilized this article to differentiate the film from its competition, selling it as the first time "the humorous side of the American Indian will be shown on-screen."[84] For Thundercloud, it provided space for one of his most sustained critiques about the presentation of Native Americans on screen: "Indians have a fine sense of humor, but motion pictures never before gave them a chance to show it. All the dialogue…could be summed up in 'uh,' how'…it's no wonder people get the wrong idea."[85]

For Thundercloud, Native life on film was presented as one-dimensional. Until relatively recently that same critique could be applied to film history. Native Americans have been involved in cinema from its beginning yet, Native people have been largely absent from its history. This absence can be attributed to film studies' traditional focus on the "great men" and artists who left their marks on the industry and a focus on the film text as its primary object of study. Studying publicity material challenges both of these tendencies and allows us to expand our study and history of film. Publicity material can destabilize film texts by calling attention to aspects of their production and reception. It also provides material that allows us to research and tell the stories of figures involved in film who left marginal traces on screen. In a Native context, publicity points to the complex work in which Native actors were involved within the studio system and in conversation with popular culture at-large.

If the work of Native actors on and off-screen appears to reinforce dominant stereotypes, we must remember, as Nicolas Rosenthal warns, that: "condemning American Indian performers for their participation in these cultural productions or understanding them as only victims fails to understand the choices they made within their historical context."[86] To understand the actions of historical Native film workers, we must contextualize how they utilized the opportunities available in a highly regulated and hierarchized industry. Publicity and off-screen performances are important methods for

understanding how they negotiated their careers in film and critiqued the industry as best they could.

## NOTES

[1.] Throughout his career, "Thundercloud" was interchangeably written as one and two words. I will be spelling it as a single word unless quoting.

[2.] Edwin Collin, *My Life at Corriganville Movie Ranch: From Crash Corrigan to Charles Manson* (CP Books, 2017), 33.

[3.] Collin, 106. Through her genealogical research, Debra Spindle of the Oklahoma Historical Society suggests that Daniels was born in Arizona and possibly of Mexican heritage, but as with every attempt so far, conclusive evidence proving Daniels' heritage has remained elusive. See *Oklahoma@The Movies* (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Historical Society, 2012). As Spindle notes, such a personal history would not preclude Daniels from indigenous heritage.

[4.] Collin, 32

[5.] Buck Rainey, *Serial Film Stars: A Biographical Dictionary, 1912-1956* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013), 736-737.

[6.] Collin, 104

[7]. The title refers to Cecil B. DeMille's attempt to film on the Umatilla reservation.

[8.] In Michelle H. Raheja, *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 1.

[9]. Notably in Beverly R. Singer's *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), Jacquelyn Kilpatrick's *Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999) and in Raheja, 2010.

[10.] Khan Red, ed., "John Del Valle," *The 1951-52 Motion Picture Almanac* (New York: Quigley Publications, 1952).

[11.] Paramount Pictures, "North West Mounted Police Pressbook," 41 1940, Paramount Press Sheets Aug 1 1940 to Aug 31 1941, Margaret Harrick Library, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, 7.

[12.] Miller, 222

[13.] Miller, 229

[14.] Miller, 16

[15.] Ibid.

[16.] Miller, 267

[17.] Miller, 254

[18] "Real Movie Indians have 'DeMille Tribe,'" *North West Mounted Police* Pressbook, 7. This article was the basis for del Valle's and refers to Thundercloud's social club to facilitate connections between actors as a figurative, not literal tribe. It does not appear to have been picked-up or published anywhere else as part of the film's publicity.

[19.] Earlovich, 17

[20.] Earlovich, 20

[21.] Earlovich, 110

[22.] Earlovich, 224
[23.] Ibid.
[24.] Miller, 291
[25.] Alvin Deer. Interview by author. Oklahoma City, January 12, 2017.
[26.] Collin, 21
[27.] Ibid.
[28.] Clark, 12
[29.] Dyer, 4
[30.] "Where the North Begins Pressbook," 1947, Janus Barfoed collection, Margaret Harrick Library, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.
[31.] Guy Barefoot, "Who Watched That Mask Man? Hollywood's Serial Audiences in the 1930s," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 31, no. 2 (June 2011): 167–90, https://doi.org/10.1080/01439685.2011.572604.179
[32.] Barefoot, 181
[33.] Barefoot, 181
[34.] Miller, 217-218
[35.] Ibid.
[36.] In Clark, 22
[37]. Earlovich, 3
[38.] "Hiawatha Scheduled," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 23, 1944, sec. 1, 7.
[39.] "Indian Chief Christens Plane," *Nevada State Journal*, August 11, 1936, 2.
[40.] Winifred Martin, "Woman's Club News, Citizenship Head Puts on the Gloves," *San Bernardino Daily Sun*, July 18, 1933, 9.
[41.] "Indian Will Lead Willkies Oregonians," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1940, sec. 1, 6.
[42.] McNenly, 79
[43]. Alice L. Tildesley, "Lo, the Poor Indian Has Gone Hollywood," *The Honolulu Advertiser*, August 9, 1936, Newspapers.com.
[44]. Ibid.
[45.] Jimmy Fidler, "Jimmy Fidler in Hollywood," *Nevada State Journal*, April 6, 1939, 4
[46.] *North West Mounted Police* Pressbook
[47.] Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, Second (New York: Routledge, 2004), 4.
[48.] Ibid, 3
[49.] Danae Clark. *Negotiation Hollywood: The Cultural Politics of Actor's Labor*. (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 12.
[50.] Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed*, Enlarged Edition (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1979), 28.
[51]. Clark, 121.
[52.] Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery, *Film History: Theory and Practice* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985), 172.
[53.] Paul Harrison, "Harrison in Hollywood," *The Monitor*, April 14, 1939, 4.

[54.] Linda Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows: From Buffalo Bill to Euro Disney* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 11.

[55.] McNenly, 10

[56.] L.G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 103.

[57.] Linda K. Neuman, *Indian Play: Indigenous Identities at Bacone College* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 76.

[58.] Neuman, 20

[59.] Neuman, 81

[60.] Neuman, 80

[61.] Richard A. Maynard, *The American West on Film: Myth and Reality* (Hayden Book, 1974), 82.

[62.] Quigley Publishing Co., "FLASH! From the Box Office," *Motion Picture Daily* (New York: Quigley Publications, March 1940), Lantern, http://lantern.mediahist.org/catalog/motionpicturedai47unse_0269.

[63.] In Maynard, 83

[64.] Earlovich, 3

[65.] Ibid.

[66.] Clark, 75

[67.] Miller 21

[68.] Earlovich, 1

[69.] In Richard A. Maynard, *The American West on Film: Myth and Reality* (Hayden Book, 1974), 84.

[70.] Ibid.

[71.] "Ugh!," *Oakland Tribune*, June 11, 1939, Human Interest, 2.

[72.] "Sunbathing Indian," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 13, 1939, Morning edition, sec. 2, Newspapers.com.

[73.] Maynard, 84

[74.] Ibid.

[75.] "Pulitzer Prize Winners By Year," accessed December 30, 2017, http://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-year/1944.

[76.] Dan De Luce, "Lone Redskin on Warpath in Movie Capital Against Paleface Writers," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 7, 1939, 2.

[77.] Ibid.

[78.] "Make-up Men Ousted by "Geronimo!" Indians," *Geronimo* Pressbook, 6.

[79.] Erskine Johnson, "Behind the Make-Up," *The Times*, April 27, 1939, 8.

[80.] Harrison, 1939

[81.] Ibid.

[82.] "Hero Heir," *Geronimo* Pressbook, 3

[83.] "T'Ain't So," *Geronimo* Pressbook, 3

[84.] Walt Hackett, "Indian Movies Joke -Chief Thundercloud," *Lansing State Journal*, October 26, 1947, 8.

[85.] Ibid.

[86] Nicolas G. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration & Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 47.

# CHAPTER III

## CHIEF MANY TREATIES, JIM THORPE, AND HOLLYWOOD LABOR

In the narratives surrounding Chief Thundercloud, labor relations in Hollywood were frequent subtexts; however, the narratives that surround Chief Many Treaties career explicitly touch upon the labor difficulties facing Hollywood extras in general, and specifically the labor concerns of Native American actors in the 1930s and 40s. This chapter will examine the contextual labor issues that concerned Native film workers in this era by examining Chief Many Treaties and Jim Thorpe through their careers and activism in Hollywood, and their connections with its labor movements. Their experiences illuminate the economic stresses Native film workers encountered and the system they navigated during this period of Hollywood**,** and examining how individual actors utilized their personas to further collective benefit provides additional insight into how these Native actors viewed their careers. Clark argues that a better understanding of actors' subjectivity requires:

> An investigation into actors' shifting perceptions of themselves in relation to their work and to the cinematic institution in general. It requires, in other words an understanding of the unifying principles around which diverse groups of actors united or formed "unions"… and the way in which fragmented aspects of subject identity cohered in relation to these unions…For the unifying constructs of subject identity not only determined how actors perceived themselves or were

> perceived by others; they directly influenced relations of power in the industry and affected actors' strength as a bargaining unit.[1]

In this chapter, I will examine how Chief Many Treaties and Jim Thorpe, and by extension other Native actors, understood the ability of their public identities to benefit other actors in the industry. In addition, Native actors' leveraged additional influence by inserting their personas into larger narratives about American unity that were being revised in the wake of the Great Depression; narratives in which Indigenous Americans began to hold symbolic and narrative weight.

## Labor in Hollywood

Avoiding union influence was one of the attractive aspects of Los Angeles to the young film industry. As Robert Sklar points out, "Los Angeles was well known as the nation's leading open-shop, nonunion city."[2] While labor disputes in Hollywood began shortly after its founding in 1916, the studios were able to, sometimes violently, crack down and control any attempts at unionizing. As Douglas Gomery argues, "If there was every proof of the power of the Hollywood studio system in 1930, it came with its ability to suppress unionization."[3] However, the intensity of unionization attempts in Hollywood increased in the 1930s, mirroring larger trends in society as a whole; "the Hollywood studios may have seemed different to companies in other industries—more glamorous and fantasy-

based—but in terms of labour organising what occurred after 1933 was no different from the struggles in Detroit and Pittsburgh."[4]

Mythologized as the height of the cultural significance of the movies in American culture, and of prolific movie going by audiences, the years of the Depression were rife with economic and social tension within Hollywood. Nineteen-thirty three and thirty-four act as significant turning points and help illustrate the complex climate in the industry. On a thematic level, the first years of the Depression Hollywood and its filmic output "perpetuated one of the most remarkable challenges to traditional values in the history of mass commercial entertainment… [they] called into question sexual propriety, social decorum, and the institutions of law and order."[5] This relative freedom in content which questioned social norms and capitalist fantasy is best portrayed in the Gangster Films popularized by Warner Bros.,[6] but this freedom ended in 1933 when on March 5, the same day that Roosevelt began his bank holiday to usher in the National Recovery Administration (NRA), the studios, at the insisting of Will Hays, officially reaffirmed their enforcement of the Production Code. Thomas Schatz notes that, "just as the bank holiday heralded heavy federal regulation via the NIRA, the Reaffirmation was the first step toward widespread industry self-censorship via the Production Code Administration—the PCA or "Breen Office."[7] The following year, Joseph L. Breen took over the administration from Hays and began to crack down on code enforcement.

On the economic front, 1932-33 was the most economically depressed for American cinema to this point in its history as attendance fell to an all-time low, "nearly a third of all theaters were shut down…Paramount [was] in bankruptcy; [and] RKO and Universal in receivership; Fox in the process of reorganization."[8] Measured in stock value the five major studios dropped from $1 Billion to $250 million dollars from 1930 to 1933.[9] The 1933 edition of *The Film Daily Year Book* began with the following warning: "1932 was a trying year for the industry and its close found the fortunes of the business at their lowest ebb…unless the general economic situation takes a decided change for the better, the industry can hope for little in the way of progress and genuine prosperity."[10] On June 16, 1933, President Roosevelt signed the National Industrial Recover Act (NIRA), legislation that Roosevelt saw as the "centerpiece of the First New Deal."[11] The NIRA was formed by a group of ideologically differing Senators, representatives, and labor attorneys, resulting in an "ambiguous catchall piece of legislation" that had to both "satisfy the impulse for regulation and that against monopoly, but also to win the support of those who would participate in the recovery plan. This included labor, but principally meant businessmen."[12] The act had two major, seemingly contradictory effects on Hollywood: "sanctioning certain monopoly practices among major U.S. industries,"[13] essentially providing government approval of blind booking, blind bidding, as well as zone and clearance practices,[14] while at the same time guaranteeing the right for workers to organize with government aid.[15] The act may have been contradictory in ideals, but its

signing resulted in a "tremendous surge of worker organization…which led to the general strikes of 1934," and dramatic increases in union membership across the country.[16]

In Hollywood, the NIRA meant a decline in influence for the studio-created Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), and opened up the possibility of union organization. It also reinforced the authority and power of the Studio System over its workers by solidifying the industry's division of labor and developed "management systems with a clearer hierarchy of authority and a greater dispersion of creative control,"[17] setting the stage for a contentious period of labor relations between the studios and their workers. According to Clark, the "NRA furthermore established a parallel development of 'big management' and 'big unionism' that locked into place the imbalance of power between producers and employees, thus assuring that labor power relations between actors and producers would remain relatively unchanged until the breakup of the studio star system in the late 1940's and early 1950s."[18]

Historian Michael Denning presents the history of worker movements in the United States "as a series of offensives and retreats" and marks five major periods of CIO surges in the CIO era: 1933-34, 1936-37, 1940-41, 1943-44, and 1945-46.[19] The attempts at unionization among various Hollywood guilds and craftspeople parallels this history of "offensives and retreats." In particular, attempts by actors to organize against the increased power of the Studio System were fraught with particular difficulty. Actors faced a conceptual and material difference from the better-unionized stage actors and film

craft workers. Conceptually, screen acting was not viewed as work. Similar to the other craft guilds materially in "institutional context," screen actors "encountered different working environments and labor power relations,"[20] and screen actors were subject to intense hierarchies. It was the actors from the "lower ranks" that drove attempts to unionize; "the major motion picture starts resisted the definition of actors as workers," and "feared that the union drive would cost them the status and power they had worked so hard to achieve."[21]

As part of the systemized hierarchy of actors within the industry, the status of extras became a point of contention in Hollywood labor organization: "The question of who qualified as an employee and thus deserved protection under the NRA code was posed by the screen extra," Clark writes.[22] The approach to the extras question during the decade generally resulted in purges of existing extras from Central Casting or limiting those granted extra status. The AMPAS' Code Committee launched an investigation to trim the ranks of actors seen as a drain on the industry and to make "the title of 'extra' as tough to get as a policeman's badge."[23] The explanation driving the Academy's efforts was to end favoritism in which only a select group of extras were hired as featured players at the expense of everyone else. While such an effort would appear to help Native actors who had to fight for screen exposure, actors' groups viewed the producer-friendly Academy's efforts with suspicion. In August 1933, the AFL had attempted for a third time to unionize screen extras, this time under an agreement with Actor's equity, the

more powerful and progressive organization that represented stage actors. The Academy's efforts were likely, as Seagrave writes, "a way to forestall actors from organizing a real trade union."[24]

That October, SAG announced that it would finally allow extras into its organization: "For the first time in motion picture history there are no class distinctions and no castes among the players," SAG secretary Ken Thomson declared.[25] However, the remainder of the decade would see a near continual series of disagreements about the class distinctions among actors and extras, and their standing in SAG. These distinctions began quickly with the establishment of the Junior Screen Actors Guild (JSAG) in March 1934, the arm of SAG that would represent extras. In October 1934, there were roughly 400 "Class A" actors, 200 "Class B" actors, and the JSAG contained over 1,700 extras. Of these, only the "Class A" actors had a vote when it came to SAG elections that determined representatives and policy.[26] SAG altered this voting procedure to be friendlier to the lower "classes" of actors in 1940, but Class "A" actors still held the majority of political power within the guild.[27]

Extras failed to reorganize again in 1935 in a union patterned after the American Society of Cinematographers, and while many extras were not happy with SAG representing their interests, the Guild did consistently lobby and pressure studios in favor of extras' pay. In 1937, the JSAG launched an investigation into pay scales that abolished the lowest pay level ($3.20 a day) and increased pay overall. However, a series of

decisions, particularly the removal of extras who were not in good standing with SAG or pay membership dues, limitations on how many extras would be allowed to join, and who was counted as a working extra, caused internal strife within the JSAG. Even after the pay increase, the stratification among the extras and their pay scales still created divisions between extras. In 1938, for instance, five extras pay rates existed: $5.50 a day for atmosphere, $8.25 per day for a "regular" extra, $11 a day for "special" extras, $13.75 a day for special extras who also supplied their own costumes, and a "dress" extra $16.50 a day (for a frame of reference, bit players with speaking parts were paid $25 a day).[28] The remainder of the 1930s saw continued infighting between SAG and JSAG, fights for influence between SAG and the AFL-CIO, and between Central Casting and the Cinema Players Group, regarding how many extras should be able to work in Hollywood and who should represent them.

A more complete history of the status of extras in Hollywood labor is told elsewhere,[29] but from this short overview we can see the prominent issues that would define the extra's experience in Hollywood during the rest of the studio era. First, actors needed to retain the status of an "extra" by maintaining regular employment, staying on good terms with Central Casting, and remaining in good standing with SAG. Second, film workers needed to be the right kind of extra in order to be in the highest class and pay scale possible. One can imagine the highly competitive atmosphere on a film set as extras fought for prominence, not just out of a desire for fame and potentially being

"discovered," but that the difference between even $11 a day and $5.50 a day likely meant the difference between a sustainable income and barely scraping by.

The majority of Native film workers in Hollywood were extras. While the popularity of the Western film meant a potential for steady work, the nature of the industry also provided the potential for exploitation. SAG may have standardized pay, but "the large pool of unemployed actors ensured that the studios exercised largely unregulated control over conditions of employment."[30] Two Native film workers who became instrumental in advocating for Native film workers, particularly to fight for the regulation of the "conditions of employment" for Native actors are the two figures who will make up the rest of this chapter: Chief Many Treaties and Jim Thorpe.

## Chief Many Treaties

William Malcom Hazlett was born in Choteau, Montana, on April 11, 1876, the son of a white father and a Piegan Blackfeet mother. He attended public school in Choteau at St. Peter's Mission, at a Blackfeet boarding school, and then at Carlisle Indian School beginning in 1890 where he excelled as a student and as an athlete.[31] After graduating in the spring of 1895[32] he held "various occupations, such as logging in the Rockies, a cowboy on the plains of the northwest, surveying in the irrigating ditches…and later in the employ of the government having in charge a pack outfit of a

government surveying crew in the Rocky Mountains, then as a farmer for the Indian agency."[33] In 1898, he was transferred to Caddo County, Oklahoma, where he "held a position as industrial teacher at the government school at colony" and married his wife, Nora Guy, a graduate of Haskell Indian School. He lived in Ft. Cobb, Oklahoma, from 1899 to 1911, where "in addition to being a stock raiser and alfalfa grower" he was the editor of the local newspaper, the *Ft. Cobb Record*, from 1906 to 1910.[34]

In 1910, Hazlett ran as the Democratic candidate for Oklahoma's 15th Senatorial District. The following year, he and his family moved to Aberdeen, Washington where he began a career in real estate[35] and had enough success to be called a "well known real estate man**"** in 1913 a local paper.[36] However, this newspaper mention is the last trace of Hazlett I have been able to find in Washington, and there is a noteworthy gap in accounts of Hazlett's life except that he moved to Hollywood and "became involved in Hollywood activities."[37] Hazlett's first uncredited film role was as Black Hawk in the 1931 Western *Oklahoma Jim*, and his first credited role was in 1935's *The Rustler's of Red Dog*, where he was credited as "William Hazlitt." In other roles he was credited as "Bill Hazelett" (in the 1938 serial *Flaming Frontiers*) and "Bill Hazlet" (in 1941's *Go West, Young Lady*). Following this role, he was either credited as Chief Many Treaties or Many Treaties.

Despite these anomalous screen credits, Chief Many Treaties' persona predates the bulk of his film career. The first record of his persona is a 1933 photo series in *The Oakland Tribune* entitled "Modern Methods." The series contains three photos: former

Carlisle football coach "Pop" Warner and Andy Kerr, a former member of his coaching staff who was then the head coach at Colgate, standing next to a Chevrolet. Below this photograph is one of Chief Many Treaties and an unnamed Native woman in plains-style regalia on horses flanking a Plymouth (though the automobile takes up the majority of the space in the photograph). The caption reads, "Chief Many Treaties and the Plymouth he now uses instead of a horse." The third image is of a new model Ford. The photoset was likely an ad for local car sales representative H.M. Lawrence, the person credited with "securing" the photos. The photo series plays into popular narratives about primitivism and technology common in advertising at the time, but what is significant is that it uses Chief Many Treaties' name rather than portraying an anonymous "Indian." This inclusion suggests that he had some level of name recognition and his persona lent some intertextual value to the meaning of the ad. Later that summer, Chief Many Treaties headlined the "Indian parts" of the "Romance of Centinela Springs" Pageant in Inglewood which told the tale of "the beautiful Indian maiden Wanasha, her love for a white conqueror, and from the Indian's standpoint, the ominous arrival of civilization."[38]

Hazlett's biography presents important points to consider when looking at Native American actors. His long, varied list of jobs, while atypical for most, was not uncommon among early film workers and especially among Native American actors. His work history suggests that film acting was part of a long line of ambitious career endeavors. Even more so, while we do not know how Hazlett came to Hollywood, he

appeared drawn to public life. A biographical sketch of Hazlett featured in a newspaper as part of his 1910 state senate campaign writes that, "the lad was destined in later years to take an active part in public life far away from Oklahoma."[39] A bit player in the movies seems a far cry from state senator; however, Hazlett may have seen the power of film to reach a mass audience. While his film roles were small, he acquired a significant persona that connected him with off-screen performance work, and provided increased visibility that he could use to advocate for Native causes.

## Jim Thorpe

One of the most popular and mythologized Native American figures of the 20th century, Jim Thorpe was born in 1888 in what today is Yale, Oklahoma. While his parents were of mixed ancestry, Thorpe identified as Native American and celebrated his Sac n Fox heritage.[40] Thorpe began attending Carlisle in 1904 and competed for its sports teams and by 1908, he began to achieve widespread attention for his athletic accomplishments.[41] The highlight of Thorpe's athletic career was winning both the Pentathlon and Decathlon at the 1912 Summer Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden. His Olympic success and Native heritage were quickly integrated into narratives about the successes of Native peoples, efficacy of government policy, and the unique qualities of the "American Spirit." However, the next year a story broke that Thorpe had played baseball under a professional contract, thus violating the amateur rules of the Olympics.

Stripped of his medals, he became a tragic figure in the national narrative. Thorpe played pro sports for another 15 years, but slid "from a symbol of physical perfection to an object of personal pity."[42] After retiring from sports, Thorpe "drifted from city to city, job to job, and bar to bar...without sports, Thorpe barely eked out a living, accepting work wherever he could find it."[43] In addition, Thorpe struggled with alcoholism, and suffered a number of personal trials; he lost a son in 1917, and was divorced twice.

Nineteen-thirty-one was a particularly difficult year for Thorpe. Out of work in Los Angeles, he traveled to Las Vegas in search of employment in the Hoover Dam project, but jobs involved in its construction had not yet materialized.[44] "This is sure one tuff country to make ends meet," Thorpe wrote in a letter to friend and Carlisle classmate Sylvester Long.[45] It is quite possible that Long had a part in piquing Thorpe's interest in a film career. Long, an African-American from North Carolina who passed as Cherokee (he learned to speak the language fluently on the Wild West show circuit) had developed the persona of Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance and enjoyed a somewhat successful screen career; he had famously stared as Baluck in *The Silent Enemy* the previous year.

Native film workers had different reasons for entering the film industry. For some, it was a way to pursue artistic expression. For others, it appears to be extensions of cultural education projects. For many, like Thorpe, it was a job. As such, it is important for evaluations of Native actors consider this. While it may be disturbing to view the film roles portrayed by a Native actor if we view them as attempts at artistic verisimilitude or

cultural education, we may also need to be forgiving of others who, in dire economic straits, played in films to support their families.

According to Buford, Thorpe's entry into acting was connected with renewed press' interest in his story. Upon his return to Los Angeles, *Collier's* magazine published a four-part series on Thorpe, a series that began "Thorpe's 'canonization as the greatest athlete of all-time."[46] Other reporters and articles would soon follow; however, the press began to focus as much, if not more, on his destitution rather than his former athletic triumphs. A well-received 1931 Associated Press article noted that the Olympic hero was now working in Los Angeles as a day laborer for $4 day and wrote that after work:

> Jim goes home to a very small cottages where Mrs. Thorpe…Philip, 4, and Billy 2, wait for him. Sometimes at night Jim opens a big book and the little Thorpe's look properly awed…the book contains many clippings and some photographs. The photographs include snapshots of Jim being handed something by the King of Sweden…there's a picture of a bronze Viking ship, which Jim got for winning the decathlon, and a picture of a bronze bust of Sweden's King which went to him for winning the pentathlon. It's hard to find a reason for the present state of affairs of the smiling former athlete hero.[47]

According to the article, Thorpe was applying to be the coach at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and at Mississippi A&M but ultimately did not receive interest in either position. While the general public was largely sympathetic to Thorpe in his medal controversy, the NCAA was, as it has been for most of its history, embroiled in a debate regarding amateurism and athletics and would not have wanted Thorpe, the most famous figure associated with the controversy, involved in college athletics. In addition, the

president of the IOC, and the most vocal proponent for amateurism in athletics was Thorpe's former bitter athletic rival, Avery Bundage.

It was a series of these "fallen hero" stories that revived widespread public interest in Thorpe and, as a result, he began to receive offers to appear at cultural and sporting events throughout Sothern California. However, regular work still eluded him. Thorpe then moved to Hawthorne, California, to live near Cecelia "Ceil" Blanchard, a long-time friend from Shawnee, Oklahoma, who was married to actor Lee Blanchard, "a skilled rider and Indian costume maker" in Hollywood. Shortly thereafter Universal Pictures, responding in part to the renewed publicity about Thorpe, signed him for a role in the serial *Battling with Buffalo.*[48] While Thorpe may have considered a career in Hollywood for years, between Blanchard's connections and studio interest he was now an actor.

The same year, Thorpe sold the rights to his life story to MGM for $1500 dollars; however, Thorpe claimed to have never seen any money: "I never did read the contract, especially the fine print. Although I'd been led to believe that I'd receive $20,000, I've received nothing."[49] When the film was released 1951, he paid sixty-five cents to see it in an Oklahoma City movie theater.[50] Thorpe's experience in Hollywood may have ended bitterly, but that was not always the case. In fact, it appears he preferred his acting career to other options. In 1931, Thorpe was offered the job as athletic director at an Oklahoma City area high school. Thorpe refused the offer and stayed in Hollywood to continue

acting. Thorpe refused the deal partly because of experiences with racism in Oklahoma but also because "in Oklahoma, for the most part, he was just another Indian."[51] Thorpe enjoyed the publicity he received in Los Angeles, but this enjoyment was tied to something more culturally significant than enjoying celebrity attention. In Hollywood he was celebrated for being an Indian in a way that he was not in his home state. In Hollywood, "Jim would come to feel more Indian than he had since leaving Carlisle."[52]

Performing in show business as an Indian provided Native Americans, especially former boarding school students, with avenues for cultural expression and pride otherwise denied to them. Nicolas Rosenthal, writing about the experiences of Carlisle graduate and Cheyenne actor Richard Davis Thunderbird notes that, "Native people…came to Hollywood after many years of following in the paths laid out for them by the U.S. Government and growing frustrated by their limitations."[53] These limitations on Native life were often severe; dress, language, and movement were regulated by the Government. Show business provided opportunities for Native performers. About Wild West performers McNenly writes that "Native people joined Wild West shows for…the possibility of continuing 'old ways' while avoiding forced assimilation and opportunities to travel freely without passes, to see and learn about the world, and to make some money…archival records support this hypothesis."[54] Though film and Wild West shows were different media, the similarities in performance registers suggest Native film workers entered film for similar reasons.

In addition to providing career alternatives that allowed for greater movement and celebrated Native culture, albeit in stereotyped ways, show business was not all together unfamiliar for many boarding school students. Around the turn of the 20th Century, boarding schools attempted to showcase their students in highly public endeavors as public relations strategies, often to argue for the success of Federal Indian Policy in general, and boarding schools specifically. L.G. Moses writes of one extreme instance where Samuel McCowan, the superintendent of the Chilacco Indian School in Oklahoma, constructed a boarding school exhibit at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. McCowan utilized Native student labor from across the country to build a life-size model school and employed what Moses calls "Show-Indian" students to perform at the exhibit which McCowan hoped demonstrated the success of boarding school assimilation efforts. Other groups of Native youth were showcased in public to demonstrate the potential for Native people to assimilate into modern American life. For instance, there were tours of Indian All-Star bands that traveled the world performing "in full-fledged Indian costumes and not in regular band uniforms," and the Native groups with the most significant cultural impact: the Carlisle and Haskell football teams.[55] These efforts aimed to show the success of assimilation, but also provided boarding school students with a taste for world travel and provided glimpses into performance and celebrity. With this in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that many Carlisle students made their way into in film throughout its history. Deloria notes that Thomas Ince was particularly proud that of his 121 Indian film workers, several were Carlisle graduates,[56] and notable Carlisle alumni

include Lillian St. Cyr (Princess Red Wing), Richard Davis Thunderbird, and Luther Standing Bear.[57]

Experience with performance and exhibition demonstrated to these Native people that performance and public exposure provided the possibility of achieving their own career interests, and also to further cultural projects. Bufford argues "the most talented and enterprising of the Hollywood Indians, including Jim, capitalized on the attention and celebrity and developed powwows, lecture tours, and performances focused on Indian culture."[58] Many Treaties and Thorpe, in particular, were effective spokespeople for Native extras because of their experience in other fields that had required the creation and maintenance of a public image: Many Treaties in politics and real estate, and Thorpe in sports.

Thorpe's advocacy for Native extras was likely informed by his experience as a highly visible collegiate and professional athlete. While seemingly disparate professions, there are notable connections between the contexts of Native actors and Native athletes in the early 20th century. In these years, sports were the most successful and visible form of public relations for Indian Boarding Schools, "providing 'proof' that Native American children could be assimilated and taught to compete with grace and sportsmanship."[59] However, as with other aspects of boarding school culture, Native students negotiated the often-oppressive conditions of the schools with their own cultural practices. In his study of Native athletics at boarding schools, John Bloom argues that sports became major sites

in which Native students were able to use a structure intended to promote assimilation to further their own interests, and to provide a source of Native pride and cultural continuation:

> Recent scholarship…has shown that students not only survived their experiences, but in doing so reimagined their ethnic identities in ways that were creative, inventive, and in dialogue with the historical contexts that indigenous people have faced in North America during the twentieth century…the popular culture, athletic teams, and sporting activities that students experience at boarding schools comprised one of the most important regions of the this terrain where the federal government, educators, and students themselves negotiated the meanings of American Indian identities and memories[60]

Interestingly, following the Meriam Commission report in 1928, and the reforms enacted by commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier in 1933, the schools began to discourage sports. While ostensibly done to prohibit exploitation, or professionalism controversies like Thorpe's, Bloom suggests that the programs were discouraged because they demonstrated a source of visible Native pride that went against the schools' initial purpose.[61]

As the most visible student athlete at Carlisle, Thorpe would have been involved from a young age in negotiating between a public mythology driven by a desire to assimilate Native Americans and utilizing celebrity for his own material ends, and to further Native cultural aims and pride. This work parallels the negotiation performed by Native actors who worked within a different kind of system invested in the public perception of Native personas and traditions. As an athlete, he would have been perceptive to power of mass media to create a public persona first hand, and in terms of

labor, would have personally seen the effects of exploitation that came with visible success and dubious contracts. Thorpe had attempted a form of Native autonomy before in a cultural institution: in 1922, he formed an all-Native football team.[62] The effort was an attempt to provide a source of pan-Indian pride, but also to provide a way for the Native athletes to control their own images, and avoid exploitation, and Thorpe began advocating for Native American film workers rather quickly upon his arrival in the film industry.

An incident between Thorpe and Cecil B. DeMille provides insight into his concern about the exploitation of Native labor. Thorpe had contacted DeMille prior to the production of T*he Plainsman* (1936) hoping to convince the director to use only Native American actors in the film's Indian roles. Yet, when DeMille went to the Cheyenne Lame Deer Reservation in Montana to shoot on location, he hired local Cheyenne actors instead of hiring Los Angeles-based actors. Thorpe was "furious."[63] On one level, Thorpe was upset because DeMille had hired non-union actors at the expense of union extras, who, as noted earlier, had to fight already for their roles and status in the SAG. On another level, Thorpe felt that these location-based extras did not know what they were getting into. The Native film workers in Los Angeles came to Hollywood for their own purposes and interests; the danger was that for these locally-based film workers, Hollywood came to them.

Examining the accounting ledger for N*orth West Mounted Police,* another DeMille production that utilized both Hollywood-based and location-based Native actors, suggests that Thorpe's concern about the exploitation of local Native actors may have been warranted. The ledgers for the production of *North West Mounted Police* extensively detail the pay of bit players, extras, and stunt performers (who performed which stunts and when, who was a background extra, who were featured, etc.). However, while listed by the Unit Production Manager on call-sheets and in the accounting ledger there is no detail for how the local extras were paid. The very absence of that information, given that the accountant for this film kept impeccable notes for everything else, opens up the possibility that these actors may not have been paid SAG wages.

## Thorpe and Many Treaties

Thorpe and Many Treaties were vocal about and fought for the careers of Native film workers individually, but one of their most significant acts of activism occurred together. The underlying concern in Many Treaties and Jim Thorpe's activism was the availability of roles. In 1934, Chief Many Treaties and Thorpe assisted the Navajo Tribal Council in revoking the honorary tribal membership of Hollywood stars such as Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and Jimmy Walker. According to Tom Dodge, a tribal council member, "Every time a movie star stops in Gallup and is adopted by the tribe, then he claims at Hollywood he is a Navajo."[64] In the Associated Press' report printed in *The New York*

*Times*, this was part of Many Treaties and Thorpe's larger effort to petition NRA Administrator Sol Rosenblatt for "a separate code to govern the 500 Indians engaged in picture work, filing forceful objection to the picturization of other races as Indians."[65]

The explanation for the lack of Native actors in Native roles is attributed to an anonymous producer (in *The New York Times* it is listed as "movie producers" plural; in the articles that also reprint this quote, it is only attributed to a single producer): "most local[66] Indians are small in stature while the film audience likes his Indian tall, husky and well-proportioned. Very few of the Indians living here fit this description."[67] This is quoted slightly differently in *The Morning Avalanche* where it is preceded by a quote that Native actors do "not look like the Indian the motion picture public expects to see." *The Independent Record* follows the quote with additional information: "for that reason, selecting a cast calling for Indians, we must look to other races and make them up to look like Indians."[68]

This event served as the impetus for a widely disseminated series of articles about the trials facing Native actors in Hollywood. However, this moment of Native activism becomes largely ignored as the article was modified in syndication to contribute to existing racial narratives in Southern California and, more than likely, used as Hollywood publicity. The article differs rather remarkably among the seven different papers.[69] The changes to each version of the article provide insight into how Native Actors were discussed by the Industry and America at large.

The subject of the each version of the article is best summarized by *The Galveston Daily News* headline: "Other Races Crowding American Indians Off Screen; Protest Heard."[70] These "other races" vary in the headlines: *The San Bernardino County Sun* cites "Indians Mad as Orientals Receive Parts," *The Albuquerque Journal* notes that "Indians On Warpath Because Arabs, Negroes Cast as Redmen," and the *Hutchinson (Kansas) News* writes that "Movie 'Indians' Often Mexicans." The headlines, though selective about which race is the most objectionable in its "fake aboriginals"[71] derive from a quote attributed to Many Treaties reprinted in each article:

> This business of motion picture companies casting Mexicans, Hawaiians, Arabs, Negroes and Chinese as American Indians in their production has got to stop. It's getting so that the 500 real Indians of the film city can't get a job in Hollywood any more. The Mexicans and Hawaiians are better organized and they get the jobs. The real Indians are getting shoved out of the pictures.[72]

As reported, the problem that Chief Many Treaties and Thorpe had was that studios were not casting Native actors in Native roles. However, their primary concern was the casting of white actors, some of whom then adopted and advertised Native ancestry. Yet, the articles, in their headlines, and through the omission of the Navajo Tribal Council resolution, shift the blame to other ethnic minorities.

Three versions of the article take creative license with its lede. *The Abilene Reporter* went the furthest with a headline reading: "Ugh, Ugh (Indian for Phoeey) Given." *The Lubbock Morning Avalanche* opened the article with "Indians of the west dusted off their war bonnets today," and the *County Sun* began with similar war imagery

by opening with, “the Indians are on the warpath,” language that situates the article within existing, fictional pop culture representations of Native Americans. Such language is ubiquitous in Pressbook material, and while the article lacks the hallmarks of planted publicity articles (theater names and release dates) this language could have caused audiences familiar with reading publicity articles, to read it as such, further obscuring the actual Native activism that generated the article in the first place.

While the Navajo Tribal Council’s action disappears in nearly all versions of this article, one argument still comes across from Many Treaties and Thorpe: that Native film workers needed to become better organized and better represented in Hollywood. For Many Treaties, not just any organizing would do; this organization needed to be established in the official codes of Hollywood as it was being reorganized in the wake of the NIRA. As the articles note, “The chief revealed that he and Thorpe have asked Sol Rosenblat, national recovery administration for the motion picture code, if the Indians couldn’t be organized as a separate unit under the code to insure them equal representation with other races in Hollywood.”[73] At the time of this article, the NIRA code for studios was being revised and the situation for actors and extras in the union organizations of Hollywood was still uncertain.

While ambitious, such a petition was not unrealistic. Unlike other Native film workers to whom political power was attributed in publicity works, Thorpe and Many Treaties had the clout to attract the attention of the Government. Chief Many Treaties had

met with Government officials before as a leader and representative for not only the Native acting community but also for the Native community in Los Angeles. For example. In 1936, he and Chief Rolling Cloud (Muscogee [Creek] actor Charles Bruner) met with Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma, then chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, to discuss problems faced by Native Americans in the area.[74] Should a meeting with Rosenblatt not work out, Many Treaties was prepared to go all the way to the top, suggesting, "if that appeal doesn't bring results, we are going straight to the president."[75] While such a meeting was improbable, Thorpe and Many Treaties' status and Roosevelt's personal interest in Hollywood would not have been completely out of the realm of possibility.

There is an additional quote attributed to Many Treaties that is reprinted only in *The Independent Record* and *The Galveston Daily News* versions of the article and it points to two additional concerns: the presentation of Indians to audiences and the "swiping" of regalia: "the Indians should have the jobs and there is no reason why the public should be bilked into believing they are seeing American aborigines on the screen when actually they are watching Mexicans and others who have swiped our feathers and paint."[76] The first concern ties into the Navajo Tribal Council's decision: that the problem was not only the casting of non-Native actors in Native roles but also the attempts made to pass these actors off as Native was harmful for Native communities. The second

concern was likely important to Many Treaties because of his role as a technical advisor on films.

Many Treaties' and Thorpe's protest also displays the complex, often-contradictory negotiation in which these Native film workers were involved. The act at the center of the Navajo Tribal Council decision was an adoption ceremony. In May, 1933, a year before the decision, Chief Many Treaties is listed as officiating in a naming ceremony (along with "Princess An-Na-wake, most likely Cherokee actress Ann Ross) in which Italian-American boxer Young Corbet III was given the "Indian name" Lone Chief II in preparation for a well-publicized fight with Jimmy McLarnin.[77] While Corbet III was only given an "Indian name" and not adopted into a specific nation, and perhaps most importantly to Many Treaties was not using the ceremony to, presumably, take the place of an actual Native worker, there are similarities in the spirit of both ceremonies. In both, Native cultures were used to provide publicity and a form of rhetorical legitimacy to non-Native public figures. That Many Treaties participated in this "ceremony" shows how in order to attain the necessary public image to advocate for his own causes, he had to participate in the very system that perpetuated the problems he hoped to advocate against.

*"Pushed Off Screen"*

The labor issues that Thorpe and Chief Many Treaties addressed in 1934 continued throughout this period and Chief Many Treaties did not give up trying to remedy them, even as personal problems prevented Thorpe from consistent advocacy. In 1942, another article was published by Wide World Feature Service in which Many Treaties addresses the same concerns voiced eight years earlier, only adopting a more pessimistic tone. His pessimism is mirrored by the thematic imagery found in the articles that parallel the plight of Native actors being pushed off screen, with the historic injustices against Native Americans being pushed off their ancestral lands: "Indians All But Pushed Off Screen," *The Oakland Tribune* headline read, or in *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, "Pushed Out of Hollywood"; or the vanishing Indian myth, "Movie Indians Vanishing," read the headline in *The (Shreveport) Times*, where the article began, "just as white men crowded them Westward across the plains, Indians today have been all but pushed off the silver screen."[78]

*The Times* article alludes to an intriguing conflict that is in the background of both it, and the 1934 articles: "Right now, there are fewer than a score of genuine, 14-carat Indian braves in the movies. That's because there is such a paucity of roles for them."[79] In much of this publicity there is a near obsession with "genuine" Indians. This is why Native actors are almost always listed as "full-blooded" even when they were not (or in the case of Thundercloud, when it varies between full-blooded Cherokee or Creek, or in

other articles where actors are impossibility listed as full-blooded members of multiple tribes). These discourses, which conflate blood quantum with authentic Indian-ness reinforce traditional racial essentialisms regarding Native American culture, and additionally reinforce the vanishing Indian trope. As Cedric Sunray writes, "Indian blood is often viewed as the 'truth' of Indian Identity…Blood quantum and identity politics are inextricably linked to the colonial project…If the logic of settler colonialism is elimination, then Indian people must always be defined as disappearing."[80]

Genuine, biological "authenticity" was expected and required for Native film workers, yet at the very same time, Indianness is something readily available and acquirable for white actors. Native actors then had to present their "Indianness" in highly visible ways, while at the same time asserting biological purity. This allowed for famous imposters, and also thrust these actors into incredibly complex discursive presentations. We may critique or cringe at the way these actors from diverse tribal nations presented themselves to the public, specifically utilizing visual cultural references or practices not native to their nations, but these presentations must be considered within their limited range of possibilities in this highly visible and racially determined industry, in an uncertain time, in which race relations, cultural expectations, and labor power relations, were being revised in messy, contradictory ways.

The article adds another complex racial layer: "In fact, if it weren't for some of the current films being made to illustrate the Japanese treachery, Lo, the poor cinema

Indian would practically starve to death. That's what Chief Many Treaties says."[81] The article closes by quoting Many Treaties saying:

> Nowadays, an honest-to-goodness Indian can't make a living in the movies by playing an Indian. They're lucky to get jobs playing Mexicans, which is a funny thing, because the Mexicans have taken over most of the Indian roles. I guess the situation would have been hopeless if we hadn't gone to war with Japan. Now the studios are making films supposedly with a lot of Japs in the casts, but since there aren't any Japs to be had as extras, we get some of those parts. That's good for some of our boys, but for me, it's too bad. I'm too tall. I stand six feet one.[82]

As with the 1934 articles, there are aspects of this article that recall elements studio publicity. Some versions of the articles end on the above quote (*The Decatur Daily Review*, *The Oakland Tribune*) recalling a consistent practice for studio publicity to end on a joke or surprising, memorable anecdote. Here, it is a rather racist one, imagining the image of a tall, stereotypical Indian attempting to pass for a Japanese person. The allusion to Japanese-themed movies does not appear to have basis in history. Despite what the article says, there were hardly any fictional films made about the Japanese in 1942, let alone enough to sustain a Hollywood extra. Perhaps the statement was in anticipation of a Hollywood genre that never developed.

Unlike the 1934 article, the 1942 article does not mention that white actors in redface were those who most frequently took these actors' parts. The reference to only Mexicans, not the other races mentioned in the 1934 article, once again reinforces traditional racial hierarchies, and economic anxieties (to use that phrase with its euphemistic, post-2016 baggage) about Mexican Americans in California. A significant

contemporary event that situates this article and its racial anxieties is the "Sleepy Lagoon" murder on August 2 (the very day this article would appear in some newspapers), in which seventeen Mexican-American youth were held in prison and nine later convicted of second-degree murder without sufficient evidence.[83] Denning argues this case had significant effects on the culture of Southern California, and considers this a major galvanizing case for the political Left in California, calling it "the West Coast equivalent of Scottsboro" (the miscarriage of justice against nine African American men in Georgia in 1931), and preceded the "Zoot Suit Riots" which occurred the following summer.[84]

An extended version of the article ends by explaining that these out-of-work Hollywood Indians sustained themselves by renting their regalia to the same Mexican actors who were taking their roles: "most of us fellows have from three to six complete regalias…the costumes cost about $300 apiece, and we rent them for around $6 a day."[85] Whether or not this was standard practice, the price was high given that this would have been almost half of what an extra would have been paid for a day's work on a film set, though if we consider the scarcity of jobs at this time, perhaps it is a price actors would have been willing to pay. Costumes were serious business for Native extras. Rolling Cloud would state that it was his ability to make and sell costumes that "kept him going," more than his actual acting work.[86]

Many Treaties continues by saying that, "another funny thing is that when the Mexicans dress in our war bonnets, they get paid $16.50 a day as dress extras. But when we work as Japs, Mexicans or Fillipinos [sic] we Indians get paid as regular extras which is $5.50 a day."[87] From the financial documents that I have seen there was little variation in terms of how extras were paid. Despite a common complaint voiced in articles and studies, I did not fine that Native extras were paid less than non-Native contemporaries.[88] What Many Treaties is most likely referring to is access to more prominent on-screen roles. The use of the phrase "dress extras" denotes a type of "featured extra," a position that would have paid more than a background extra. The pay discrimination was not simply that Native Guild actors were paid less, even at this time such a practice would have caused significant problems within the guilds, but rather a type of discrimination where Native actors were kept from more significant, featured roles and the higher wages that came with those roles. Why this was the case no-doubt varies from film production to film production, but the Many Treaties suggestion, and one articulated by numerous Hollywood production types, was that they did not look Indian enough.

## Many Treaties and SEG

Despite the resigned tone of the 1942 article, Many Treaties participated in labor activism into the late 1940s, and was described as "a sort of elder statesman among the film capital's Indians."[89] In his activism, he continually extended the vision of his work from

Native film workers to contemporary labor issues and film laborers as a whole. While Native extras faced unique problems and prejudices, their fate in the industry was tied to larger union organizing efforts.

In 1944, the extras voted to drop SAG as their collective bargaining agency to join the Screen Player's Union (SPU). The following two years were difficult ones for screen extras. Following an extras strike by the SPU in 1945, the extras were beset by infighting and disagreements over loyalties between SPU and the AFL backed SAG, and later the Screen Extra's Guild (SEG). In 1946, the screen extras voted to leave the SPU in favor of SEG in a contentious and split vote. Those who voted to remain with SPU were purged from the SEG, and in July of that year, a group of extras went to court claiming to have been blacklisted for their support of SPU.[90]

The Screen Extras Guild included representatives from the major minority groups in Hollywood: Spencer Chan, who represented Chinese Extras, as well as an unnamed "Negro, a Spanish girl, a Fillipino [sic], and many others too numerous to mention here, to talk for their people" (Riesel). Many Treaties, who was also an AFL official, was chosen to be the SEG representative for the Hollywood Indians. This position held significance in labor circles and Many Treaties would appear in several columns on labor during the 1940s, the most significant of which was a syndicated column by Victor Riesel published in the fall 1947. At the time, Riesel was a columnist for *The New York Post* whose his labor column was syndicated in nearly 200 newspapers nation-wide.[91]

The article is first a profile of Many Treaties' work as an AFL official representing the Hollywood Indians, showcasing his work in the SEG as a positive example of labor advocacy in running a "clean little union" and congratulating the SEG for its diverse membership and representation: "never have we seen a union board so representative of all races."[92] The article also acts as a warning; that the SEG was still new and "struggling," and therefore susceptible to communist "false fronts." By the article's end, Many Treaties stands an example of a labor leader who would not "let his talents and unions be exploited by political sharpshooters."[93]

The anti-communist tone of this article may appear contradictory given popular histories of Pre-WWII, Popular Front labor movements, and especially since Riesel himself began his career working for the Socialist affiliated *The New Leader* in the late 1920s.[94] However, the relationship between the varying labor movements and affiliated organizations was complex and often contentious. Michael Denning argues against painting the Popular Front CIO movements as one with communists at the center and including left-leaning "fellow travelers" at the periphery. Instead, "the periphery was in many cases the center, the 'fellow travelers' *were* the Popular Front" which he describes as "more of a historical bloc...than a party, a broad and tenuous left wing alliance of fractions of the subaltern classes."[95] While Denning notes that in comparison to other areas of the country, "the major CIO unions hostile to communists had few West Coast members, and since the Communist Party was smaller, the California Popular Front was

less divided internally,"[96] divisions within labor movements and denunciations of communists still existed. Riesel's column acts as a profile of Many Treaties and his efforts on behalf of screen extras, and in particular details the attempts by the SEG to resist "the Communists and their false fronts" who "tried unsuccessfully to capture the extra players**."**[97] That "Chief Many Treaties is on the Screen Extras Guild Board of Directors to speak for all the movie Indians. So the next time you see the Red Men war-whooping it down on the lovely maidens, cowering behind covered wagons; remember the happy warriors are doing it at union rates—their interests are well cared for by Chief Many Treaties, an American Federation of Labor official."[98]

Riesel was worried that the newly formed SEG might fall to communist influence, but an interesting aspect of the article is it assumes that losing Chief Many Treaties to communists would have been consequential. Riesel writes, "the point is that the Comrades didn't want the Screen Extras Guild just so Chief Many Treaties could front for them as one of the original Americans. They wanted the SEG as they want all other Hollywood unions, so they could deal directly with the producers."[99] While Riesel reads the goal of communist forces to get to the table with the major forces in Hollywood, producers, not just to turn Many Treaties, he recognizes that Many Treaties held consequence and rhetorical value because of his position in labor and also because of the potential rhetorical value as an "original" American.

The importance of Chief Many Treaties within the Guild, points to significant ethnic aspects of the labor movement in the Depression and the ways in which Many Treaties used his heritage to leverage labor power by appealing to American themes and discourses. As Gerstle argues in his study of industrial unionism, "few words in the 1930s American labor movement resounded as broadly as 'Americanism,'"[100] however the term had "such varied meanings" that it is "impossible…to treat it as an ideology."[101] For Gerstle, what matters is how different groups attempted to form a discourse around Americanism to further their causes; that "those who control a political language enjoy…an advantage in their bid for power."[102] In the era, "such a preoccupation with 'being American' did not itself procure political or cultural conformity, but it did force virtually every group seriously interested in political power—groups as diverse as capitalists, socialists, ghettoized ethnics, and small-town fundamentalists—to couch their program in the language of 'Americanism.'"[103] An aspect of this Americanism was "rooted in nostalgia for the mythic, simpler, and more virtuous past."[104] While Gerstle situates this traditionalist dimension within the history of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, Terry Cooney and Larry May both place an importance on Native Americans within this dimension in the discourse of Americanism.

For Cooney, "four overlapping but distinct patterns of intellectual development" informed a cultural shift in American discourses surrounding Indigeneity. The first was a new approach to anthropology, particularly Franz Boas' cultural relativism popularized in

the United States largely through the success of Ruth Benedict's 1934 book *Patterns of Culture.* Cooney argues that while "relativism allowed a neutral stance and attempted to asses cultures, including that of the United States…there was a clear tendency to turn the relativist approach toward a critique of modern (and American) culture…rooted at times in romanticization of indigenous peasant societies."[105]

The second pattern was an update of the impulse described in my first chapter, related to the development of uniquely American forms of art and culture that sought Native themes as potential sources of inspiration. While this project had been around since the turn of the century, it found renewed interest during the Depression in the popular study of American folk arts and culture. Cooney summarizes the influence of Constance Rourke and her 1931 book *American Humor* to this pattern by writing that, "attention should be paid to what made America American, and that meant the culture of the folk in all its legend-creating fertility" and this included Native Americans.

The third pattern can be viewed as a more artistically inclined version of the first: the appeal of primitivism to modernist artists as critique of modern American culture and society. While such approach was laden with essentialist views and condescension, modernist groups, such as the modernist writers and painters who pilgrimaged to Toas who romanticized Native culture, were "helping to readjust the framework of what might be valued."[106] (110). Cooney's final pattern was a "cosmopolitan ideal" among various strains of intellectuals, influenced by immigration and the need for labor and political

coalition-making, that had in common "a recognition of cultural multiplicity—of traditions, resources, instincts, needs, and possibilities that made existing frameworks of social hierarchy and aesthetic value seem limited and inadequate."[107] These for patterns "would combine with politics and policy to begin to reshape some of the most persistent questions of American group relationships, particularly involving the social and cultural status of Native Americans and African-Americans."[108]

May also sees radical implications in discourses which emphasized Native American tradition in the 1930s; however, while Cooney examines a shift in Anglo-American attitudes towards Native peoples, May examines active Native American cultural critique particularly in his rereading of Will Rogers' "formula" films from 1931-1934. May argues that "Rogers's great popularity was that he evoked a left-wing populism; what Craig Calhoun has called a 'radicalism of tradition'" in which "radicalism finds its efforts to save traditional institutions undermined by an untrammeled market and exploitative power relations."[109] The Great Depression, and the economic strain on cinema leading to the financial problems of 1933, allowed film producers to reevaluate its historic model of artistic ideals, moving from a discursive tie to European symbols to "films that dramatized a counter-narrative of 'Americanism' emerging from the bottom rather than the top of the social order."[110] Rogers ancestry, and his familial knowledge of Cherokee politics and social orders, allowed him to update "the elan of the Cherokee trickster," and use his humor to present to his audience "an

alternative basis of authority."[111] By appealing to his ancestral tradition, Rogers was able to use the "backward-looking myth not to promote, but to undermine, the status quo."[112] May concludes that "at a time when many equated Americanism with Anglo-Saxon superiority and liberal capitalism, Rogers had drawn on his Cherokee roots and communal memories to popularize a more inclusive and radical vision of nationality."[113]

Many Treaties was not nearly as famous as Rogers (who was perhaps the most famous person in Hollywood at the time, the top box office draw of 1934, and the second box office draw of 1933 and 35[114]) and did not hold the same cultural or political clout (arguably, neither did anyone else in America), but like Rogers, his Native heritage had important cultural weight and highly visible symbolism to his labor activities. On the level of visual rhetoric, Many Treaties' presence and participation in labor events equated the movement with a romanticized past. Riesel warned that if Many Treaties was "lost" he could use his persona, derived from his heritage, to potentially legitimize communism as American. This suggests that there was legitimate political value in Many Treaties' persona; that his work on and off-screen to be an Indian is what gave him opportunities to advocate for political causes.

In addition to a visual, rhetorical value, what is most immediately noteworthy about Chief Many Treaties' persona was his name (though as with the names of most Native actors, its exact origin is unclear and obscured by film publicity) which was unique because unlike the other major film "Chiefs" it was not based on nature or the

weather. The name itself is expressly political in two ways: first, it suggests that the chief is experienced in government-to-government negotiations that resulted in treaties. Second, the name serves as a reminder of a history of broken treaties between the US Government and Tribal nations. The first meaning is appropriate given Many Treaties' position as a spokesperson between the local community of Native film workers, unions, Hollywood, and even government figures. The second meaning is one that was not lost on studio publicists. An article published in the *Democrat and Herald* (Rochester, New York) on Christmas Day in 1943, almost certainly lifted from the pressbook from the film *Buffalo Bill*, highlights Many Treaties' presence in the film. The article, titled "New Film to Offer Indian Oration," describes Many Treaties' involvement with the film in political and legal terms, noting that "the case of the American Indian against Buffalo Bill and other frontiersmen is given free expression in "Buffalo Bill," which 20th Century-Fox is making with Joel McCrea, Maureen O'Hara and Linda Darnell as stars."[115] What is interesting in this first paragraph is the slippage between fact and fiction, history and myth; Buffalo Bill, the showman and mythic figure who stands as the figure for historic dispossession, and the ambiguity as to whether the film is describing Many Treaties within the diegesis of the film or as the actor portraying a character.

The article continues making a direct parallel between Many Treaties' name and the content of his oration; the evidence in his case: "A Blackfeet Indian, Chief Many Treaties makes the charges which are based on the white man's perfidy in breaking

treaties and his wanton slaughter of the buffalo, which was food, clothing and housing to the plains Indian."[116] The article then closes with unusual commentary: "the Chief's points are very well taken, but it is doubtful if the many movie fans will understand it. He delivers the charges in the language of the Cheyenne tribe."[117] The reason provided as to why Many Treaties would not be understood by audiences is fascinating and frustrating, and the tone with which one reads this final sentence colors the meaning of rest of the article. In addition, there is a progressive and regressive function in this article: Many Treaties is able to speak a specific, Native language on screen (though not his own); however, this also means his English-speaking audience is unaware of the political nature of his on-screen performance. A more depressing view of the tone of this final sentence is that it was intended, as was practice in many publicity articles, to be a joke: that the bit-part Indian of films, famously inarticulate, is actually giving a fine speech; however, the white audience mistakes it for the inarticulate and simplistic language of screen Indians.

This frustration mirrors the career of Many Treaties and many of the other Hollywood Indians. The on-screen depiction and performances as portrayed in their films are regressive and one-dimensional. However, with greater context, and considering the information provided in off-screen texts and in knowledge of their off-screen lives, the portrayal takes on great complexity and in this case political power. Like many publicity articles concerning Native actors, the content of this article challenges the very thematic

content of the film it was created to advertise. The nature of this article may have had its roots in an earlier, more critical version of the film. According to Sandra K. Sagala:

> Wayne Sarf tells the story of director William Wellman, who with Gene Fowler decided to write a screenplay about the "fakiest guy who ever lived." After the two had butchered Cody on paper, they decided, "you can't stab Babe Ruth, you couldn't kill Dempsey, you can't kill any of these wonderful heroes…" Buffalo Bill is a great figure and we cannot do it," so they burned three months' work and started over.[118]

As mentioned in the second chapter, publicity material was created before the film was finished so this article may have had in mind a more critical tone based on early conceptions about the type of film that Wellman and Fowler were making. The article does refer to an event to happen in the film: that Many Treaties would give a speech. Yet, as the article itself points out, we would not know the content of the speech without the article's context, whether it had already been filmed or was planned as a scene in the finished work.

As with much of the publicity related to these actors, the article focuses more significantly on actor than the film. From the article, we do not really know what *Buffalo Bill* as a film was necessarily "about," but it does provide insight into the persona of Chief Many Treaties. *Buffalo Bill* was a massive production and featured "five thousand extras including three Indian tribes."[119] That Many Treaties was selected to be a significant part of the publicity for the film, and that in this publicity he is credited for being an advocate for Native American causes, suggests that his public persona

influenced how his performance in the film was read by audiences, or more specifically framed by studio publicity for its imagined audience.

The significance of persona may explain a curious aspect of the history of Native actors and studio publicity in this period, and that is the scarce amount of material devoted to Jim Thorpe in studio publicity. It would seem obvious that studios would exploit the presence of the "world's greatest athlete" in films. However, Thorpe appears in remarkably few press articles. The only pressbook article I have found devoted solely to Thorpe is contained in the pressbook for *Outlaw Trail* (1944) which featured Thorpe in the bit part of Henchman Spike. Interestingly, in the Pressbook there are four articles about Chief Thundercloud, also in a bit part, and only one about Thorpe. The article, entitled "Sports Champ in Western Film," reviews "Big Jim's" Olympic accomplishments, but focuses on his football career, specifically his relationship with Glenn "Pop" Warner.[120]

Initially, I expected the absence of Thorpe could be the result of his professional sports scandal and the stripping of his Olympic medals. However, as Rubinfeld notes, the response to the medal scandal was remarkably sympathetic towards Thorpe, and concludes that in the media coverage, "there is no hint of racial animosity towards Thorpe…the overwhelming press reaction…was one of sympathy, not anger."[121] However, while the response to Thorpe's Olympic scandal was not racial anger, but sympathy, that sympathy was founded in racist assumptions about Native Americans, and

the importance of progressive assimilation programs. That it "helped revive the old canard that Native Americans required the 'benevolence' of whites to save them from themselves.[122]

Instead, the absence of Thorpe in film publicity may stem from his place in the existing narratives and the National imaginary. In Rubinfeld's study of Thorpe's public image, he concludes that "the life of Jim Thorpe…was often distorted by representations. As a national symbol, Thorpe was malleable."[123] However, this malleability was tied most directly to progressive era beliefs about the United States and its racial formation; that Thorpe was mythologized as symbolizing the ability of 1920s America to "accept, embrace, and assimilate an 'other' into 'one of their own'"[124] In addition, while Thorpe's accomplishments were cited to the "modern Indian" so too were his failures. Rubinfeld notes "heroes sell papers. And fallen heroes sell even more papers."[125] In the "fallen hero" articles about Thorpe if his film career was mentioned at all it was presented as an act of desperation. In addition to fulfilling a mythological function, these articles articulated or generalized problems about Native Americans.

Thorpe was already well known to the public and his persona was tied to the conception of Native Americans and Policy towards Native Americans in the 1910s and 20s. However, the 1930s found new policy and required new mythologies. Thorpe was a "Modern Indian," and the 1930s was interested in the continuation of tradition, and a focus on the survival of Native Americans in some authentic connection to the past.

Actors like Many Treaties, were potential blank slates for publicity and public interest. Thorpe was associated to contemporary events, while publicists could use other "Chiefs" to recall romanticized, Native traditions. While Thorpe and Many Treaties worked together in their activism, and Thorpe utilized his fame to attempt to benefit Native actors, Many Treaties was essential in appealing to discursive notions about tradition that for some reason to which Thorpe was unable to gain access.

As one version of the 1942 article closes, Many Treaties' solution for the problems facing Native film workers once again lay in organization: "I think the fortunate occasion of ten of us Indians working in one picture in these times is the result of an educational program. I've been carrying on among directors and producers."[126] In the next chapter, I will examine the different Native organizations which existed in Hollywood; how these spaces were covered in the press, and the important role these spaces played in the Native Hollywood community.

## NOTES

[1.] Danae Clark, *Negotiating Hollywood: The Cultural Politics of Actors' Labor* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 27.

[2.] Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies*, Revised and Updated (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 68.

[3.] Gomery, Douglas, *The Hollywood Studio System: A History* (London: The British Film Institute, 2005), 68.

[4.] Gomery 2005, 186.

[5.] Sklar 175

[6.] Andrew Bergman, *We're in the Money: Depression America and Its Films* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc., 1971), xix.

[7.] Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). 175

[8.] Sklar 162

[9.] Schatz 159

[10.] Quoted in Bergman xxi

[11.] Robert S. McElvaine, *The Great Depression: America, 1929-1941* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1993). 156.

[12.] McElvanie 157

[13.] Schatz 160

[14.] Ibid.

[15.] Gomery 2005, 185

[16.] Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front* (New York: Verso, 1998), 7.

[17.] Schatz 161

[18.] Clark 58

[19.] Denning 22

[20.] Clark 34

[21.] Ibid.

[22.] Clark 48

[23.] Ibid.

[24.] Kerry Segrave, *Extras of Early Hollywood: A History of the Crowd 1918-1945* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013), 89.

[25.] Quoted in Segrave 90

[26.] Segrave 91

[27.] Segrave 98

[28.] Segrave 141

[29.] Notably in Segrave 2013. See also Alfred Harding's *The Revolt of the Actors* (New York: William Morrow, 1929)

[30.] Richard Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema,* Second Edition (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003). 148

[31.] Hazlett, William, "William Hazlett Student File," 1895, RG 75, Series 1327, box 135, folder 5288, Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

[32.] William Hazlett, "Student Identification Card," 1890, RG 75, Series 1329, box 1, Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

[33.] "For State Senator" in Carlisle Student File

[34.] Dan Crumley, "Indian, In Bed for 5 Years Receives TV Set From Club," *The Lawton Constitution,* April 5, 1956, Newspapers.com.

[35.] "Report After Leaving Carlisle," in Carlisle Student File

[36.] "Tale of the Town" in Carlisle Student File

[37.] Crumley

[38.] "Pageant Given At Inglewood," *The Los Angeles Times,* August 5, 1933, sec. 2, Newspapers.com.

[39.] "For State Senator" in Carlisle Student File

[40.] Mark Rubinfield, "The Mythical Jim Thorpe: Re/Presenting the Twentieth Century American Indian," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 23, no. 2 (2006): 167–89, https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360500478224, 168.

[41.] Rubinfield. 170

[42.] Rubinfeld 175

[43.] Ibid.

[44.] Kate Buford, *Native American Son: The Life and Sporting Legend of Jim Thorpe* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010). Loc. 4860.

[45.] Buford loc 4858

[46.] Buford loc. 4868

[47.] Associated Press, "Jim Thorpe Is Now a Laborer at $4 Per Day," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 3, 1931, sec. c, Newspapers.com.

[48.] Bufford loc. 5033

[49.] Rubinfeld 184-185

[50.] Ibid.

[51.] Buford loc. 4941

[52.] Buford loc 5020

[53.] Nicolas G. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration & Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012). 40

[54.] Linda Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows: From Buffalo Bill to Euro Disney* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 53.

[55.] L.G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 150-154, 165-166.

[56.] Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004). 79

[57.] Rosenthal 40

[58.] Buford loc. 5020

[59.] Jon Bloom, "Sports and the Politics of Identity and Memory: The Case of Federal Indian Boarding Schools During the 1930s," *Ethnic Studies Review* 21 (1998): 51. 2

[60.] Bloom 1

[61.] Bloom 2

[62.] Rubinfeld 169

[63.] Buford loc. 5519

[64.] Associated Press, "Navajos Expel 'Jimmy' Walker From Tribe; Indians Demand Film Redskins Be Real," *The New York Times*, March 15, 1934, ProQuest.

[65.] Ibid.

[66.] "Local" as in Hollywood, not in location-shooting. DeMille's explanation for hiring Cheyenne performers instead of Hollywood actors was that they looked more "authentic"

[67.] Associated Press, "Indians Mad As Orientals Receive Parts," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, March 15, 1934, Newspapers.com.

[68.] Associated Press, "Indians Crowded Out of Films by Fake Aboriginals," *The Independent Record*, March 14, 1934, Newspapers.com.

[69.] March 13 in *The Albuquerque Journal*; on March 14 in *The Independent Record* [Helena, Montana], *The Hutchinson News*; on March 15 in the *Abilene Reporter-News, Lubbock Morning Avalanche, The Galveston Daily News,* and *The San Bernardino County Sun*; and on March 16 in *The Chicago Daily Tribune*. There are several editorial oddities about the articles. The by-line lists the location as Hollywood, except in *The Morning Avalanche* and *The Abilene Reporter-News* where it's listed as San Francisco. In each instance, the article is attributed to the Associated Press, except in the Chicago Daily Tribune where it is credited to George Shaffer of the Chicago Tribune News Service, but in this printing, Shaffer seems to have summarized the article in a weekly Hollywood News column.

[70.] Associated Press, "Other Races Crowding American Indians Off Screen; Protest Heard," *The Galveston Daily News*, March 15, 1934, Newspapers.com.

[71.] Associated Press, "Indians Crowded Out of Films by Fake Aboriginals."

[72.] Associated Press, "Other Races Crowding American Indians Off Screen; Protest Heard."

[73.] Ibid.

[74.] "Thomas Consults Indians Here on Tribal Problems," *The Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1936, Newspapers.com.

[75.] Associated Press, "Ugh, Ugh (Indian Phooey) Given: Honorary Navajoes Lose Feathers by Tribal Edict," *Abilene Reporter-News*, March 15, 1934, Newspapers.com.

[76.] Associated Press, "Other Races Crowding American Indians Off Screen; Protest Heard."

[77.] "McLarnin's Chief Obstacle," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 1933, Newspapers.com.

[78.] World Wide Features Services, "Movie Indians Vanishing. Some Take War Plant Jobs," *The Times*, July 31, 1942, Newspapers.com.

[79.] Ibid.

[80.] Cedric Sunray, "Blood Policing," in *Native Studies Keywords*, ed. Stephanie Nohelani Teves, Andrea Smith, and Michelle H. Raheja (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2015). 209

[81.] World Wide Features Services, "Movie Indians Vanishing. Some Take War Plant Jobs."

[82.] Ibid.

[83.] "Sleepy Lagoon Trial," *Zoot Suit Discovery Guide*. Digital Archive. http://research.pomona.edu/zootsuit/en/trial/.

[84.] Denning, *The Cultural Front*. 15

[85.] "Mexicans Play Indians in Movies, Indians Rent Them Costumes," *Democrat and Chronicle*, July 31, 1942, Newspapers.com.

[86.] Helen Angwerd, Charles Bruner, Tape, October 25, 1971.

[87.] World Wide Features Services, "Movie Indians Vanishing. Some Take War Plant Jobs."

[88.] Aliess concludes the same. See Aliess 2005, 184n40.

[89.] World Wide Features Services, "Movie Indians Vanishing. Some Take War Plant Jobs."

[90.] Segrave 111

[91.] Jay Maeder, "Dark Places: Victor Riesel," *New York Daily News*, September 22, 1998.

[92.] Victor Riesel, "Inside Labor," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, October 21, 1947, Kentucky Edition, sec. C, Newspapers.com.

[93.] Ibid.

[94.] Maeder, "Dark Places: Victor Riesel."

[95.] Denning 5-6

[96.] Denning 19

[97.] Riesel, "Inside Labor."

[98.] Ibid

[99.] Ibid

[100.] Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 5.

[101.] Gerstle 8

[102.] Gerstle 14

[103.] Gerstle 8

[104.] Gerstle 11

[105.] Cooney 107

[106.] Cooney 110

[107.] Cooney 111

[108.] Ibid.

[109.] Larry May, *The Big Tomorrow* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 14.

[110.] May 17

[111.] May 27

[112.] May 28

[113.] May 48

[114.] Bryan B. Sterling and Frances N. Sterling, *Will Rogers in Hollywood: An Illustrated Career of America's Favorite Humorist* (New York: Crown Publishers, INC., 1984), 102.

[115.] "New Film to Offer Indian Oration," *Democrat and Chronicle*, December 25, 1941, Newspapers.com.

[116.] Ibid.

[117.] Ibid.

[118.] Sandra K. Sagala, *Buffalo Bill on the Silver Screen: The Films of William F. Cody* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 160.

[119.] Ibid.

[120.] *Outlaw Trail* Pressbook. Folder 5530 AMPAS

[121.] Rubinfeld 174

[122.] Rubinfeld 176

[123.] Rubinfeld 186

[124.] Rubinfeld 168

[125.] Rubinfeld 172

[126.] "Mexicans Play Indians in Movies, Indians Rent Them Costumes."

# CHAPTER IV

## NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY BUILDING AND THE MODELING OF NATIVE MODERNITY IN HOLLYWOOD

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how Native film workers and their families leveraged their positions within the film industry to build a Native American community in Hollywood. In addition, through performances, community service, fundraisers, educational programs, and social functions, Native community members publicized their presence, the resilience of Native life, and the value of Native culture in urban modernity. I will first examine the cultural myths about and expectations of Native Americans in urban modernity as perpetuated by the narratives surrounding the founding of Hollywood. I will, then, highlight a series of Native American communities built within the industry and adjacent to it. Finally, I will focus on White Bird, a Native American who provided a successful example of Native American community building and modeled a Native modernity in Hollywood.

"Hollywood" means many things, and it is necessary to stipulate and differentiate those meanings. Hollywood, when used generally as a term, refers to the film industry as embodied by the apparatuses of film production. Another common use of the word refers to the creative output of this industry; the Hollywood created by its films that "you can visit…in the movies."[1] The third meaning is the place of Hollywood itself, as a region in the Los Angeles Metro area. In previous chapters, I have focused on the first Hollywood,

while the majority of Native film study has focused on the second. While all three Hollywoods are interconnected, in this chapter I will focus on Hollywood as geographic place and that place's importance to Native culture and community.

A view of all three Hollywoods is essential in fully surveying the work of Native Americans in film. If one views the Native American experience through Hollywood's films, they might view a tragedy: a brief opening for Native American creativity in its early stages that was quickly closed, followed by years of stereotyped marginalization, and ultimately erasure in Redfacing. Try as they might, Native film workers and advocates could not change their on-screen representations in the face of the massive, American film industry. Yet, if we examine the off-screen community work in the place of Hollywood by these same film workers and their families, a different story is told, one where a group of Native performers from diverse tribes and places came together to form one of the largest and most important Native communities and cultural centers in the country.

Given the stakes of representation, the history of misrepresentations, and the long legacy of film texts, it is understandable that on-screen images have been the major point of study of Native Americans and film. Yet, the on-screen arena was not the only one in which these Native performers were engaged in a fight for representation and inclusion. The same stereotypes and cultural myths that informed the regressive representations on screen informed the narratives involved in the founding of Hollywood and the modern image created by Los Angeles.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, there were three generalized expectations about Native Americans in Anglo-American culture and these expectations informed the founding of Hollywood, the western genre, the role of Native Americans in the film industry, the tone of much publicity material, and the expectations of the news reporters that covered these Native American communities. The first was that the Native American, and their culture, was vanishing and the other two derive from this expectation: Native American culture was too primitive and would be destroyed by modernity, and that the Native American was too communalist and needed to embrace individualism to survive in modern America. Through community building and in public images, the Native community in Hollywood demonstrated Native presence, cultural viability, and modeled a Native modernism that suggested that contemporary Native American artists had much to offer society at large. Unlike struggles related to representation on film, significant traces remain of the community of these Native American film workers.

## Community, Circuits of Performance and Native Hubs

Film studies, understandably, centers itself around films; however, in the careers of these Native performers, we need to first understand that while film was a significant force in driving Native immigration to Hollywood, it was only part of their performance world. Many Native film workers crossed media, and though they were anonymous extras on screen, they found notoriety and success as pageant performers, singers, dancers, in vaudeville, as lecturers, or athletes. A word frequently used to describe performances in

these other forms of entertainment are circuits, and in addition to travelling from entertainment circuit to circuit, Native performers travelled throughout the country on vaudeville and Chautauqua circuits. Because a major draw of the Western "outdoor epics" was natural landscapes, Native performers also travelled to other Native communities to film and engaged with Native peoples there.

The circuit-like nature of performance, the travel that performance required, and the travel between Hollywood and Indian Country, suggests that Hollywood became what Laverne Roberts Ramirez calls a "Native Hub." The concept is useful to Ramirez because it does not privilege Indian Country as the only site of authentic Native experience, or suggest that Native urban communities are isolated from the communities of Indian Country. Rather it demonstrates the interconnected nature of the city and Indian Country to perpetuate a vibrant Native culture. The term hub draws from a metaphor given to Ramirez by a community organizer who visualized the concept as "a hub on a wheel," where "urban Indians occupy the center, connected to their tribal communities by social networks represented by the wheel's spokes."[2] While the eponymous hub is initially presented as a wheel-based image, the actions that occur through hubs, and Ramirez's work within Silicon Valley, superimposes a technological metaphor: "the city…acts as a collecting center, a hub of Indian peoples' new ideas, information, culture, community, and imagination that when shared back 'home' on the reservation can impact thousands of Native Americans." Hubs may include actual, physical locations where Native Americans gather or "cultural events, such as powwows, sweat lodge ceremonies, as well as social and political activities, such as meetings and family gatherings."[3]

The metaphor of a hub visualizes the work that occurs in building Native communities and sharing knowledge across distances. It rejects a binary relationship between the urban and the rural. It "suggests how landless Native Americans maintain a sense of connection to their tribal homelands and urban spaces through participation in cultural circuits and maintenance of social networks as well as shared activity with other Native Americans."[4] The community groups presented in this chapter acted as hubs in two ways: they connected different groups and families of Native Americans working in Hollywood with each other, and they connected these groups to their communities back home. This sophisticated work of community building and cultural transmission also provides insight into the experience of Native Americans in modernity.

To begin his study of Native Los Angeles, Nicolas Rosenthal presents a simple, but necessary assertion: "American Indians have always lived in the towns and cities of North America."[5] Because Native American experience can be urban as much as rural, our studies of Native people needs to undergo a "reimagining of Indian Country…beyond the reservations and rural communities" into urban areas. Traditional views of Native American culture and history have privileged reservations and rural Indian Country as the "authentic" site of Native experience. While this emphasizes the significance of land in Native American life, it also has reinforced the Native experience as "other" from that of the rest of contemporary America and has omitted Native American experience from American history at large. Examining Native Americans in urban settings allows scholars to "begin to see that cities have played a central and defining role in twentieth-century Native American life,"[6] and reinserts the Native Americans who were involved in the events in modern American history.

Native community building in Hollywood in the 1920s and 30s features many short-lived groups of varying levels of exposure and size. In some cases, groups have left few material traces, appearing only in a single newspaper or trade article. So little exists in the written record regarding some groups that it is difficult to tell if a writer misreported the name of the group or is writing about a new one. Community groups were founded by many of the same people so it can be difficult to determine when one ended and another began. Even groups that were the largest and most publicized appear at the height of their activity for about five years. This might suggest a string of failures, but such uneven history is a common characteristic of urban community building. Susan Lobo described community building in the San Francisco Bay Area as follows, though her description could easily apply to community building attempts in Hollywood during the 20's and 30s:

> The community itself has the potential for regeneration. The community is ephemeral in nature…with the power to continually take new forms and thus endure. Or it is described as being like the old-time warrior's strategy to disperse, vanish, become invisible, and then to regroup to fight another day…The institutions in the Indian community are in continual flux, able to disassemble and reassemble. Yet through all this motion, there is an underlying network structure that allows for persistence.[7]

Though clubs and organizations came and went, some with physical locations and others more transitory in nature, as did many of the film workers and community figures, the "underlying network" of a Native American community in Hollywood persisted.

*Native Modernity*

The assertion that to assimilate into modern America Native Americans must become individuals and no longer rely on communities was interrelated with the policy of Allotment, which fragmented communal ownership of lands to splinter Native communities, to turn Native Americans into capitalist individualists, and open up tribal land for white settlement and exploitation. The hope was that, splintering tribes into individual family units would accelerate assimilation into white society. Should this assimilation fail, Natives who held onto traditional ways would die out along with Native culture. This view, influenced by a popularized version of social Darwinism and early Anthropology, was the theme of most Indian pictures at the time. While the depiction of Native Americans in film was a "complex and ambiguous melding of imperialist nostalgia, sympathy, and condemnation,"[8] they were still considered problematically primitive, celebrated for a perceived tragic nobility or resented as an obstacle to white modernity. Highly visible Native communities argued that Native Americans could survive in modern, urban America. Highly visible Native communities participating in one of the most modern of industries, film, demonstrated that Native Americans could survive and contribute to modern culture.

Focusing on Native Americans in urban areas forces us to recognize that Native Americans, as Deloria argues, "engaged the same forces of modernization that were making non-Indians reevaluate their own expectations of themselves and their society."[9] Deloria's statement is echoed nearly 70 years earlier by Helen Crane who wrote of young Native Americans in Hollywood in 1930 that "a relentless questioning of all that is established and formal has not passed the Indian by. Every phase of rebellion through

which the white boy and girl are passing is being experienced by the red boy and girl."[10] An example of a life that was both exemplary of late 19th century Native youth, but of an experience of modernity similar to countless others who came to Hollywood, is that of Chief John Big Tree (Isaac Johnny John), a Seneca actor who had one of the longest careers of any Native actor in Hollywood. After attending Carlisle Indian School, John traveled to New York for work only to find that his training had not prepared him for the new economy, and got by with odd jobs as a common laborer.[11] While in New York, he became involved in performance, modeled for artists, and became involved in film.[12] By 1915, he had travelled to Hollywood with the industry, and the following year he was a player at Mutual.[13]

Tom Gunning argues that modernity was less "a demarcated historical period than…a change in experience."[14] It occurred in different places at different times. While Non-Natives suffered the shocks of changing culture, technology, speed, and a questioning of tradition, Native Americans experienced these same effects in addition to "the shocks of genocide, colonization, and displacement, followed by the shifting tides of federal and local policy."[15] They not only faced Lukacs' "transcendental homelessness," an alienation from tradition and community in the new world of synergistic capitalism, mass culture, and technology,[16] but also literal homelessness for those Native Americans who experienced forced removal and allotment. Anglo-Americans may have encountered a "historical disintegration" and "spiritual loss"[17] within modernity but for many Native Americans the experience was not just from new relationships to labor, space, and capital but from forced programs of assimilation and laws that prohibited traditional religious and cultural practice.

Workers involved in cinema, including Native Americans, also experienced an even more acute form of modernism than the general public. In a landmark 1947 anthropological study of the Hollywood studio system, Hortense Powdermaker viewed the film industry as an exaggerated form of modern capitalism that alienated individuals and placed them into totalitarian corporate settings. Hollywood was not that different from the rest of the modern, corporate world but "a reflection…a caricature of selected contemporary tendencies… a caricature and overelaboration of the business motives and goals of our society."[18]

While the industry may have embodied the tendencies of Fordist/Taylorist labor, and imposed a sense of fragmented individualism over community, Hollywood stars modeled how their fans could succeed within the new corporate regime. According to Lary May, the industry "served the public…by showing how to preserve individualism in the midst of the very corporate system it helped create."[19] Stars, and often the characters they portrayed, demonstrated how to reconcile idealized American individualism with the rising corporate system of modernity. That in "this reborn West, the Hollywood frontier promised to solve some of the major public problems facing reformers, and thus set the stage or the culmination of the consumer culture in the twenties"[20]

Examining Native Americans in the building of Los Angeles and Hollywood, or rather Los Angeles through the establishment of Hollywood, allows us to see the significant influences of Native Americans on the film industry, an industry that also played a prominent role in shaping cultural views on urban modernity. These Native public figures also modeled a type of Native modernity as alternative to the assumed expectations of modern America towards them by participating in the building of Los

Angeles, and in the building of the cinema. Such a focus, on Natives in urban space and film as urban cultural production, reasserts Native presence in the physical and imagined experience of modernity, not only as subjects but as active participants.

The response to Native American experience in modernity was to assert a Native modernism, a term I borrow from Bill Anthes who used it to describe the work of Native American visual artists. Native Modernism:

> Shares some characteristics with Euro-American modernism…however, it will be seen as differently inflected from the beginning…maintaining connections to traditional ideas about place and identity while also resolutely modern because it represents an engaged response to a changed world[21]

Anthes uses the term to describe formal approaches in visual art; however, the impulse characterizes a Native response to modernity in general, and draws from a long tradition of technological and social adaptation that has been a crucial practice for Native Americans for centuries. For instance, Paul Chaat Smith, noting that the success of the Comanche to adopt imported horses and guns, argues that "the Indian societies consistently valued technology and when useful made it their own."[22]

Native Modernism is not an anti-modern response as with the primitivist movements of Anglo artists, or even the romanticized nostalgia of what May called the "radicalism of tradition," discussed in chapter three. Rather it is an "alternative modernism," in which Native Americans remain connected to tradition that is neither "degraded" nor "lost," as they become, "or strive to becom[e] subjects of modernity."[23] As part of this work, Native performers at times appealed to Anglo-American expectations that feature primitivist or romanticized characteristics, but did so to support their move to modern subjectivity and to navigate an urban, modern context. As Deloria

writes, “Indian performers used expectations to gain entrée’ into positions in which they were able to participate in shaping the particular form of the modern.”[24] These Native Americans in Hollywood did not just participate in the modern, but modeled a Native modernity through performance and publicity, “portraying the ways in which Indian people have created distinctly Native spaces that are themselves modern.”[25]

## Hollywood And Frontier Myths

To highlight the significance of the presence of Indigenous communities in Hollywood, and the presence of these communities in the press and publicity, I will first examine the absent presence of Native Americans in the founding myths of Hollywood and in the precinematic image making in Los Angeles. While some of this history has been told before elsewhere, it has not emphasized the significance of Native Americans or ideas about Native history and people. This emphasis highlights the significant national narratives that these Native film workers encountered in Hollywood, both as place and industry, and also show that Native Americans were involved in the building of Hollywood as place and industry. While many histories have focused on the content of the films, I want to examine the narratives and publicity surrounding the establishment of Hollywood, one complicated by Native presence and publicity of Native American performers. Moreover, communities of film workers countered these images in their public work and publicity.

*Hollywood as The New West*

As those of other American industries based in technological innovation, the founders of American cinema were, and are still, called "pioneers." While we take the connotations of this term for granted, these innovators took the label to heart and colored their own journey west through the historical experiences of western settlers. Paramount co-founder Jesse Lasky described the following experience as he traveled by rail to Southern California for the first time:

> I glanced out of the train window at the rolling prairies, the mountains, the desert, I saw the vast panorama of sky and earth forming a backdrop for those heroic souls whose first wagon trains actually took much of the same route three quarters of a century before…superimposing the past on present…was an emotional, almost mystical experience.[26]

William DeMille similarly drew parallels between the move west and the promise of the West in American thought by considering it in opposition to settled East Coast cities as "a place where men could chose ones' inheritance."[27] Regarding his own move to California, his brother Cecil, "spoke in familiar terms of covered wagons and the good old days of the Spaniards."[28] An idealized West was partly what brought DeMille to Hollywood, after considering but deciding Flagstaff, Arizona did not "look western enough."[29]

The cosmogonic myth of Hollywood bears a similar ideology. The "rags-to-riches tradition" told of enterprising, immigrant entrepreneurs who "fled westward to Los Angeles" to escape the industrial malaise and the prejudices of traditional cultural centers of the East, embodied by Thomas Edison and the agents of his Motion Picture Patents Company. As historians have subsequently pointed out, this narrative is not supported by history: Hollywood's founders were also members of the MPPC Trust, and why settle in

Los Angeles when San Diego is much closer to the Mexican Border should one need to hide from MPPC agents with subpoenas.[30] The actual reasons for a move westward are still a point of historical debate, and as Shiel has noted it is not entirely clear who was the first to set up shop in Los Angeles.[31] Yet, in narratives about Hollywood we see an updated version of Manifest Destiny, one that required a Native absence. According to Lary May:

> Los Angeles offered the vision of a new West. This was crucial for the image the movies wanted to create. For, ever since the mid-nineteenth century the frontier symbolized freedom from the hierarchical, industrial East…At a time when the dream of independence seemed to be receding in the wake of a rising corporate order and class conflict, anxious Americans might look to Los Angeles, the farthest point on the frontier, to recreate the vision of a virgin land.[32]

The "virgin land" trope is common in both the narratives told by Hollywood's founders and in subsequent history. Related terminology is commonplace. The term holds considerable weight and history and its continuation in film history is problematic.

Influenced by Hayden White, Stam and Shohat argue that "within colonialist discourse, metaphors, tropes, and allegorical motifs played a constitutive role in 'figuring' European superiority."[33] These colonizing metaphors typically drew from the natural world: animization of colonized peoples and metaphors for their land. One of the most common of these was "opposed yet linked narratives of Western penetration of inviting virginal landscapes," which were "available for defloration and fecundation; ownerless, it becomes the property of its 'discoverers' and cultivators." Among Euro-American writers this metaphor drew from Edenic, Biblical imagery where:

> The exaltation of the garden…gave way to the exaltation of the cultivator...the garden metaphor evoked growth, increase, cultivation, and blissful agricultural labor and implied that the land, prior to Western penetration, was

> empty…uncultivated, undomesticated, and without a legitimate (that is, settled European) owner.[34]

It is fitting coincidence that the area of Los Angeles where William Selig established what is likely the first permanent film studio, was called Edendale. Even in narratives that avoid the tropes of "virgin land," the key aspect emphasized about this "new West" was its emptiness and available land. Missing, but assumed in these narratives, is the displacement and genocide of the Native inhabitants of those lands.

The prevalence of the vanishing Indian myth and its significance in Western tropes has been repeatedly studied in the Western film genre. Here, I want to examine the connection of these myths to the place of Hollywood, not just its film products, because these filmmakers who relocated to Southern California may not have independently applied these narratives themselves. Shiel notes an important prehistory of Hollywood and the self-identification of Los Angeles at the end of the 19th Century, one that likely informed and even drew filmmakers to the area. In the 1880s, the Los Angeles area became a favorite of impressionistic painters drawn to the region's natural beauty and "romantic Spanish and Mexican ruins." At roughly the same time, photographers flocked to Southern California to photograph the area's resources "on commission for railroad, mining, and lumber companies as advertisements of the West aimed at investors."[35] To perpetuate and shape the perception of their town, Los Angeles civic leaders worked to create their own image production based in public relations:

> A flood of…boosterist photography was subsequently produced for local, national, and international consumption that foregrounded Southern California's favourable climate, physical beauty, abundant flora, and its Spanish and Mexican romantic antiquity, emblematized by its historic missions.[36]

In these genres of early LA image-making we see similar themes: nature, exploitable resources, and colonial antiquity. Left out of LA booster's narratives and subsequent evaluations of these narratives, is the Native role in this "colonial antiquity." The emphasis on "ruin" and "antiquity" obscured the Indigenous peoples inhabiting the land and distanced the area from the brutal Spanish colonization of those people. To promote this antiquity, the region adopted and exploited the Mission style architecture influenced by the Spanish missions constructed and served by enslaved Native Californians. The suppression of Native presence and the appropriating of Spanish colonial imagery was a conscious effort:

> Los Angeles' boosters sought to differentiate it from older cities back east, erasing, suppressing, or appropriating other histories from peoples despite their prior claims. An image of Los Angeles as white and racially pure was promoted notwithstanding its history and its actually increasing Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino populations.[37]

The Mission became an important, ubiquitous symbol of the new Los Angeles. As Brian Jacobson writes, the Spanish mission style "represented a modern myth created by California settlers in search of authenticity."[38] This style was appropriated by the early film studios in the 1910s, particularly by William Selig, and "became valuable components of the rhetoric that shaped the social and political ecology of Southern California and set the stage for early Hollywood."[39] Studio heads deployed the visual rhetoric to suggest the utility of the new industry to the region and to "draw links between cinema and California History."[40] In turn, films reinforced this romanticized, colonial California in their films. Notably, the success of the 1910 version of *Ramona* intensified "the romanticization of the region's Spanish mission heritage within the terms of an ascendant anglo boosterism."[41]

*Early Hollywood and Machines Of Colonization*

Whereas Selig attempted to forge a connection to California's colonial past with contemporary architecture, his early career, and by extension both film and the Western genre, was deeply connected to an instrument of colonization: the railroad. Selig's connection to the railroad presents a material link between a key instrument of colonization and cinema, a connection that illustrates similar ideologies regarding the West and Native Americans operating in both industries.

William Selig was born to a family of Polish immigrants in Chicago. As a teen, his poor health forced him to move to a better climate in California. It was there that Selig's career in entertainment began as a magician and minstrel performer and in 1895, while performing in a minstrel show in Dallas, he first saw the kinetoscope which began his interest in the motion picture industry. Two years later, he had established his first Polyscope company named after his personal version of the cinematograph device.[42]

As a young entrepreneur, Selig required funding for his films and the ability to travel to acquire the scenic pictures most profitable with audiences at the time. He sought out clients who could supply both and it was in railroad companies that he would find his "most important corporate clients."[43] Selig utilized existing connections he had gained as a photographer supplying the railroad with images of California in the 1880s.[44] One of these connections was with Colorado-based photographer Harry H. Buckwalter. The work of the two for the Rio Grande, Colorado and Southern, and other railroad companies would form a solid foundation for Selig's motion picture business, and in

Andrew Smith's assessment, "by 1904 Selig and Buckwalter had gone a long way toward inventing the Western."[45]

In the first five years of the 20th century, Selig and Buckwalter created films largely to advertise the resources and economic opportunity provided out West opened up by the railroad. Assumed in this vision was the colonization of Native peoples. While the majority of these early films focused on landscapes, the significant people who inhabited these films were Native. As Smith writes, these Indian films "emphasized the federal government's success in 'containing Indians and limiting those cultural practices that might be potentially disruptive to the industrial order." Against this depiction of Native people was the presentation of "The image of the virtuous and independent cowpuncher proved a particularly powerful symbol for boosters who sought to efface the reality of labor relations in Colorado, which at the time were contentions and violent."[46] The original Western binary was formed.

*The Railroad and Manifest Destiny*

Making the connection between the birth of cinema and the railroad even more explicit, Selig and Buckwalter's films found new audiences during the Hales Tour fads following their presentation at the 1904 St Louis Exhibition.[47] Hale's Tours were a variety of 1900s attractions, a "phantom ride" where viewers boarded a stationary train car. Panoramic motion pictures outside the windows would simulate a train ride in a faraway place.[48] The railroad, used often as a metaphor for a new, modern mode of vision, was also an instrument to present the new territories in the west to populations back east; to survey

the American colonial project that railroad companies were seriously invested in through photographic technology in many forms.

Railroad companies, engines of modern American capitalism, accompanied American colonialism. In the West, railroad construction was accompanied by land surveyors who were in turn accompanied by soldiers.[49] In Indian Territory, railroads were fiercely involved in the policies that preceded allotment. In 1882, Congress allowed the Frisco railroad to construct a line through the Choctaw Nation that was not mentioned or allowed in existing treaties. This was "one of the most significant watersheds in the post-Civil War history of Indian policy" allowing Congress to "authorize corporations to exercise privileges upon Indian lands without consulting the tribes."[50] While the move was initially helpful economically for the Choctaw, and other nations in Indian Territory hoped to negotiate with railroad companies to their economic benefit, it was a massive blow to tribal sovereignty.[51] When the Cherokee Nation attempted to force fair compensation from the Southern Kansas railroad, who was building a line through their territory, the US Government decided that the railroad had the right to eminent domain.[52]The railroad brought other businesses seeking to profit off the land in Indian Territory, as well as squatters and speculators.[53] As Debo writes, "Indian Territory was, of course, not public land, but the railroads were invited to intrigue to make it so."[54] This movement by corporations settled "a philosophical question in the minds of congressmen by establishing that the way to civilization and acculturation for the Indian was to change from tribal land title in common to individual land title in severalty"[55] or, what would become allotment.

Decades earlier, the railroad in California accompanied the Gold Rush and subsequent genocide of California tribes.[56] In the 1880s and 90s, Los Angeles boosters and railroad companies worked to sell a now empty west with available land to Americans in the East. To do this, it utilized film and the work of these early filmmakers prefigured what would become the Western genre, the genre that helped to build what became Hollywood. Ironically, the Western, while supporting these mythologies, required Indian roles and labor to support itself as a popular genre of recent historical film. This brought substantial numbers of Indians to Hollywood where they established one of the most important Native American communities and hub.

## Native American Communities in Hollywood

### *Thomas Ince and the Inceville Souix*

The first Native community in Hollywood accompanied what is considered the first permanent film studio in Hollywood, the New York Motion Picture Company (Bison films) Studio in Santa Monica, California. The NYMPC purchased the 18,000 acres of land and invested significant funds to move production west, largely to improve their output of Western films. To manage the endeavor, they hired a young filmmaker (he was only 30 years old, and had only been in the film business for a little over a year), Thomas Ince.[57] Like all of the early founders of Hollywood, much has been written about Ince tough relative to Native Americans the focus has been the themes of his films. However, as Tuska argues, compared to someone like Griffith, Ince's contribution to film history is less as a filmmaker than in making "filmmaking a collective enterprise."[58] Through his

Western films, Ince established a systematized model of film production which would become the standard for what would become the Hollywood studio system.[59] Because of his influence in this model of Hollywood labor, instead of his films, I want to emphasize his use of Native labor to build what would become Studio Hollywood.

Tuska suggests that the seeds of Ince's film career were planted by William S. Hart. Ince was the child of a vaudeville family who lived in the same hotel as Hart, who at night would tell Ince stories about his childhood among the Sioux in the Dakota Territory.[60] When Ince was sent to California, he turned to these stories as material for his filmmaking, and utilized his connections with Hart and the Wild West shows to contract the Miller Bros. 101 Ranch (forming Bison-101) out of Oklahoma whose performers included at least thirty-five Native performers primarily from the Ponca Nation.[61] These Native performers would become his "most important acquisition"[62] as an executive. Over time, the Indian population grew large enough to establish an Indian Village for the performers, a group that became known as the "Inceville Sioux." The popularity of their pictures, and the presence of a large number of Native film workers, "inspired Ince to focus exclusively on Indian-themed films."[63]

In addition to building what would become the prototype for the studio system in Hollywood, Bison-101 built early infrastructure in Santa Monica. To support Inceville, rivers and creeks were damned and water pumps installed. Inceville had its own electrical power plant and installed telephone wires. The studio had its own garden and cattle ranch. As part of his agreement with the Office of Indian Affairs (Native Americans were still wards of the State), Ince built a schoolhouse for his Native performers, with the groups' Boarding school graduates acting as instructors.[64]

Contrary to the LA booster's view of a racially whitewashed Los Angeles, Inceville resembled a "parliament of men." In addition to Native Americans, Ince hired Indian, Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican performers. While Ince felt he was required to have "each race be segregated from the other," the collaborative nature of film production and the physical labor needed to operate Inceville suggests that multicultural contact and exchange occurred.[65] For the most part, however, the Native community at Inceville was not a permanent community,[66] but it laid the groundwork for a larger network of support. The movement of temporary performers in and out of Hollywood also heralded Los Angeles as a Native Hub. This first, modern Native community in Hollywood accompanied the establishment of the foundations of the Hollywood studio system that was built on the image of Native Americans in part by Native American labor.

*THE 1920s*

One of the first Native-run organizations established in Los Angeles in the Twentieth Century, was the Sequoia League, established by Charles Lummis Fletcher in 1902, as a welfare group for Mission Indians.[67] It was not until the 1920s that Native groups began to form with greater frequency, and nearly all were in some way connected with the film industry. Two of the earliest groups included film workers, but generally in ancillary roles. One of the first was the American Indian Progressive Association, a progressive reform group founded by Pablo Narcha. The group, formed in 1924, "sough to use their experiences to contribute to legislative reform and Indian Welfare."[68] A second group, The Wigwam Club of America was a welfare organization "founded on the principles looking to the welfare of Indian boys and girls."[69] While Sharon organized the

organization and the events, longtime vaudeville and screen actor Chief Clear Sky served as its initial president. The office of president changed over the years, but Sharon was a consistent presence as its executive secretary. The club is best remembered for its Indian Day celebrations, activities that also served to promote the national observance of an American Indian Day. The first iteration numbered twenty participants. By 1929 the picnic attracted over 2500.[70] Even after the club appears to have become inactive, its "reunion" picnics became a major event for Native Americans in Los Angeles. Both groups "promoted a type of urban Indian identity that made more room for the cultural traditions of Indian people," and "linked" traditional public performance "to activism for Indian people."[71]

*The American Indian Woman's Club*

The American Indian Woman's Club (AIWC), also known was the Wa-tha-huck Club (which meant "bringing the light")[72] was a short-lived, yet prolific Los Angeles-based Native American organization formed in the spring of 1927. According to *The Los Angeles Times,* the group was, "a brilliant group of women, prominent in the business and professional life of Los Angeles" and advertised it as "the first club for American Indian women in the world."[73] While this claim was most likely an exaggeration, the club was one of the first Native-run organizations in Los Angeles. The majority of the club's membership were of mixed-ancestry; however, the club enacted a requirement that all members must be of one-sixteenth Native heritage to join. The club drew its influence in part from its accreditation through the Federation of Women's Clubs, and compared to other Native groups has left more traces of its existence through Los Angeles' society

pages. In one such profile of the club, its membership was described as "all highly educated" and as:

> Ardently interested in government affairs, in educating their race, in the purification of politics, in the development of a philosophy of life that will bring progress and contentment. They are pledged to perpetuate the ancient arts and crafts of the Indian which reflect the desires, the minds and the natures of every tribe who has spoken to the world through stories and legends and through the creation of their handicraft which is the highest type of symbology. [74]

In addition to political engagement and cultural revitalization, the club also participated in public service, pledging, "No Indian child will be giftless on Christmas Day. No Indian family will go cold or hungry or comfortless."[75] The club hosted lecturers committed to Native policy or culture, dinners and dances typically to raise funds for charity. In addition, the club members lectured and performed for other clubs and organizations under the auspices of the AIWC. Members of the groups may have even accompanied film programs. "Suggested Programs for Junior Matinees," was a column in *Motion Picture News* aimed at theater managers providing sample programs for certain films or holidays. The purpose of these programs was to "build good will with neighborhood theaters," combining the often maligned Saturday matinee content with cultural and educational aspects. A 1942, sample program compiled by the public relations director of West Coast Theaters' for the birthday of George Armstrong Custer, suggested having officers of the Club attend the screening as "Guests of honor."[76]

The formation of the AIWC was directly tied to the film industry. As the Native population in Los Angeles grew, organizations formed to support performers. It appears existing organizations failed to adequately support women who were involved in the industry. As the *Los Angeles Times* article announcing the club's formation reported,

"pictures are attracting Indians from every tribe in the United States...The boys and men are protected by the American Indian Protective Association,[77] the Wigwam and War Paint clubs. The girls and women who come here to study or work will be under the protection of the Wa-tha-huck club."[78]

The club's officers and membership were comprised of film workers themselves or their family members. In its initial form, the Club's leadership was Rilla M. De Porta, a government appointed welfare worker among Los Angeles' Native population, as President; Jeanne L'estrange Cappel, a writer and lecturer who was "recognized authority on the fascinating folklore stories of all the tribes," as Vice President; and Blance Duquette as Treasurer.[79] I will now briefly look at three members of the group who had active connections to the Native film community.

The member of the AIWC most involved in film production was Gertrude Chorre who provided the musical accompaniment for the club's meetings.[80] The matriarch of a family of actors including Joseph ("Sonny" or Suni War Cloud) a wrestler and actor who had a 20 year career in pictures, Marie, Bennie, and James. All attended Sherman Indian School in Riverside. According to Raheja, "when given a limited choice of a career as a domestic servant or as an actor," Gertrude "chose Hollywood."[81]

One of the few California Indians (she was Luiseno) in the film industry,[82] Chorre was an extra and consultant in films. Chorre also appears to have been an important figure in the film community who worked to facilitate connections between the studios and Native talent. An article documenting the casting of the 1936 version of *Ramona* reported that the director called Chorre and Jim Thorpe and that "between them these two

know the addresses of all the Indians hereabout who work from time to time in pictures, and no sooner did they send forth the alarm than groups of aborigines could be seen leaping into their cars and starting south."[83]

The group's secretary, May Montoya Jones, performed under the name "Warcaziwin," (Sioux for Sunflower)[84] was called "a woman of rare attainments, a brilliant writer on psychology and equally brilliant as a lecturer on scientific subjects." Jones was "of Pueblo descent" and "devoted her life to the study of the Indian and his arts."[85] Jones had a personal connection with Luther Standing Bear though their relationship is listed differently across sources. One article calls her his daughter, and another calls her his niece. In another it notes that she was adopted into the Sioux tribe by Standing Bear.[86] Confusion about their relationship is likely due to relationship titles in Native communities. Whatever their relationship, Jones would later co-author Standing Bear's three books. She would lecture well into the 1960s on Native culture. An excerpt from one these lectures from a February 1928 speech at the Southwest Museum on the "Contributions of the American Indians to Culture." In the speech, Jones noted Native culture and political sophistication prior to the arrival of European settlers and "laid emphasis on the high place held by women among the American Indians"[87]

Born in Minnesota in 1873, Chippewa writer, performer, lecturer, and the group's Vice President, Jeanne L'estrange Cappel[88] was one of the most active members of the club during its existence, and active member of other non-Native Orange County women's clubs.[89] In the 1930s, she would form the American Indian History and Art club that was most active in the 1940s.[90] While the extent of Cappel's film career is unknown, she was a performer. In fact, she was the featured performer, along with Chief John Big

Tree, of a "dramatic program" in November 1927, along with tenor Heska Naswood and Klamath writer and poet Alice Phillips, that was put-on to raise funds for an AIWC clubhouse[91] (it appears that the club never had a permanent clubhouse, as they were listed as meeting at the Clara Barton Hall as of 1929). Cappel would lecture to many other Los Angeles based clubs "dressed in Chippewa costume" telling "Indian legends, and exhibit[ing] articles of Indian handicraft."[92] As a writer, Cappel contributed Indian Legends to the Theosophic publication Occult Life Magazine.[93] She also wrote a book on Chippewa legends under the name Wa-be-No O-Pee-Chee (Mystic Robin).[94]

*The 1930s and 1940s*

According to anthropologist Shirley Fiske, in Los Angeles "throughout the 1930s, a new set of Indian institutions formed slowly but consistently about every 2 years throughout the decade."[95] Two film-based groups discussed in my previous chapter were the American Indian Actor's Association and the American Indian Actors Guild. Important non-film based groups and organizations formed during this period which likely had film workers in their membership include: The California Indian Land Rights Association 1932, The Roach Owner's Society (a Pow Wow Group, 1933), The Los Angeles Indian Center 1935, and The First American Indian Church 1936.[96]

*DeMille Indians*

While John Del Valle's article presented the DeMille Indians as Chief Thundercloud's attempt to organize a federally recognized Indian Tribe of Native film actors, the original

publicity article in the pressbook for *North West Mounted Police*, titled "Real Movie Indians have 'DeMille Tribe,'" suggested a different organization. The headline's use of past tense suggested that the tribe already existed, and its use of quotes, that fit with the tone of the article, uses tribe in a more figurative sense. Instead of documenting the problems of Native representation and Thundercloud's attempt to resolve them by petitioning the government for a tribe, this version of the article details Thundercloud organizing a "social club" comprised of regular DeMille actors, both Native and Non-Native.[97]

According to this article, Thundercloud wrote a letter to DeMille in which he noted that, "real Indians" were having difficulty finding work "although there are always plenty of Indian roles in the pictures." To rectify this problem, Thundercloud relates to DeMille that:

> Right now I am organizing the real Indians of Hollywood into a social club, and out of tribute to you we are going to call ourselves the "De Mille Indians," because you have made that name almost as famous as the names of real tribes. We think it is time there was an actual "De Mille tribe" and we are going to be it.[98]

While I have yet to be able to find a copy of this letter in DeMille's archives, I have found similar letters from Native, and Native passing, actors asking DeMille for jobs. One, by Richard Davis Thunderbird, begins with a paragraph similarly praising DeMille for his authenticity towards Native Americans.[99] This flattery serves a dual purpose as it could be used to sell DeMille's brand of historical authenticity in publicity articles, and given DeMille's temperament, was also a useful rhetorical strategy in appealing to the director.

The term "DeMille Indian" had already been used to describe both the Indian character type used in the film as well as the group of regular Native actors who portrayed those roles in DeMille's films.[100] As the article notes, the "legendary tribe…Cecil B. DeMille's Indians… have probably fought as many wars as the Apaches, and are just as well known to most Americans."[101] This name recognition aided Thundercloud and Native film workers in their careers. DeMille also played up these actors in his publicity and as such these actors became public figures.

This gets to the unanswered question in the article: why was Thundercloud writing to DeMille in the first place? The letter appears to be asking for DeMille to give his blessing, and name, to an already extant group of his Native employees. For these film workers, the DeMille name carried significant status in Hollywood. Even to be an extra on a DeMille picture could boost an actor's resume. To not just be a Hollywood Indian, but to be a DeMille Indian carried a prestige which would open doors and future roles for these actors. Additionally, DeMille was fiercely loyal to his extras. He would hire extras from his silent days to act well into the 1950s. His archive is full of letters from former extras asking for work on his latest project. A social club named after DeMille guaranteed additional personal investment in their careers and stability within the industry. It appears that DeMille did give the tribe his approval. These Native actors were given pins from DeMille that celebrated DeMille's "First Americans" on screen.[102] This approval also successfully worked for these actors

It is also important to note that the club was open to Non-Natives. The article closed by noting that "The Chief said that Walter Hampden, the distinguished Shakespearean actor, who changed the color of his eyes by means of contact lenses to

play Chief Big Bear in 'North West Mounted Police,' would be invited to become an honorary member."[103] Another newspaper article mentions Hampden's membership in the club as it relates an incident when Gary Cooper walked into the Paramount commissary and found Walter Hampden, the distinguished stage actor, all made up as an Indian for a test…"How," said Cooper. "Yes," answered Hampden. "Yes," drawled Cooper, scornfully. "A real Indian would say 'ugh'" "Ah!" replied Hampden. "But I am a DeMille Indian."[104] While this seems to support the practice of making white actors honorary Indians that actors like Thorpe and Many Treaties worked to end, the constructed nature of the organization provided a more playful context and called the construction of the Hollywood Indian type.

The inclusion of non-Native actors suggested a comradery of people who played a Hollywood type. The inclusion of these actors had the potential to build further industry connections for the Native actors. These connections were significant in the studio system. According to Clark, studios, in practice and in publicity, worked to fragment and "emphasize differences among actors" in order to establish an "'isolation effect' that placed barriers between actors and forced them into competition with each other for studio attention."[105] This served a dual purpose. In publicity, emphasizing difference helped differentiate actors as product. In labor, it created a hyper-competitive, isolating environment to prevent labor organizing. Forming a social club helped mitigate the "isolation effect," and forming the club created a more powerful labor force that created real economic change for its Native members.

In Diana Cary's memoir she recalls a meeting of cowboy performers in Gower Gulch[106] discussing whether to attempt to organize into a union. In that meeting, Artie

Ortego, a Mission Indian and member of DeMille's Indians, related the Native actors' successes with organizing. Ortego boasted that:

> Some of our people were told to use sign language in a scene, and when we did, we asked for a full speaking part adjustment. After all, talk's talk, however you say it. Well, the studio refused, so we went in a body to the Screen Actors Guild and they ruled in our favor and our people got paid what they deserved. Now we're pushing for sixteen-fifty a day, if we wear our own native costumes, and we're going to get it too, because we've already wrung that rate of DeMille[107]

Ortego notes two points of labor appeals at work in the industry. The first, recognizing sign language as speech (Ortego had taught other actors Indian Sign Language on films,[108] so this would have been a problem he would have been aware of first-hand), required an official appeal to a union body. The second was achieved through the social club and Ortega's confidence rested in DeMille's status in the industry. He set the pace when it came to many aspects of the industry, and if he paid his Indians sixteen-fifty a day, it would lend support for others as well. While Ortega relates the power of an unofficial, social organization to achieve real labor success, the evolution of the article's major event from the formation of a social group to a federally recognized tribe, shows a fascination with more official organizations of power, and a fascination in the tribe tied to contemporary Native American policy.

The transformation can likely be attributed to more compelling ad copy, but this also arises from the external developments related to the so-called Native American New Deal, or Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). Graham Taylor argues that the IRA made "the tribe the focus of attention"[109] and in the IRA's policies, the cultural concept regarding Native government became the tribe. The major problem some Native groups had with the IRA rested in its attempt to fit all federally recognized Native groups into similarly

structured tribal governments regardless of their traditional forms of government. In addition, conservative lawmakers opposed the concept of tribal government in this because the focus on a tribe meant shifting policy from individual assimilation to community building, and as such "labeled the tribal organizations conceived by the bureau as communistic"[110]

The publicity writers may have focused on a tribe because of contemporary views of Native governments, or Del Valle shifted focus from a social club to a tribe for publicity's sake. In either respect, the move holds subversive potential. The actors are no longer presented as individuals within the Hollywood system but identified as part of a larger group with potential governmental legitimacy and real potential for negotiating power. As social club, the DeMille Indians represented the potential for individual networking and career advancement. Presented as a potential tribe in the press, the DeMille Indians represented communal uplift for all Native film workers.

*The Native Red Men of Hollywood*

The Native Redmen of Hollywood, a Native American acting organization of 63 Native actors, presided over by Chief Many Treaties,[111] is one of several Native organizations that appears briefly in documented history and seems to abruptly disappear. In fact, I've only found one significant trace of the group, a full-page 1941 *Los Angeles Times* pictorial spread titled "Hollywood Indians Go to School to Learn Tepee Lore," which displays a series of photographs of the group involved in various activities. While information is scarce on the organization, the profile provides important insight into Native community organization and Native Americans in the film industry.

The first image portrays Blue Bird[112] and Riley Sunrise (a Hopi/Pueblo performer who later had a long career as a celebrated artist) in full Hollywood Indian performance regalia, dancing the jitterbug. The picture's juxtaposition of a marker of stereotyped expectation of tradition and the modern is striking, and works almost as a microcosm of the issues in this chapter as a whole. The photo's caption reads: "Since most Indians grow up in cities or on reservations, Hollywood's redskin actors…go to school to learn how to become better Indians. After class, the younger generation…go into a jitterbug…instead of a war dance."[113] This photograph illustrates one of the group's major purposes: to provide acting classes for Native American actors; however, these were not typical acting classes. It was an acting school to teach Native actors how to act like Hollywood Indians.

The profile writer uses this photograph to suggest that modern Native youth have lost their tradition through exposure to modern white culture and must be taught traditional ways. In reality, the "authentic" "tradition" of Hollywood Indians was largely alien to Native Americans who found no such traditions in their own backgrounds. Being able to understand and exploit what white filmmakers and audiences expected as markers of tradition was actually a sophisticated modern negotiation that Native performers learned and practiced. In what must have been maddening instances, directors expressed their disapproval with the ability of Native Americans to act adequately Indian. The photo's use of dance is also significant. Given the superficial roles available to most Native actors, knowing how to perform physical actions like dancing as expected, was a crucial part of acting. On the set of *NWMP*, DeMille was reportedly shocked to find that none of the 500 Indians filming a scene knew how to perform a "real" Indian War Dance, so he hired studio choreographer LeRoy Prinz to teach them the "correct" moves.[114] In

addition to acting, prospective Native actors also needed to know how to look the way directors expected. It appears this was also taught in the organization, as a second image shows Sioux actor Shooting Star demonstrating on an unnamed model "how to apply war paint."

A third image shows Chief Yowlachie, unnamed in the caption, on a telephone. The caption notes, "The club telephone is in constant use as members call Central Casting for work."[115] The importance of the telephone for gaining employment shows up repeatedly in narratives about Native Hollywood. Speaking with Alvin Deere, the first memory that came to his mind about the industry was his family's telephone. His family's home became a hub of family friends who were actors, but did not have a telephone, waiting around for calls, anxiously hoping that casting would not call while another actor was on the phone.[116] Cary, who grew up in Gower Gulch, relates a very similar story suggesting a common experience among film extras throughout Hollywood: "If we were the ones whose telephone was working (but whose water had been turned off), we let the next-door neighbor who was without phone service, call Central at our house and she in turn gave us enough water to make supper."[117] Those who were not lucky enough to have access to a telephone were forced to participate in "the most desperate footrace of the day…to be first in to reach the pay telephone booth outside the studio."[118] In addition to providing connections and instruction, the Native Red Men, and other clubs, acted as hubs by providing vital access to communication technology.

A third image shows a group of three women and two men, all in regalia holding folding chairs. The caption notes that, "In Hollywood, as on the plains, Indians let women do the work." The tone of the caption appears as if to point out the difference between

Native culture and Anglo-American culture; that these Native men are not properly performing appropriate gendered expectations. Yet, as shown in previous examples women were crucial to the Hollywood Native American community, and in the next section, I will provide a case study of White Bird, a Cherokee woman who became a central figure in the Hollywood community during the 1920s and '30s.

## Case Study: White Bird and the War Paint Club

In June 1930, a syndicated profile of Native American youth was published[119] that embodied the central cultural expectations about modern, urban Native Americans. The article's subheading previewed its themes, claiming that "the younger generation…is in rebellion against traditional habits and custom—sharing with the white men the urge 'to be ourselves.'" It paints Native youth caught in a difficult situation as "hybrid thinkers"[120] who find that they "cannot fit their new ideas in with the old way of life on the reservations," and must "either return to the blanket…or must go out into the world and make his way by the white man's means."[121]

Something was happening with the youth, the article argued. They are leaving for the cities, dressing like "flappers," and rebelling from tradition: "the native individualism…is asserting itself."[122] To give voice to this generation, Crane interviewed White Bird, presented as "a Cherokee girl who is running an art shop in Hollywood." White Bird, who was heavily quoted in the article, complicates the article's initial premise and inserts a view of an alternative, Native modernism. At first, she seems to agree with the article's framing, noting how "Indians are very slow to change" to "a

period of such rapid and violent change." However, this slow adaptation was not hindering Native success; rather it meant that Native youth drew from a long, deep tradition that provided an alternative form of adaptation that would ultimately benefit Native Americans:

> White men are not the natural heritors of this soil—they have not our steady, unchanging past…they have learned to adapt themselves quite easily to the exigencies and demands of their civilization which is moving so rapidly into new channels that that which was new yesterday and essential to them is now out of date and useless, and the necessities of their present-day life will be nonessentials tomorrow.[123]

It was from this tradition that modern Native youth would draw to contribute to modern society. While White Bird does endorse the idea that the city, more than Indian Country, provided the place that Native youth could find the most success and opportunity it was tradition that would inform the artistic and cultural contributions of Native Youth. That informed by Native tradition, Native artists are "singing the songs of the world and painting the pictures and writing books, and he is bringing to his interpretation the uniqueness of his people."[124] This was not just a modern phenomenon or a new opportunity. Repeatedly, in this and other articles White Bird introduces modern opportunity by retelling the history of Native culture and innovation, a history in which Native Americans had contributed vital and importantly to what would become the United States:

> The white men reared their cities on our old campfire sites and built their highways and railroads over our trails. We taught them our waterways and portages, we showed them our methods of agricultures and hunting; without us they could not have colonized in the short time they did…Those are some of our contributions of yesterday, but today and tomorrow we have as much to give. We as a race are as capable of overcoming difficult circumstances as any other people, and we are proving it today. Our young people are bringing to their work

> the colorful backgrounds of their race, and I dare to think they will have the least little bit of influence on the culture of the time.[125]

For White Bird, Native culture had an historic tradition of "versatility" that benefited culture as a whole. Native artists were not pre-modern, but rather had essential traditions and visions which would benefit modern culture at large. This Native Modernity is central to White Bird's influential career and cultural projects, which helped establish and solidify a Native American film community in Hollywood. For White Bird was not just "a Cherokee girl who is running an art shop," but one of the most important figures in the Los Angeles Indian community. She was an activist, casting director, actress, artist, socialite, community organizer, fashion designer, and mentor to a group of Native artists. *Los Angeles Times* Columnist Lee Shippey wrote in 1930, "Someday, we imagine, the regenerated Indians of the Southwest will erect a monument to White Bird for what she is doing for her race now."[126] White Bird illustrates how a Native community was built in Hollywood, and how publicizing this communities activities was tied to modeling a Native Modernity.

White Bird (born Mary Oliver[127]) was born in Texas, the daughter of a French father and Texas Cherokee mother. She married and had one daughter, Nelba O'Connor.[128] I have found little else about her life until she arrived in Hollywood sometime in 1924. Her earliest appearance in Hollywood is at a Lions Club meeting, where, also in attendance was Chief Yowlachie (Daniel Simmons), a Yakima actor who had one of the longest careers of any Native actor in Hollywood. Shortly afterward the two were married.

*The War Paint Club*

Upon arriving in Hollywood[129] White Bird "marveled that most of the Indians being used in pictures were imitation Indians." When she asked why this was the case, she was told that casting directors could not find Native actors in Hollywood, and believed that they were too scarce, estimating fewer than a dozen "real" Indian actors working in Los Angeles. Skeptical of this claim, she took it upon herself to find and cast a call for six "real Indians" for an upcoming feature. During the course of her search, she "found practically none had telephones and many had moved to other addresses." In response, "she built up a list of active telephone numbers and a 'scout' system for reaching those who had no telephone. Gradually the home of White-Bird and Yowlachie became a sort of central casting bureau for Indians." After this search, White-Bird advertised that she could deliver "As many as 150 Indians…at short notice."[130]

This event led to the formation of the War Paint Club, initially centered in the home of White Bird and Chief Yowlache and later at White Bird's Indian Art Store on Hollywood Boulevard. Luther Standing Bear became the club's "Chief Counselor," and the club was governed by a council of twelve "chiefs." While these "chiefs" would not allow White Bird to sit on the council out of "tradition," presumably because she was a woman, White Bird was its "executive secretary" managing the club, its funds, and its events.[131]

While others have written about the War Paint Club's advocacy in representation, "to keep the Indian character from defamation or ridicule,"[132] its primary function was as

an organization to assist Native film workers within the industry; to act as a casting agency for Native talent, and White Bird was its casting director.[133] The first purpose was to make it easier for studios to find and contact "authentic," Native film workers with experience in the industry. Interestingly, the reason given was not only "for the protection of the Indian in the picture," but also "for the protection of the studios." This claim appears to be White Bird's selling point to the studios and demonstrates a negotiation at work: she would provide them with "actual," "picture broke," Native actors, and they would then be able to publicize their authenticity and presumably be saved from any potential embarrassment. The casting was so central to the War Paint Club's efforts that it appears in the 1928 Film Daily Yearbook, essentially the Yellow Pages of the film industry at the time, listed as a Casting Service under "Indians."[134]

In articles about the formation of the War Paint Club, reporters wrote as if White Bird had brokered peace among warring tribal nations.[135] Whether or not animosity existed among members of different tribes, or if writers were using figurative language drawn from the popular imagination, it points to a difficulty in organizing the casting service: acting in the film industry is a highly competitive field. A casting agency among the Native American actors required them to agree upon equal access to casting directors. Better-connected actors had to agree to help those who were new to the town or industry. It also appears that White Bird deferred to this access, and was sensitive to issues of authenticity, even at the expense of the career of her family members.

In 1933, MGM was casting the adaptation of Oliver La Farge's Pulitzer-Prize winning, Navajo-themed novel *Laughing Boy* and asked White Bird to send over young Native women for a small role that required dancing. After casting the other roles and

looking at pictures of the remaining club members sent by White Bird, someone at the studio saw a picture of a Native performer named Walks Alone in the newspaper. A studio representative called White Bird and asked why she did not send over her information. White Bird responded that: "I didn't know you wanted Irish Indians." The representative was confused. White Bird explained, "my first husband was full-blooded Irish and this girl is our daughter. If I tried to send her in to you you'd have thought I was doing too much for my own family." The representative said that she was exactly what they had in mind for the part and to send her over. Kuuks Walks Alone[136] (Nelba O'Connell) received the part.

*Performance Regalia and Fashion*

In addition to facilitating industry connections, the club helped the actors acquire and create "costumes." These were crucial to getting parts, and especially featured in higher paying roles. Chief Rolling Cloud credited his ability to create effective "costumes" as the key to getting work.[137] Actors rented "many of the Indian costumes and jewels seen in Indian pictures,"[138] from White Bird's store, and as of 1932, the club had 70 performers from fourteen nations with "costumes" ready to perform in films.[139] It should be noted that "costumes," is seen as a patronizing and offensive word for "regalia," which is the preferred term for traditional Native ceremonial dress. White Bird and Rolling Cloud's use of the word more than likely was a result of the industry using the word to describe any clothing worn on screen. However, questions about what exactly to call their outfits points to the complex and hybrid nature of Native dress on screen.

Regarding the dress of performers in Wild West shows, McNenly uses the term "performance regalia," a term that illustrates the apparent paradox at work in Native clothing in performances: regalia is considered traditional and authentic, while performance is constructed and appealing to stereotypical expectations. Yet, McNenly argues that performative regalia "was not simply stereotypical exotic garb. Native performers' dress, reflected, first, their distinctiveness and, second, their adaptability. Dress for performances involved the negotiation of audience expectations, traditional styles, and clothing influences as a result of contact with settlers."[140] A story that illustrates this hybridity was told to me by Kogee Tomas, a long time educator in the Los Angeles area who grew up among the Hollywood Native community and neighbor to Jay Silverheels. One day, Silverheels was up for a part in an upcoming film. At that time, all of the directors wanted the Indians to have long, dark hair, requiring them to wear wigs. However, the wigs easily fell off, limiting what he was able to do as an actor. Silverheels, in his Plains-style performance regalia, came to Kogee's mother with his dilemma and asked her to make a headband for him to keep the wig on his head. Taking fabric she had in the house, Kogee's mother made a red headband for Silverheels. He got the part, and the headband, made in a stylized Indian fashion informed by other on-screen headbands by a Muscogee (Creek) woman for a Mohawk actor out of Anglo patterned fabric, became part of his iconic performance regalia.[141] McNenly asks rhetorically:

> Did Native performers wear stereotypical garb or traditional dress, or did they adopt settler clothing? The answer is yes, yes and yes. Native dress…was multifaceted and hybrid, as was Native people's attire in general.

A 1932, newspaper column illustrates this hybridity at work in the off-screen clothes of Native film workers. The column noted that several Native actors around Hollywood

were seen wearing "Basque caps" (French berets). Native actor Big Eagle explained that directors wanted them to shave their heads, but that having a shaved head could be seen as socially unacceptable in certain settings, and he wanted to wear a hat that his boss would not tell him to take off at his restaurant job.[142]

White Bird modeled this Native modern fashion and sold it to Hollywood. In the first society article in which White Bird is mentioned, she is highlighted because of her fashion. The reporter spends an entire paragraph describing her dress, "the only one in its existence" that "has won its wearer many prizes at exhibition of Indian clothing and ornaments."[143] Afterward, White Bird's shop became a fashion destination in Hollywood, and was featured by an LA Times fashion reporter: "Indians!!-really truly ones at the American Indian Art Shop" a "fascinating place where every article is hand made by Indian students. Their hand-woven coats in gorgeous colorings are attracting a great deal of attention among discriminating women who strive for the original, though beautiful in dress."[144]

In 1929, White Bird's coats became a popular fashion item in Hollywood. After Artie Mason Carter, a pillar of the Hollywood community and force behind the construction of the Hollywood Bowl, was seen wearing one of these coats, "it attracted a great deal of attention because of its originality and exotic coloring." An *LA Times* fashion writer added that "others equally attractive may be had at the American Indian Art Shop… Princess White Bird and Chief Yowlache are the presiding geniuses."[145] The following year it was reported that she was "making coats out of Chimayo blankets and selling them to fashionably dressed women all over the United States."[146]

White Bird literally modeled a Native modernity by including a fashion show as part of the Club's performance to White audiences.[147] The creation and selling of Native-themed clothing to Non-Native buyers points to its own debate, and without images and better descriptions of White Bird's coats it is difficult to discuss in-depth potential issues related to tradition and commodification. However, by creating, modeling, and selling a marker of modern Native cultural production, White Bird inserted a Native presence into the upper-echelons of American popular culture that suggested that Native culture could be modern and fashionable.

*The American Indian Art Shop*

White Bird's American Indian Art Shop became a crucial hub for Native Americans in multiple ways. In addition to being the headquarters of her casting service, the store served to connect artists on reservations and in Indian Country with buyers in Hollywood. White Bird would travel to festivals in New Mexico to buy wares from Native artists there, and Hopi and Navajo brought her their "surplus product."[148]

The store also served as a hub for Los Angeles-based artists and Native youth, whom White Bird occasionally tried to turn into artists. She would tell Native youth frustrated with their prospects in the city that came to her store:

> Nonsense! Look at Chief Yowlache and Chief Standing Bear! Look at Will Rogers and Monte Blue! Look at Lou-che-enya and Bellmard! Go and make some moccasins or beads or baskets or ollas or tom-toms or bows and arrows and I'll sell them for you and give you every penny. Or I can show you where Indian singers and dancers make money.[149]

This quote provides insight into White Bird's attitude, as well as how the store operated as a Native hub. For those looking for work, it provided a showcase to create goods. For those who wanted to perform it provided a means of connections.

Accounts of the Store describe it as typically full of Native actors or artists, and often quite lively:

> Any day one may find half a dozen Indians sitting around—Modern Indians who wear golf trousers and drive motor cars, but sure enough Indians all the same…They are singers, dancers, artists-all Indians with aspirations along artistic lines…This artistic Indian colony is as bohemian as any artistic group in the Quarter Latin inclined to live on the promise of tomorrow even when the proceeds of today are inadequate.[150]

In addition to acting as hub for artists and performers, the store emphasized its place as a Native community center by hosting powwows. Shippey wrote that Yowlache and White Bird's powwows were "the most interesting of all the social events in Los Angeles," and describes one attended by forty-two people, where after two hours, "some of the young Indians slipped into another room, turned on the radio and began dancing modern dances." In response, a frustrated Standing Bear, "seized his tomtom and drowned out the music."[151]

The store provided a physical place and material support for the local Native community, and White Bird and Yowlache were engaged in much social and community activity to raise their profile, bring customers to the store, and bring attention to the Native community. In addition to powwows hosting war heroes or visiting artists, this included putting on Indian pageants, appearing at other clubs, and other public artistic performances.

*Publicity and Community Engagement*

White Bird performed in charity benefits, notably putting on benefit shows with the War Paint Club to pay for the school lunches of needy children. She connected to this cause through her friendship with Lee Shippey and his wife, who were involved in the local PTA. The relationship with Shippey[152] was an important one, because in addition to facilitating increased popular awareness of the shop and its Native community, Shippey's regular updates about her shop and its Native community in his "Leeside of LA" columns document White Bird in greater detail than most other Native figures in Hollywood at the time.

The first of Shippey's columns about White Bird appeared in 1927, and its content sheds light on White Bird's personality and character. While White Bird was featured in the article, she kept introducing Shippey to other Native artists and suggested that they would make good subjects for future columns that he should write. Three years later, he would write that "she unselfishly does her best for them [Native artists]. Never once has she suggested that she would like a few words of publicity about herself."[153] This unselfishness, however should not be confused with an inability to publicize herself and the club.

Even without her husband, White Bird would have kept visible in the Hollywood social scene; yet, Yowlache's experience with publicity and his public notoriety was likely important to the profile of the War Paint Club and the Hollywood Native community. Yowlache **(**Daniel Simmons) was born and raised on the Yakima reservation in Washington and went to school to study opera as a baritone.[154] Unlike other Native actors who often followed several career paths before entering show business,

Yowlache[155] always wanted to be a performer and followed a far more traditional path to Hollywood: he first gained prominence on Vaudeville stages.[156] In 1923, Yowlachie appeared in his first attributed role in *Kentucky Days*, which would begin a nearly five-decade long film and television career.

Yowlache was well known off-screen before he started acting in film as a popular performer first in the Northwest and ultimately in Los Angeles and this experience in the public eye prior to film proved invaluable. Performing for Yowlachie, as with many Native performers, was a multimedia experience and as much as any Native actors he understood how to stay in the public eye. In addition to Vaudeville, pageants, operas, lectures, and social club performances Yowlachie was a popular radio performer.[157] This experience with another mass media may explain his ability to, unlike many other actors in this study, successfully transition to television; a move that provided him steady work throughout the 1950s, and occasional roles until his death in 1966.

*Across Hollywood Boulevard*

On August 1, 1927, Grauman's Chinese Theater in Hollywood held an Indian Chief's Festival to celebrate its 150th screening of Cecil B. DeMille's *King of Kings.*[158] As an added attraction, the theater held its first public ceremony of an actor, Norma Shearer, placing her footprints into what would become one of the most iconic landmarks in Hollywood. The event advertised that chiefs from "more than a score of different tribes, redskin warriors from scattering portions of the country will gather for the festival," and advertised entertainment was a "terpsichorean diversion" by White Bird.[159] This was not

the only connection between White Bird and the legendary theater. Her Indian Art Shop was located across the street.

In an article for *New Movie Magazine*, Roman Romero wrote of this proximity, "here two civilizations will meet in happy compromise. Sid Grauman has promised every cooperation to his red-skinned friends, who are his across-the-street neighbors."[160] This prime location on Hollywood Boulevard, facing an icon of its glamorous Golden Age, inserted this native hub into the heart of Hollywood where it would not easily be missed or forgotten. As a physical building, the art shop was an important feature of the Hollywood Community and its location placed it centrally in Hollywood.

The location of White Bird's store serves as a metaphor for the Native American experience in Hollywood. On one side of Hollywood Boulevard stood the orientalist movie palace, a monument to the new industry that attempted to call back to the romanticized tradition of a racialized other. On the other stood a Native woman's shop that helped support and unite the film workers from another racialized, romanticized "other." On one side, glamorous movie premieres. On the other, powwows. While, unlike Grauman's Chinese Theater, White Bird's shop no longer stands, its location serves a reminder that while often forgotten or marginalized in the history written about the figures and films that premiered and walked red carpets at the theater, Native Americans were there; some, like White Bird, involved in the festivities, and others, still missing from history, facing them from across the street.

## NOTES

[1]. Richard Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema*, Second Edition (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003).6)

[2]. Ramirez, Renya Katarine, *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in Silicon Valley and Beyond* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007). 3

[3]. Ibid.

[4]. Ibid.

[5]. Nicolas G. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration & Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012).12

[6]. Rosenthal. 3

[7]. Susan Lobo, "Is Urban a Person or a Place? Characteristics of Urban Indian Country," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 22, no. 4 (1998): 89–102. 94

[8]. M. Elise Marubbio, *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009). 55

[9]. Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 6.

[10]. Helen R. Crane, "A Place in the Sun," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 30, 1930, Newspapers.com.

[11]. Isaac Johnny John, "Isaac Johnny John Student File," RG 75, Series 1327, Box 33, Folder 1607, Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

[12]. Bernard W. Caughey, "Chief John Big Tree: A Much Copied Indian," *Bennington Banner*, September 28, 1965, Newspapers.com.

[13]. "Famous Indian Athlete Becomes Mutual Player," *The Sunday Telegram*, January 9, 1916, Newspapers.com.

[14]. Tom Gunning, "Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, and Early Cinema," in *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*, ed. Leo Charney and Vanessa L Schwartz (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 19.

[15]. Bill Anthes, *Native Moderns: American Indian Painting 1940-1960* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), Xxi.

[16] See Hansen, Miriam, *Cinema and Experience* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 6, 60-6.

[17]. Ibid.

[18]. Hortense Powdermaker, "Hollywood and the USA," in *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*, ed. Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk, Blackwell Readers in Anthropology (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 161–71. 164, 167.

[19]. May, Larry, *Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 182.

[20]. May 199. For more on this consumer culture in the work of DeMille see Higashi's "The Screen as Display Window" in Sumiko Higashi, *Cecil B. DeMille and American Culture: The Silent Era* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994).

[21]. Anthes xxi

[22]. Paul Chaat Smith, *Everything You Know About Indians Is Wrong* (Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

[23]. Anthes xxi

[24]. Deloria 2006 14

[25]. Deloria 2006, 156

[26]. In May 1983, 185-186

[27]. Ibid.

[28]. Mark Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema and the Real Los Angeles* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2012), 42.

[29]. Michael Wallis, *The Real Wild West: The 101 Ranch and the Creation of the American West* (Macmillan, 2000), 403.

[30]. Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies*, Revised and Updated (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

[31]. Shiel 32

[32]. Shiel 183

[33]. Robert Stam and Ella Sohat, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, Sightlines (New York: Routledge, 1994), 137.

[34]. Stam and Shohat, 141

[35]. Shiel 23

[36]. Ibid.

[37]. Shiel 50

[38]. Brian R. Jacobson, "Fantastic Functionality: Studio Architecture and the Visual Rhetoric of Early Hollywood," *Film History* 26, no. 2 (2014): 52–81, 59.

[39]. Jacobson 60

[40]. Jacobson 70

[41]. Shiel 2012, 51

[42] Smith 12

[43]. Ibid.

[44]. Shiel

[45]. Smith 10

[46]. Smith 15

[47]. Smith 19

[48]. Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema*. 629n18

[49]. Angie Debo, *A History of the Indians of the United States* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), 235.

[50]. H. Craig Miner, *The Corporation and the Indian: Tribal Sovereignty and Industrial Civilization in Indian Territory, 1865-1907* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 19 76), 101.

[51]. Miner 105

[52]. Miner 115

[53]. See Wilma Mankiller and Wallis, Michael, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: St. Martin's, 1993), 130-131.

[54]. Debo 183

[55]. Debo 116

[56]. For a discussion and breakdown on why the word Genocide is appropriate for what occurred in 19th century California, and how the word fits the UN's definition of genocide see James V. Fenelon and Trafzer, Clifford E., "From Colonialism to Denial of

California Genocide to Misrepresentations," *American Behavioral Scientist* 58, no. 1 (2014): 3–29, https://doi.org/10.1.177/0002764213495045.

[57]. Smith 114

[58]. Jon Tuska, *The Filming of the West* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976), 24.

[59]. Ibid.

[60]. Tuska 19, 30

[61]. Smith 115-116

[62]. Smith 116

[63]. Smith 118

[64]. Ibid

[65]. Ibid.

[66]. Ibid.

[67]. Shirley J. Fiske, "Urban Indian Institutions: A Reappraisal from Los Angeles," *Urban Anthropology* 8, no. 2 (Summer 1979): 149–71, https://doi.org/139.78.24.113.

[68]. Rosenthal 105-107

[69]. "Tribes Join in Indian Picnic," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 26, 1925, Newspapers.com.

[70]. "Wigwam Club Has Pow-Wow," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1929, Newspapers.com.

[71]. Rosenthal 108-109. In this section, I focused on groups that were connected with the film industry, and on enlarging the history of groups not discussed in depth in existing literature. See Rosenthal for more information about these groups and other groups that were not expressly connected with film in Los Angeles

[72]. In some contemporary reports this is also reported as Jim Thorpe's name, but his "Indian name" was the similar Wa-tha-sko-huk "light after lightning." In Kate Buford, *Native American Son: The Life and Sporting Legend of Jim Thorpe* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), loc 103.

[73]. Jennie V. N. Allen, "Indian Women Unite in Club," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1927, Newspapers.com.

[74]. Ibid.

[75]. Ibid.

[76]. Ryllis Hemmington, "Push Group Singing Is Wesco Tip," *Motion Picture News*, November 22, 1930, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[77]. I find no other mentions of this organization. I assume that they meant the Progressive Association, not Protection.

[78]. Allen 1927

[79]. Ibid. A Feb. 1929 article lists her as the president.

[80]. "West Ebell to Give Program Next Tuesday," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 1928, Newspapers.com.

[81]. Raheja 29

[82]. Ibid. Native Californians were generally not hired because they did not meet the audience's expectations for what an Indian looked like.

[83]. "Gaunt Variety Scarce," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 17, 1936, Newspapers.com.

[84]. "Local Briefs," *Santa Ana Register*, November 24, 1930, Newspapers.com.

[85]. “Indian Women Unite in Club”

[86]. “Local Briefs.”

[87]. “Lecturer Tells of Early Indian Peace League,” *The Los Angeles Times*, February 27, 1928, Newspapers.com.

[88]. In newspapers her name is written as Jeanne Chappel, Jeanne Cappell, or Jeanne Strange Cappel.

[89]. “Garden Section Members Meet,” *Santa Ana Register*, March 18, 1939, Newspapers.com.

[90]. “History Unit of C.F.W.C. Sponsors Yule Programs,” *The Los Angeles Times*, December 9, 1940, Newspapers.com.

[91]. “Indian Talent,” *The Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1927, Newspapers.com.

[92]. “D.A.R. To Meet Tuesday,” *The Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1929, Newspapers.com.

[93]. It should be noted that “occult” has different connotations today than it did then. At the time, it essentially referred to religious miscellany.

[94]. *Catalog of Copyright Entries. NewSeries 1931:1*, n.d.

[95]. Fiske 1979

[96]. Ibid

[97]. Real Movie Indians have ‘DeMille Tribe.’” *North West Mounted Police* Pressbook (1940), 7.

[98]. Ibid.

[99]. Richard Davis Thunderbird, “Letter from Richard Davis Thunderbird,” December 11, 1939, Box 357 Folder 9, BYU MSS 1400.

[100]. The first mention of the phrase “DeMille Indians” that I have come across comes from a 1939 capsule review.

[101]. “DeMille Tribe.”

[102]. Kogee Thomas. Interview with the author. 5/21/17.

[103]. “DeMille Tribe”

[104]. “North West Mounted Police Scrapbook.” BYU Box 134 vol. 1

[105] Danae Clark, *Negotiating Hollywood: The Cultural Politics of Actors’ Labor* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 20.

[106]. Despite Ortega’s presence in this anecdote, Native Americans are largely absent from the rest of Cary’s memoir, and while it should appear that Gower Gulch also served as a Native American community, I have found insufficient evidence of this. In the newspaper accounts I have read, the only western workers accounted for are cowboys and cowboy stunt people.

[107]. Ortega said that this rate was first paid on *Union Pacific* (1939). The first DeMille film that employed Thundercloud was *The Plainsman* (1936), so the organization of the club happened between those films. Note: Cary mistakenly refers to him as “Artie Ortega”

[108]. “Johnny Is Learning Indian Sign Code,” *Lansing State Journal*, March 27, 1938, Main edition, sec. 16, Newspapers.com.

[109]. Graham D Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1980). 65.

[110]. Taylor 24

[111]. "Hollywood Indians Go to School to Learn Tepee Lore," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1941, Newspapers.com.

[112] Blue Bird, credited as Princess Bluebird in her one starring role in *King of the Stallions*, was named Barbara Felker

[113]. "Lore" 1941

[114] Indians Can Shaq and Truck. War Dance? No! *NWMP* Pressbook page 2

[115]. "Lore" 1941

[116]. Alvin Deer. Interview by author. Oklahoma City, January 12, 2017.

[117]. Diana Serra Cary, *The Hollywood Posse: The Story of a Gallant Band of Horsemen Who Made Movie History* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996).161

[118]. Cary 151

[119]. Two different versions of the article exist, They share many similarities but certain quotes are longer or shorter in the other. Helen R. Crane, "Youth Flames from the Tepee," *Salt Lake Telegram*, June 15, 1930, Newspapers.com. Crane, "A Place in the Sun."

[120]. "Sun" 1930

[121]. Ibid.

[122]. Ibid.

[123]. Ibid.

[124]. "Tepee" 1930

[125]. Ibid.

[126]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 1930, Newspapers.com. 26.

[127]. 1920 Census. Place: Fort Worth Ward 7, Tarrant, Texas; Roll: T625_1848; Page: 3B; Enumeration District: 128. In the obituaries for Walks Alone, she is named as Mary Oliver, but it appears they confused mother with daughter.

[128]. 1930 Census. Place: Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California; Roll: 134; Page: 11B; Enumeration District: 0056; FHL microfilm: 2339869

[129]. White Bird acted in "many movie pictures," but the only film I can specifically say she was in was Under the Tonto Rim: as Princess White Bird.

[130]. Wade Werner, "Real Indians Still Scarce in Hollywood," *Oakland Tribune*, September 30, 1927, Evening edition, Newspapers.com.

[131]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1932, Newspapers.com.

[132]. Ibid.

[133]. Ramon Romero, "White Bird--Hollywood's Indian Casting Director," *The New Movie Magazine*, November 1934, Lantern.Mediahist.org.

[134]. Wid's Films and Film Folk, Inc., "Casting Agencies," *The Film Daily Yearbook*, 1928, Media History Digital Library.

[135]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 1934. Newspapers.com.

[136]. Kuuks' name may provide insight into Hollywood Indian names. Her nickname was "cookie." White Bird said that she "walks alone" because she was not neither white or Indian.

[137]. Helen Angwerd, Charles Bruner, Tape, October 25, 1971.

[138]. Romero 1934

[139]. Shippey, Lee, "The Lee Side O' LA," May 21, 1932.

[140]. Linda Scarangella McNenly, *Native Performers in Wild West Shows: From Buffalo Bill to Euro Disney* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 91.

[141]. Kogee Thomas. Interview with the author. 5/21/17.

[142]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1932, Newspapers.com.

[143]. "Indians Guests of Lions," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1925, Newspapers.com.

[144]. "Shopping Along Hollywood Boulevard: The Style Center of the World," *The Los Angeles Times*, June 20, 1929, sec. 1, Newspapers.com.

[145]. "Shopping along Hollywood Boulevard: Style Center of the World," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1929, sec. 2, Newspapers.com.

[146]. "Tepee" 1930

[147]. Lee Shippey, "Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, November 7, 1929, Newspapers.com. See also "Indian Program Chosen," *The Los Angeles Times*, November 10, 1930, Newspapers.com.

[148]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, August 3, 1929, Newspapers.com.

[149]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," March 27, 1930.

[150]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," August 3, 1929.

[151]. Lee Shippey, "Lee Side o' L.A.," *The Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1939, sec. 2, Newspapers.com.

[152]. Lee Shippey "The Lee Side O' LA," *The Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1939, sec. Part 2, Newspapers.com.

[153]. Lee Shippey, "The Lee Side O' LA," March 27, 1930.

[154]. Rosenthal 40

[155]. His name is alternately spelled Yowlachie in media and publicity materials

[156]. "Pantages Vaudeville," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 25, 1923.

[157]. "Wednesday, October 1," *Radio Digest*, October 4, 1924.

[158]. "Special Nights Set," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 28, 1927, Newspapers.com.

[159]. "Star to Print Feet," *The Los Angeles Times*, August 1, 1927, Newspapers.com.

[160]. Romero 1934

# REFERENCES


Abel, Richard. *The Red Rooster Scare: Making Cinema American, 1900-1910*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

"All-American Day Planned by Club." *The Los Angeles Times*. May 8, 1932. Newspapers.com.

Allen, Jennie V. N. "Indian Women Unite in Club." *The Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1927. Newspapers.com.

Allen, Robert C. "Relocating American Film History." *Cultural Studies* 20, no. 1 (2006): 48–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380500492590.

Allen, Robert C., and Douglas Gomery. *Film History: Theory and Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985.

Anthes, Bill. *Native Moderns: American Indian Painting 1940-1960*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.

"Arizona Elks Arrive Here for Convention." *The Arizona Republican*. March 28, 1930, sec. 1. Newspapers.com.

"Arizona Holds Gala Picture Premiere." *Arizona Republic*. November 26, 1939, First edition. Newspapers.com.

Associated Press. "Indians All But Pushed Off Screen." *Oakland Tribune*. August 7, 1942. Newspapers.com.

———. "Indians Crowded Out of Films by Fake Aboriginals." *The Independent Record*. March 14, 1934. Newspapers.com.

———. "Indians Mad As Orientals Receive Parts." *The San Bernardino County Sun*. March 15, 1934. Newspapers.com.

———. "Indians on Warpath Because Arabs, Negroes Cast as Redmen." *Albuquerque Journal*. March 14, 1934. Newspapers.com.

———. "Jim Thorpe Is Now a Laborer at $4 Per Day." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. March 3, 1931, sec. c. Newspapers.com.

———. "Movie 'Indians' Often Mexicans." *The Hutchinson News*. March 14, 1934. Newspapers.com.

———. “Navajos Expel ‘Jimmy’ Walker From Tribe; Indians Demand Film Redskins Be Real.” *The New York Times*. March 15, 1934. ProQuest.

———. “Other Races Crowding American Indians Off Screen; Protest Heard.” *The Galveston Daily News*. March 15, 1934. Newspapers.com.

———. “Ugh, Ugh (Indian Phooey) Given: Honorary Navajoes [sic] Lose Feathers by Tribal Edict.” *Abilene Reporter-News*. March 15, 1934. Newspapers.com.

Atkinson, Sarah. *Beyond the Screen: Emerging Cinema and Engaging Audiences*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2014.

Barefoot, Guy. “Who Watched That Mask Man? Hollywood’s Serial Audiences in the 1930s.” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 31, no. 2 (June 2011): 167–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/01439685.2011.572604.

Bergman, Andrew. *We’re in the Money: Depression America and Its Films*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc., 1971.

Bloom, Jon. “Sports and the Politics of Identity and Memory: The Case of Federal Indian Boarding Schools During the 1930s.” *Ethnic Studies Review* 21 (1998): 51.

Bordwell, David. *On the History of Film Style*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Bordwell, David, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson. *The Classical Hollywood Style: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

“Buffalo Ranch Wild West With ML Main Circus.” *Shamokin Daily News*. May 26, 1933. Newspapers.com.

Buford, Kate. *Native American Son: The Life and Sporting Legend of Jim Thorpe*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

Buscombe, Edward. “The Western.” In *The Oxford History of World Cinema*, edited by Geoffrey Noel Smith, 286–94. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Cameron, Kate. “Vivid Action-Movie at the Paramount.” *New York Daily News*, February 8, 1940.

Cary, Diana Serra. *The Hollywood Posse: The Story of a Gallant Band of Horsemen Who Made Movie History*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.

Caughey, Bernard W. “Chief John Big Tree: A Much Copied Indian.” *Bennington Banner*. September 28, 1965. Newspapers.com.

Cavell, Stanley. *The World Viewed*. Enlarged Edition. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1979.

"Chicagoans Throng to 'NWMP' Premiere." *Boxoffice*, November 2, 1940. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

"Chief Thundercloud Indian Aviator, Dies of Glider Injuries." *Journal and Courier*. April 12, 1039, sec. 1. Newspapers.com.

Clark, Danae. *Negotiating Hollywood: The Cultural Politics of Actors' Labor*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

Collin, Edwin. *My Life at Corriganville Movie Ranch: From Crash Corrigan to Charles Manson*. CP Books, 2017.

Cooney, Terry A. *Balancing Acts: American Thought and Culture in the 1930s*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995.

Corrigan, Timothy, and Patricia White. *The Film Experience*. Fourth. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.

Crafton, Donald. "The Jazz Singer's Reception in the Media and at the Box Office." In *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*, edited by David Bordwell and Noel Carroll, 460–80. Wisconsin Studies in Film. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.

Crane, Helen R. "A Place in the Sun." *The Los Angeles Times*. March 30, 1930. Newspapers.com.

———. "Youth Flames from the Tepee." *Salt Lake Telegram*. June 15, 1930. Newspapers.com.

Crumley, Dan. "Indian, In Bed for 5 Years Receives TV Set From Club." *The Lawton Constitution*. April 5, 1956. Newspapers.com.

Cutter, Walter A. "Psychology of the Theater." In *Moviegoing in America*, edited by Gregory A. Waller. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.

Daly, Phil M. "Along the Rialto." *The Film Daily*, November 28, 1939.

De Luce, Dan. "Lone Redskin on Warpath in Movie Capital Against Paleface Writers." *The San Bernardino County Sun*. March 7, 1939. Newspapers.com.

Debo, Angie. *A History of the Indians of the United States*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970.

"Decorate Capitol for Premiere." *Boxoffice*, October 5, 1940. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

Deloria, Philip J. *Indians in Unexpected Places*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

———. *Playing Indian*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.

Denning, Michael. *The Cultural Front*. New York: Verso, 1998.

Durham, Jimmie. "Geronimo!" In *Partial Recall: Photographs of Native North Americans*, edited by Lucy R. Lippard, 55–58. New York: The New Press, 1992.

Dyer, Richard. *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*. Second. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Earlovich, Mary Beth. "Motion Picture Advertising: Industrial and Social Forces and Effects, 1930-1948." Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1984.

"Famous Indian Athlete Becomes Mutual Player." *The Sunday Telegram*. January 9, 1916. Newspapers.com.

Fanon, Franz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, 1952.

———. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1963.

Faris, James C. "The Gaze of Western Humanism." In *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*, edited by Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk, 77–91. Blackwell Readers in Anthropology. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.

Fenelon, James V., and Trafzer, Clifford E. "From Colonialism to Denial of California Genocide to Misrepresentations." *American Behavioral Scientist* 58, no. 1 (2014): 3–29. https://doi.org/10.1.177/0002764213495045.

Fidler, Jimmy. "Jimmy Fidler in Hollywood." *Nevada State Journal*. April 6, 1939, sec. Keeping Up With the World. Newspapers.com.

Fields, Alison. "Circuits of Spectacle: The Miller Brothers' 101 Ranch Real Wild West." *American Indian Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 443–65.

"First Leading Man." *Harrisburg Telegraph*. March 25, 1938. Newspapers.com.

Fischer, David Hackett. *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1970.

Fiske, Shirley J. "Urban Indian Institutions: A Reappraisal from Los Angeles." *Urban Anthropology* 8, no. 2 (Summer 1979): 149–71. https://doi.org/139.78.24.113.

"Gaunt Variety Scarce." *The Baltimore Sun*. May 17, 1936. Newspapers.com.

"Geronimo, Carrying Rifle, Reaches City." *Arizona Republic*. November 24, 1939, Third edition. Newspapers.com.

"'Geronimo' to Preem in Indian Territory." *Variety*, November 22, 1939. Media History Digital Library.

Gerstle, Gary. *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Ginsburg, Faye. "Mediating Cultures: Indigenous Media, Ethnographic Film, and the Production of Identity." In *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*, edited by Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk, 210–35. Blackwell Readers in Anthropology. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.

Gomery, Douglas. "The Hollywood Studio System." In *The Oxford History of World Cinema*, edited by Geoffrey Noel Smith, 43–53. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

———. *The Hollywood Studio System: A History*. London: The British Film Institute, 2005.

"Governors, Movie Stars, Indians Join in 'Geronimo' Premiere." *Arizona Republic*. November 25, 1939, Morning edition. newspapers.com.

Gunning, Tom. "Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, and Early Cinema." In *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*, edited by Leo Charney and Vanessa L Schwartz. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.

Guynn, William. *Writing History in Film*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Hackett, Walt. "Indian Movies Joke -Chief Thundercloud." *Lansing State Journal*. October 26, 1947. Newspapers.com.

———. "Notes From Around the Studio Lots." *Lansing State Journal*. October 26, 1947, sec. 2.

Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation." In *Film and Theory: An Introduction*, edited by Robert Stam and Toby Miller, 704–14. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000.

Hansen, Miriam. *Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Hansen, Miriam. *Cinema and Experience*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012.

Harrison, Paul. "Harrison in Hollywood." *The Monitor*. April 14, 1939. Newspapers.com.

Hazlett, William. “Student Identification Card,” 1890. RG 75, Series 1329, box 1. Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

Hazlett, William. “William Hazlett Student File,” 1895. RG 75, Series 1327, box 135, folder 5288. Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

Hearne, Joanna. *Native Recognition: Indigenous Cinema and the Western*. Horizons of Cinema. New York: SUNY Press, 2012.

Hemmington, Ryllis. “Push Group Singing Is Wesco Tip.” *Motion Picture News*, November 22, 1930. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

“Hiawatha Scheduled.” *The Los Angeles Times*. September 23, 1944, sec. Part 1. Newspapers.com.

Higashi, Sumiko. *Cecil B. DeMille and American Culture: The Silent Era*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994.

Hochman, Brian. *Savage Preservation: The Ethnographic Origins of Modern Media Technology*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

“Hollywood Indians Go to School to Learn Tepee Lore.” *The Los Angeles Times*. March 2, 1941. Newspapers.com.

Huhndorf, Shari M. *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

“Indian Chief Christens Plane.” *Nevada State Journal*. August 11, 1936. Newspapers.com.

“Indian Pageant Observes Special Santa Ana Night.” *Santa Ana Register*. August 20, 1927. Newspapers.com.

“Indian Program Chosen.” *The Los Angeles Times*. November 10, 1020. Newspapers.com.

“Indian Singer Pleases With Native Songs.” *The Los Angeles Times*. August 10, 1927, Evening edition. Newspapers.com.

“Indian Will Lead Willkies Oregonians.” *The Los Angeles Times*. September 19, 1940, sec. 1. Newspapers.com.

“Indians Guests of Lions.” *The Los Angeles Times*. January 3, 1925. Newspapers.com.

“Indians Hold Weird Rites.” *The Los Angeles Times*. December 26, 1932, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

"Indians Plan Village for 'Geronimo' Show." *Arizona Republic*. November 23, 1939, first edition. Newspapers.com.

"Indians Seek Better Chance." *Lubbock Morning Avalanche*. March 15, 194AD. Newspapers.com.

"International Club Plays Host to Famed Indian Group at Colorful Meeting." *The Los Angeles Times*. August 20, 1933, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

Jacobson, Brian R. "Fantastic Functionality: Studio Architecture and the Visual Rhetoric of Early Hollywood." *Film History* 26, no. 2 (2014): 52–81.

Jenkins, Henry. "'In My Weekend-Only World...': Reconsidering Fandom." In *Film and Theory: An Introduction*, edited by Robert Stam and Toby Miller, 791–99. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000.

John, Isaac Johnny. "Isaac Johnny John Student File," n.d. RG 75, Series 1327, Box 33, Folder 1607. Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

"Johnny Is Learning Indian Sign Code." *Lansing State Journal*. March 27, 1938, Main edition, sec. 16. Newspapers.com.

Johnson, Erskine. "Behind the Make-Up." *The Times*. April 27, 1939, sec. Editorial Page. Newspapers.com.

Kemp, Phillip. "Cecil B. DeMille." In *The Oxford History of World Cinema*, edited by Geoffrey Noel Smith, 34–35. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn. *Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1999.

King, Barry. "Stardom as Occupation." In *The Hollywood Film Industry*, edited by Paul Kerr, 154–84. British Film Institute Readers in Film Studies. London: Routledge, 1986.

"Kitshi Manido Will Open This Evening Before Laguna Residents." *Santa Ana Register*. August 12, 1927. Newspapers.com.

Leuthold, Steven. *Indigenous Aesthetics: Native Art, Media, and Identity*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1998.

Lobo, Susan. "Is Urban a Person or a Place? Characteristics of Urban Indian Country." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 22, no. 4 (1998): 89–102.

"Local Briefs." *Santa Ana Register*. November 24, 1930. Newspapers.com.

Louvish, Simon. *Cecil B. DeMille: A Life in Art*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2007.

Maltby, Richard. *Hollywood Cinema*. Second Edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.

Marinescu, Paul. "Hermeneutical Crisis as Rethinking the Humanities: The Question of the Trace--Traces of the Past, Cortical Traces." *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 75, no. 2 (2014): 142–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/21692327.2014.958182.

Martin, Winifred. "Woman's Club News, Citizenship Head Puts on the Gloves." *San Bernardino Daily Sun*, July 18, 1933. Newspapers.com.

Marubbio, M. Elise. *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009.

May, Larry. *Screening Out the Past: The Birth of Mass Culture and the Motion Picture Industry*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

May, Larry. *The Big Tomorrow*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Maynard, Richard A. *The American West on Film: Myth and Reality*. Hayden Book, 1974.

McClean, Adrienne L. *Being Rita Hayworth: Labor, Identity, and Hollywood Stardom*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

McElvaine, Robert S. *The Great Depression: America, 1929-1941*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1993.

"McLarnin's Chief Obstacle." *The Los Angeles Times*. May 22, 1933. Newspapers.com.

McLean, Adrienne L. *Being Rita Haywoth: Labor, Identity, and Hollywood Stardom*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

McNenly, Linda Scarangella. *Native Performers in Wild West Shows: From Buffalo Bill to Euro Disney*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012.

"Mexicans Play Indians in Movies, Indians Rent Them Costumes." *Democrat and Chronicle*. July 31, 1942. Newspapers.com.

Miller, Mark Stuart. "Promoting Movies in the Late 1930s: Pressbooks at Warner Bros." Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1994. University Microfilms International (Order Number 9428613).

Miner, H. Craig. *The Corporation and the Indian: Tribal Sovereignty and Industrial Civilization in Indian Territory, 1865-1907*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 19 76.

"Modern Methods." *Oakland Tribune*. January 22, 1933, sec. b. Newspapers.com.

Moses, L.G. *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

"Movie Indians In Defense." *The Decatur Daily Review*. August 2, 1942. Newspapers.com.

"Nephew of Geronimo Gets Hot Springs Publicity." *The Motion Picture Herald*, January 27, 1940, sec. Wired Reports on Late Dates. Lantern.

Neuman, Linda K. *Indian Play: Indigenous Identities at Bacone College*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2013.

"Newspaper Ads Still Lead, Says Gillham." *Showmen's Trade Review*, January 27, 1945. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

"Noted Stars to Attend 'Geronimo' Premiere." *Arizona Republic*. November 22, 1939, Morning edition. Newspapers.com.

"Pageant Given At Inglewood." *The Los Angeles Times*. August 5, 1933, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

"Paramount Calls out Indians for 'Geronimo'; MGM Pre-Dates 'Wind.'" *Motion Picture Herald*, November 25, 1939. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

Paramount Pictures. "Geronimo Pressbook," 1939. Paramount Pictures Press Sheets Aug 1, 1939 to July 31, 1940. Margaret Harrick Library, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

———. "North West Mounted Police Pressbook," 41 1940. Paramount Press Sheets Aug 1 1940 to Aug 31 1941. Margaret Harrick Library, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

Peacock, Bruce. "Hectic Premiere Days Now Regina History." *Boxoffice*, October 26, 1940. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

Pearson, Roberta E. "Indianism? Classical Hollywood's Representation of Native Americans." In *Classic Hollywood Classic Whiteness*, edited by Daniel Bernardi, 245–62. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

"Pictorial Section of Exhibitor's Herald." *The Exhibitor's Herald*, December 17, 1927. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

Powdermaker, Hortense. "Hollywood and the USA." In *The Anthropology of Media: A Reader*, edited by Kelly Askew and Richard R. Wilk, 161–71. Blackwell Readers in Anthropology. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.

"Pulitzer Prize Winners By Year." Accessed December 30, 2017. http://www.pulitzer.org/prize-winners-by-year/1944.

Quigley Publishing Co. "FLASH! From the Box Office." *Motion Picture Daily*. New York: Quigley Publications, March 1940. Lantern. http://lantern.mediahist.org/catalog/motionpicturedai47unse_0269.

Raheja, Michelle H. "Reading Nanook's Smile." In *Native Americans on Film: Conversations, Teaching, and Theory*, edited by M. Elise Marrubio and Eric L. Buffalohead. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 2013.

———. *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representations of Native Americans in Film*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.

Rainey, Buck. *Serial Film Stars: A Biographical Dictionary, 1912-1956*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013.

Ramirez, Renya Katarine. "Healing Through Grief: Urban Indians Reimagining Culture and Community in San Jose, California." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 22, no. 4 (1998): 305–33. https://doi.org/139.78.24.68.

Ramirez, Renya Katarine. *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in Silicon Valley and Beyond*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

Red, Khan, ed. "John Del Valle." *The 1951-52 Motion Picture Almanac*. New York: Quigley Publications, 1952.

Romero, Ramon. "White Bird--Hollywood's Indian Casting Director." *The New Movie Magazine*, November 1934. Lantern.Mediahist.org.

Rony, Fatimah Tobing. *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996.

Rosenthal, Nicolas G. *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration & Identity in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012.

Ross, Stephen J. "How Hollywood Became Hollywood: Money, Politics, and Movies." In *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, edited by Tom Sitton and William Deverell, 255–76. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001.

———. *Working-Class Hollywood: Silent Film and the Shaping of Class in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Rubinfield, Mark. “The Mythical Jim Thorpe: Re/Presenting the Twentieth Century American Indian.” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 23, no. 2 (2006): 167–89. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523360500478224.

Sagala, Sandra K. *Buffalo Bill on the Silver Screen: The Films of William F. Cody*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013.

Schatz, Thomas. *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Segrave, Kerry. *Extras of Early Hollywood: A History of the Crowd 1918-1945*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013.

Shaffer, George. “Indians Want Only Indians in Redskin Roles.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. March 16, 1934. Newspapers.com.

Shiel, Mark. *Hollywood Cinema and the Real Los Angeles*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2012.

Shippey, Lee. “Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. November 7, 1929. Newspapers.com.

———. “Lee Side o’ L.A.” *The Los Angeles Times*. June 14, 1939, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

Shippey, Lee. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. August 3, 1929. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. November 7, 1929. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. March 27, 1930. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. April 2, 1932. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. May 21, 1932. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. June 21, 1932. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. January 21, 1933. Newspapers.com.

———. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. November 25, 1933. Newspapers.com.

Shippey, Lee. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 1934. Newspapers.com.

Shippey, Lee. “The Lee Side O’ LA.” *The Los Angeles Times*. June 14, 1939, sec. Part 2. Newspapers.com.

Shively, JoEllen. “Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films Among American Indians and Anglos.” In *Film and Theory: An Introduction*, edited by Robert Stam and Toby Miller, 345–60. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000.

“Shopping along Hollywood Boulevard: Style Center of the World.” *Los Angeles Times*. June 27, 1929, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

“Shopping Along Hollywood Boulevard: The Style Center of the World.” *The Los Angeles Times*. June 20, 1929, sec. 1. Newspapers.com.

Singer, Beverly R. *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Sklar, Robert. *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies*. Revised and Updated. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

Smith, Andrew Brodie. *Shooting Cowboys and Indians: Silent Western Films, American Culture, and the Birth of Hollywood*. Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press, 2003.

Smith, Paul Chaat. *Everything You Know About Indians Is Wrong*. Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Spivak, Gayatari Chakravorty. “Can the Subaltern Speak.” In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by C Nelson and L Grossberg, 271–313. New York: MacMillan, 1988.

“Stafford Plans Geronimo Day.” *Arizona Republic*. November 24, 1939. Newspapers.com.

Staiger, Janet. “Announcing Wares, Winning Patrons, Voicing Ideals: Thinking About the History and Theory of Film Advertising.” *Cinema Journal* 29, no. 3 (Spring 1990): 3–31.

Staiger, Janet. “The Future of the Past.” *Cinema Journal* 44, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 126–30.

Stam, Robert. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000.

Stam, Robert, and Ella Sohat. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. Sightlines. New York: Routledge, 1994.

“Star to Print Feet.” *The Los Angeles Times*. August 1, 1927. Newspapers.com.

“State-Wide Participation Is Arranged for ‘Geronimo.’” *Arizona Republic*. November 21, 1939, First edition, sec. 1. Newspapers.com.

Sterling, Bryan B., and Frances N. Sterling. *Will Rogers in Hollywood: An Illustrated Career of America’s Favorite Humorist*. New York: Crown Publishers, INC., 1984.

"Sunbathing Indian." *The Los Angeles Times*. April 13, 1939, Morning edition, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

Swanton, John R. *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995.

Taylor, Graham D. *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1980.

*The Film Daily (Oct-Dec 1939)*. Wid's Films and Film Folk, Inc., 1939. http://archive.org/details/filmdail76wids.

Theatre Patrons, Inc. "Geronimo." *The Movies...and the People Who Make Them*, 1940. http://lantern.mediahist.org/catalog/moviespeoplewhom00thea_0_0227.

"Thomas Consults Indians Here on Tribal Problems." *The Los Angeles Times*. August 15, 1936. Newspapers.com.

"Thunder Cloud's Geronimo Role a Real Natural""." *Cumberland Evening Times*. January 13, 1940, sec. Theaters. Newspapers.com.

"Thundercloud Dies." *The Chicago Tribune*. December 1, 1967, sec. 2. Newspapers.com.

Tildesley, Alice L. "Lo, the Poor Indian Has Gone Hollywood." *The Honolulu Advertiser*. August 9, 1936. Newspapers.com.

"Tribes Join in Indian Picnic." *The Los Angeles Times*. October 26, 1925. Newspapers.com.

Tuska, Jon. *The Filming of the West*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.

"Ugh!" *Oakland Tribune*. June 11, 1939. Newspapers.com.

"Valley Pioneers to See Geronimo." *Arizona Daily Star*. November 26, 1939. Newspapers.com.

Vasey, Ruth. *The World According to Hollywood: 1918-1939*. Wisconsin Studies in Film. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997.

Wallace, Karen. "The Redskin and the Paleface." In *Classic Hollywood Classic Whiteness*, edited by Daniel Bernardi, 111–38. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

Wallis, Michael. *The Real Wild West: The 101 Ranch and the Creation of the American West*. Macmillan, 2000.

"War Paint Club Members Honor Heroes of War." *The Los Angeles Times*. November 14, 2926. Newspapers.com.

Ware, Amy M. *The Cherokee Kid: Will Rogers, Tribal Identity, and the Making of an American Icon*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015.

Werner, Wade. "Real Indians Still Scarce in Hollywood." *Oakland Tribune*. September 30, 1927, Evening edition. Newspapers.com.

"West Ebell to Give Program Next Tuesday." *The Los Angeles Times*. March 4, 1928. Newspapers.com.

"Where the North Begins Presbook," n.d. Janus Barfoed collection. Margaret Harrick Library, Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

Wid's Films and Film Folk, Inc. "Casting Agencies." *The Film Daily Yearbook*, 1928. Media History Digital Library.

Wight, Mrs. W.A. "Reports from the North and South." *The Motion Picture Herald*, March 2, 1940. Lantern.

"Wigwam Club Has Pow-Wow." *The Los Angeles Times*. September 30, 1929. Newspapers.com.

World Wide Features Services. "All But Pushed Out of Hollywood, Now." *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. August 5, 1942. Newspapers.com.

———. "Movie Indians Vanishing. Some Take War Plant Jobs." *The Times*. July 31, 1942. Newspapers.com.

VITA

Jacob Thomas Floyd

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

DISSERTATION: DEMILLE INDIANS: THE NATIVE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD

Major Field: English (Screen Studies)

Education:

2011-2018 Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
**Ph.D. in English (Screen Studies)** May 2018

2008-2010 New York University, New York, NY
**Masters of Arts in Cinema Studies** May 2010
**Masters Certificate in Culture and Media Studies** May 2010

2001-2002 Brigham Young University, Provo UT
2004-2008 **Bachelor of Arts in Media Arts Studies** April 2008

Teaching Experience:

**Instructor, Oklahoma State University**

- Introduction to Film and TV (ENG 2435), Spring 2015, Spring 2017
- Freshman Composition 2 (Online course) Spring 2017
- Freshman Composition 2 (ENG 1213) Spring 2012-2014, Fall 2016,
- Freshman Composition 1 (ENG 1113), Fall 2012- Spring 2015

**Arts Aloud Prison Theater Writing Program**, Fall 2015- Spring 2016
**Graduate Teaching Assistant**, Intro. To Film and Video, Fall 2013.
**Research Assistant,** Fall 2013- Spring 2014, Spring 2016
**Writing Center Consultant, OSU Writing Center, Fall 2011 - Spring 2012**
**Teaching Assistant, Media-Arts Department, BYU, Spring 2006 - Spring 2008**