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Lagwa Chapter 4

4
Red Eyes

To understand the making of Anglo-America is impossible without close and sustained attention to its indigenous predecessors, allies, and nemeses.

—*James Axtell*[1]

The invaders also anticipated, correctly, that other Europeans would question the morality of their enterprise. They therefore [prepared] . . . quantities of propaganda to overpower their own countrymen's scruples. The propaganda gradually took standard form as an ideology with conventional assumptions and semantics. We live with it still.

—*Francis Jennings*[2]

Memory says, "I did that." Pride replies, "I could not have done that." Eventually, memory yields.

—*Friedrich Nietzsche*[3]

There is not one Indian in the whol who does not cringe in anguish and of these textbooks. There is not one I not come home in shame and tears.

HISTORICALLY, American Indians hav subset of our population. That's why Mich ing about Native Americans, "One does but from minus ten."[5] High school stude of their textbooks, which unapologeticall through white eyes. Today's textbooks sho what historians call Indian history (thou flowered in the last twenty years, and th textbooks might be based currently rests o

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There is not one Indian in the whole of this country who does not cringe in anguish and frustration because of these textbooks. There is not one Indian child who has not come home in shame and tears.

—Rupert Costo[4]

HISTORICALLY, American Indians have been the most lied-about subset of our population. That's why Michael Dorris said that, in learning about Native Americans, "One does not start from point zero, but from minus ten."[5] High school students start below zero because of their textbooks, which unapologetically present Native Americans through white eyes. Today's textbooks should do better, especially since what historians call Indian history (though really it is interracial) has flowered in the last twenty years, and the information on which new textbooks might be based currently rests on library shelves.

There has been some improvement in textbooks' treatment of Native peoples in recent years. In 1961 the best-selling *Rise of the American Nation* contained ten illustrations featuring Native people, alone or with whites (of 268 illustrations); most of these pictures focused on the themes of primitive life and savage warfare. Twenty-five years later, the retitled *Triumph of the American Nation* contained fifteen illustrations of Indians; more important, no longer were Native Americans depicted as one-dimensional primitives. Rather, they were people who participated in struggles to preserve their identities and their land. Included were Metacomet (King Philip), Crispus Attucks (first casualty of the Revolution, who was also part black in ancestry), Sequoyah (who invented the Cherokee alphabet), and Navajo code-talkers in World War II.

Nevertheless, the authors of American history textbooks "need a crash course in cultural relativism and ethnic sensitivity," according to James Axtell, who criticized textbooks in 1987 for still using such terms as *half-breed, massacre,* and *war-whooping.*[6] Reserving milder terms such as *frontier initiative* and *settlers* for whites is equally biased. Even worse are the authors' overall interpretations, which continue to be shackled by the "conventional assumptions and semantics" that have "explained" Indian-white relations for centuries. Textbook authors still write history to comfort descendants of the "settlers."

Our journey into the history of Indian peoples and their relations with European and African invaders cannot be a happy excursion. Native

Americans are not and must not be props in a sort of theme park of the past, where we go to have a good time and see exotic cultures. "What we have done to the peoples who were living in North America" is, according to anthropologist Sol Tax, "our Original Sin."[7] If we look Indian history squarely in the eye, we are going to get red eyes. This is our past, however, and we must acknowledge it. It is time for textbooks to send white children home, if not with red eyes, at least with thought-provoking questions.

Today's textbooks at least try to be accurate about Indian culture. All but two of the twelve textbooks I surveyed begin by devoting more than five pages to pre-contact Native societies.[8] And to their credit most of the textbooks recognize diversity among Native societies. They tell about the League of Five Nations among the Iroquois in the Northeast, potlatches among the Northwestern coastal Indians, cliff dwellings in the Southwest, and caste divisions among the Natchez in the Southeast. In the process of presenting ten or twenty different cultures in six or eight pages, however, the textbooks can hardly reach a high level of sophistication. So they seize upon the unusual. No matter that the Choctaws were more numerous and played a much larger role in American history than the Natchez—they were also more ordinary. Students will not find among the Native Americans portrayed in their history textbooks many "regular folks" with whom they might identify.

American Indian societies pose a special problem for textbooks.[9] The authors of history textbooks are consumers, not practitioners, of archaeology, ethnobotany, linguistics, physical anthropology, folklore studies, cultural anthropology, ethnohistory, and other related disciplines. Scholars in these fields can tell us much, albeit tentatively, about what happened in the Americas before Europeans and Africans arrived. Unfortunately, the authors of history textbooks treat archaeology et al. as dead disciplines to be mined for answers. These fields study dead people, to be sure, but they are alive with controversy. Only *The American Adventure* admits uncertainty: "This page may be out of date by the time it is read." *Adventure* goes on to present claims that humans have been in the Americas for 12,000, 21,000, and 40,000 years. As a result, although *Adventure* is one of the oldest of the twelve textbooks, its pre-Columbian pages have not gone out of date.[10]

Most other textbooks retain their usual authoritative tone. On the matter of the first human settlement of the Americas, estimates vary from 12,000 years before the present to more than 70,000 B.P.[11] Some scientists believe that the original settlers came in successive waves over thousands of years; genetic similarities convince others that most Natives descended from a single small band.[12] Th choose one position or the other and presen textbook says something like this, from *A* level of the oceans dropped sharply, exposin and North America." Actually, while most crossing, actual evidence is slim, so we car accidental or purposeful.[13] Even if the firs they were just as surely explorers as Colun picture them as primitives, vaguely Neande

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descended from a single small band.[12] The majority of the textbooks choose one position or the other and present it as undisputed fact. Every textbook says something like this, from *American History:* "The water level of the oceans dropped sharply, exposing a land bridge between Asia and North America." Actually, while most scholars accept a "Beringia" crossing, actual evidence is slim, so we cannot rule out boat crossings, accidental or purposeful.[13] Even if the first Americans arrived on foot, they were just as surely explorers as Columbus. Nonetheless, textbooks picture them as primitives, vaguely Neanderthalian.

This archetype of the primitive savage, not very bright, enmeshed in wars with nature and other humans, drives some of the certainties that textbooks impose on the ancient past. *American History* tells of "the wanderers" who "moved slowly southward and to the east. . . . Many thousand years passed before they had spread over all of North and South America." Actually, a significant number of archaeologists believe that people reached most parts of the Americas within a thousand years, too rapidly to allow easy archaeological determination of the direction and timing of their migration. "They did not know that they were exploring a new continent," *American History* goes on, offering no evidence upon which to infer these early Americans' alleged ignorance. The depiction of mental torpor persists as *American History* continues: "None of the groups made much progress in developing simple machines or substituting mechanical or even animal power for their own muscle power." In Europe and Asia, most pre-1492 machines depended on horses, oxen, water buffalo, mules, or cattle—beasts that were unknown in the Americas, after all.

American History then generalizes: "Those who planted seeds and cultivated the land instead of merely hunting and gathering food were more secure and comfortable." Apparently the author has not encountered the "affluent primitive" theory, which persuaded anthropology some twenty-five years ago that gatherer-hunters lived quite comfortably. *American History* completes the evolutionary stereotype: "These agricultural people were mostly peaceful, though they could fight fiercely to protect their fields. The hunters and wanderers, on the other hand, were quite warlike because their need to move about brought them frequently into conflict with other groups." Here the author betrays the influence of the old savage-to-barbaric-to-civilized school dating back to L. H. Morgan and Karl Marx in the last century. The authors of history textbooks may well have encountered such thinking in anthropology courses when they were undergraduates; it is no longer taught today, however. Decades ago, most anthropologists challenged the outmoded

continuum, determining that hunters and gatherers were relatively peaceful, compared to agriculturalists, and that modern societies were more warlike still. Thus violence increases with civilization.

Today's textbooks do confer civilization on some Natives. Like the Spanish conquistadors themselves, *The American Adventure* equates wealth and civilization: "Unlike the noncivilized peoples of the Caribbean, the Aztec were rich and prosperous." Textbooks invariably put the civilization far away, in Mexico, Guatemala, or Peru. By comparison, "Indian life in North America was less advanced," says *The American Pageant.* It seems that, despite good intentions, textbooks cannot resist contrasting "primitive" Americans with modern Europeans. Part of the problem is that the books are really comparing rural America to urban Europe—Massachusetts to London. Comparing Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City) to rural Scotland might produce a very different impression, for when Cortez arrived, Tenochtitlan was a city of 100,000 to 300,000 whose central market was so busy and noisy "that it could be heard more than four miles away," according to Bernal Diaz, who accompanied him.[14] Moreover, from the perspective of the average inhabitant, life may have been equally as "advanced" and pleasant in Massachusetts or Scotland as in Aztec Mexico or London.

For a long time Native Americans have been rebuking textbook authors for reserving the adjective *civilized* for European cultures. In 1927 an organization of Native leaders called the Grand Council Fire of American Indians criticized textbooks as "unjust to the life of our people." They went on to ask, "What is civilization? Its marks are a noble religion and philosophy, original arts, stirring music, rich story and legend. We had these. Then we were not savages, but a civilized race."[15] Even an appreciative treatment of Native cultures reinforces ethnocentrism so long as it does not challenge the primitive-to-civilized continuum. This continuum inevitably conflates the meaning of *civilized* in everyday conversation—"refined or enlightened"—with "having a complex division of labor," the only definition that anthropologists defend. When we consider the continuum carefully, it immediately becomes problematic. Was the Third Reich civilized, for instance? Most anthropologists would answer yes. In what ways do we prefer the civilized Third Reich to the more primitive Arawak nation that Columbus encountered? If we refuse to label the Third Reich civilized, are we not using the term to imply a certain comity? If so, we must consider the Arawaks civilized, and we must also consider Columbus and his Spaniards primitive if not savage. Ironically, societies characterized by a complex division of labor are often marked by inequality and capable of supporting large specialized armies. Precisely these "civilized" societies are likely to resort to savage violence i "primitive" societies.[16]

Thoughtless use of the "otherizing" t blocks any real inquiry into the world-v "uncivilized" person or society. In 199(Iraq's invasion of Kuwait with the words, against Iraq"—an irony, in that Iraq's T the earliest known seat of civilization.

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Thoughtless use of the "otherizing" terms *civilized* and *civilization* blocks any real inquiry into the world-view or social structure of the "uncivilized" person or society. In 1990 President Bush condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait with the words, "The entire civilized world is against Iraq"—an irony, in that Iraq's Tigris and Euphrates valleys are the earliest known seat of civilization.

After contact with Europeans and Africans, Indian societies changed rapidly. Native Americans took into their cultures not only guns, blankets, and kettles, but also new foods, ways of building houses, and ideas from Christianity. Most American history textbooks tell about the changes in only one group, the Plains Indians. Eight of the twelve textbooks I surveyed mention the rapid efflorescence of this colorful culture after the Spaniards introduced the horse to the American West. It is an exhilarating example of syncretism—blending elements of two different cultures to create something new.[17]

The transformation in the Plains cultures, however, was only the tip of the cultural-change iceberg. An even more profound metamorphosis occurred as Europeans linked Native peoples to the developing world economy. Yet textbooks make no mention of this process, despite the fact that it continues to affect formerly independent cultures in the last half of our century. In the early 1970s, for example, Lapps in Norway replaced their sled dogs with snowmobiles, only to find themselves vulnerable to Arab oil embargoes.[18] The process seems inevitable, hence perhaps is neither to be praised nor decried—but it should not be ignored, because it is crucial to understanding how Europeans took over America.

In Atlantic North America, members of Indian nations possessed a variety of sophisticated skills, from the ability to weave watertight baskets to an understanding of how certain plants can be used to reduce pain. At first, Native Americans traded corn, beaver, fish, sassafras, and other goods with the French, Dutch, and British, in return for axes, blankets, cloth, beads, and kettles. Soon, however, Europeans persuaded Natives to specialize in the fur and slave trades. Native Americans were better hunters and trappers than Europeans, and with the guns the Europeans sold them, they became better still. Other Native skills began to atrophy. Why spend hours making a watertight basket when in one-tenth the time you could trap enough beavers to trade for a kettle? Even agriculture, which the Native Americans had shown to the Europeans, declined, because it became easier to trade for food than to grow it. Everyone acted in rational self-interest in joining such a system—that

is, Native Americans were not mere victims—because everyone's standard of living improved, at least in theory.

Some of the rapid changes in eastern Indian societies exemplify syncretism. When the Iroquois combined European guns and Native American tactics to smash the Hurons, they controlled their own culture and chose which elements of European culture to incorporate, which to modify, which to ignore. Native Americans learned how to repair guns, cast bullets, build stronger forts, and fight to annihilate.[19] Native Americans also became well known as linguists, often speaking two European languages (French, English, Dutch, or Spanish) and at least two Indian languages. British colonists sometimes used Natives as interpreters when dealing with the Spanish or French, not just with other Native American nations. [20]

These developments were not all matters of happy economics and voluntary syncretic cultural transformation, however. Natives were operating under a military and cultural threat, and they knew it. They quickly deduced that European guns were more efficient than their bows and arrows. Europeans soon realized that trade goods could be used to win and maintain political alliances with Indian nations. To deal with the new threat and because whites "demanded institutions reflective of their own with which to relate," many Native groups strengthened their tribal governments.[21] Chiefs acquired power they had never had before. These governments often ruled unprecedentedly broad areas, because the heightened warfare and the plagues had wiped out smaller tribes or caused them to merge with larger ones for protection. Large nations became ethnic melting pots, taking in whites and blacks as well as other Indians. New confederations and nations developed, such as the Creeks, Seminoles, and Lumbees.[22] The tribes also became more male-dominated, in imitation of Europeans or because of the expanded importance of war skills in their cultures.[23]

Tribes that were closest to the Europeans got guns first, guns that could be trained on interior peoples who had not yet acquired any. Suddenly some nations had a great military advantage over others. The result was an escalation of Indian warfare. Native nations had engaged in conflict before Europeans came, of course. Tribes rarely fought to the finish, however. Some tribes did not want to take over the lands belonging to other nations, partly because each had its own sacred sites. For a nation to exterminate its neighbors was difficult anyway, since all enjoyed the same level of military technology. Now all this changed. European powers deliberately increased Indian warfare by playing one nation off against another. The Spanish, for example, used a divide-and-conquer strategy to defeat the Aztecs in Mexico. In Scotland and Ireland, the English had played tribes against one an
Now they did the same in North America.[24]

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For many tribes the motive for the increased combat was the enslavement of other Indians to sell to the Europeans for more guns and kettles. As northern tribes specialized in fur, certain southern tribes specialized in people. Some Native Americans had enslaved each other long before Europeans arrived. Now Europeans vastly expanded Indian slavery. Colonists in South Carolina paid nearby Indian nations in guns, ammunition, and other goods, which enabled them to enslave interior nations as far west as Arkansas.[25]

I had expected to find in our textbooks the cliché that Native Americans did not make good slaves, but only two books, *Triumph of the American Nation* and *The American Tradition,* say even that. *The American Pageant* contains a paragraph that at least states the basics—"Indian slaves were among the colony's earliest exports"—even if it gives no hint of the trade's extent. *American History* buries a sentence, "A few Indians were enslaved," in its discussion of the African slave trade. Otherwise, the twelve textbooks are silent on the subject of the Native American slave trade.[26]

The Europeans' enslavement of Native Americans has a long history. Textbooks used in elementary schools tell that Ponce de Leon went to Florida to seek the mythical fountain of youth; they do not say that his main business was to capture slaves for Hispaniola.[27] In New England,

Ran away from his Master Nathanael Holbrook
of Sherburn, on Wednesday the 19th of Sept last, an Indian Lad of about 18 Years of Age, named John Pittarne; He is pretty well sett and of a guilty Countenance and has short Hair; He had on a grey Coat with Pewter Buttons, Leather Breeches, an old tow Shirt, grey Stockings, good Shoes, and a Felt Hat.

Whoever shall take up the said Servant, and convey him to his Master in Sherburn, shall have Forty Shillings Reward and all necessary Charges paid. We hear the said Servant intended to change his Name and his Clothes.

Like African slaves, Indian slaves escaped when they could. This notice comes from the Boston Weekly News-Letter *for October 4, 1739.*

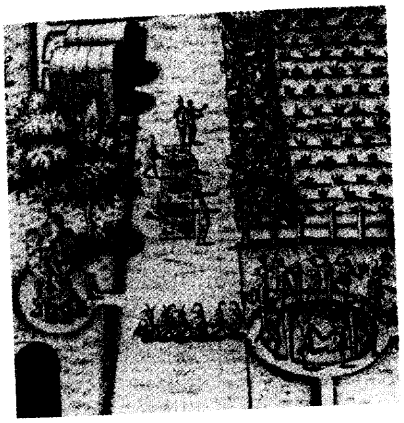
Indian slavery led directly to African slavery: the first blacks imported there, in 1638, were brought from the West Indies to be exchanged for Native Americans from Connecticut.[28] On the eve of the New York City slave rebellion of 1712, in which Native and African slaves united, about one resident in four was enslaved and one slave in four was Indian. A 1730 census of South Kingston, Rhode Island, showed 935 whites, 333 African slaves, and 223 Native American slaves.[29]

The center of Native American slavery, like African American slavery, was South Carolina. Its population in 1708 included 3,960 free whites, 4,100 African slaves, 1,400 Indian slaves, and 120 indentured servants, presumably white. These numbers do not reflect the magnitude of Native slavery, however, because they omit the export trade. From Carolina, as from New England, colonists sent Indian slaves (who might escape) to the West Indies (where they could never escape), in exchange for black slaves. Charleston shipped more than 10,000 Natives in chains to the West Indies in one year![30] Further west, so many Pawnee Indians were sold to whites that *Pawnee* became the name applied in the plains to all slaves, whether they were of Indian or African origin.[31] On the West Coast, Pierson Reading, a manager of John Sutter's huge grant of Indian land in central California, extolled the easy life he led in 1844: "The Indians of California make as obedient and humble slaves as the Negro in the south." In the Southwest, whites enslaved Navajos and Apaches right up to the middle of the Civil War.[32]

Intensified warfare and the slave trade rendered stable settlements no longer safe, helping to deagriculturize Native Americans. To avoid being targets for capture, Indians abandoned their cornfields and their villages and began to live in smaller settlements from which they could more easily escape to the woods. Ultimately, they had to trade with Europeans even for food.[33] As Europeans learned from Natives what to grow and how to grow it, they became less dependent upon Indians and Indian technology, while Indians became more dependent upon Europeans and European technology.[34] Thus what worked for the Native Americans in the short run worked against them in the long. In the long run, it was Indians who were enslaved, Indians who died, Indian technology that was lost, Indian cultures that fell apart. By the time the pitiful remnant of the Massachuset tribe converted to Christianity and joined the Puritans' "praying Indian towns," they did so in response to an invading culture that told them their religion was wrong and Christianity was right. This process exemplifies what anthropologists call cultural imperialism. Even the proud Plains Indians, whose syncretic culture combined horses and guns from the Spanish with Native art, religion, and hunting

Figure It Out

Study the two drawings below. Both were made after the year 1500, but one shows how Indians lived before 1500 and one shows Indian life after 1500! Which shows Indian life before Europeans arrived and which shows Indian life after? What evidence tells you the date?



The textbook Life and Liberty *is distinguished by i in Native societies. It confronts students with this and asks, "Which shows Indian life before Euro Indian life after? What evidence tells you the dat students understand that Europeans did not "civi Indians, but had the opposite impact.*

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To be anthropologically literate about c be familiar with the terms *syncretism* and the concepts they denote. None of the tw term, and most of them explain nothi change, again except for the Plains Ind consequence, comes across as unique. process of incorporation into the global e worked to deskill Native Americans, mo warfare, and only *The American Pageant* Native American slave trade.

Just as American societies changed wh European societies changed when they completely miss this side of the mutual tion process. Instead, their view of whi

ın slavery: the first blacks imported
the West Indies to be exchanged for
t.[28] On the eve of the New York City
ıtive and African slaves united, about
ınd one slave in four was Indian. A
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lavery, like African American slavery,
ı in 1708 included 3,960 free whites,
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do not reflect the magnitude of Na-
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ıore than 10,000 Natives in chains to
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ıanager of John Sutter's huge grant of
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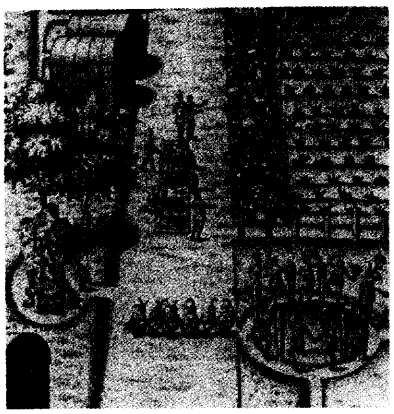
dians, whose syncretic culture combined
sh with Native art, religion, and hunting

Figure It Out

Study the two drawings below. Both were made after the year 1500, but one shows how Indians lived before 1500 and one shows Indian life after 1500. Which shows Indian life before Europeans arrived and which shows Indian life after? What evidence tells you the date?



The textbook Life and Liberty *is distinguished by its graphic presentation of change in Native societies. It confronts students with this provocative pair of illustrations and asks, "Which shows Indian life before Europeans arrived and which shows Indian life after? What evidence tells you the date?" Thus* Life and Liberty *helps students understand that Europeans did not "civilize" or "settle" "roaming" Indians, but had the opposite impact.*

styles, showed the effects of cultural imperialism: the Sioux word for white man, *wasichu,* meant "one who has everything good."[35]

To be anthropologically literate about culture contact, students should be familiar with the terms *syncretism* and *cultural imperialism,* or at least the concepts they denote. None of the twelve textbooks mentions either term, and most of them explain nothing of the process of cultural change, again except for the Plains Indian horse culture, which, as a consequence, comes across as unique. Not one textbook tells of the process of incorporation into the global economy, none tells how contact worked to deskill Native Americans, most don't tell of increased Indian warfare, and only *The American Pageant* even hints at the extent of the Native American slave trade.

Just as American societies changed when they encountered whites, so European societies changed when they encountered Natives. Textbooks completely miss this side of the mutual accommodation and acculturation process. Instead, their view of white-Indian relations is dominated

by the archetype of the frontier line. Textbooks present the process as a moving line of white (and black) settlement—Indians on one side, whites (and blacks) on the other. Pocahontas and Squanto aside, the Natives and Europeans don't meet much in textbook history, except as whites remove Indians further west. In reality, whites and Native Americans worked together, sometimes lived together, and quarreled with each other for scores and even hundreds of years. For 325 years, after all, from the first permanent Spanish settlement in 1565 to the end of Sioux and Apache autonomy around 1890, independent Native and European nations coexisted in what is now the United States.

The term *frontier* hardly does justice to this process, for it implies a line or boundary. Contact, not separation, was the rule. *Frontier* also locates the observer somewhere in the urban East, from which the frontier is "out there." Textbook authors seem not to have encountered the trick question, "Which came first, civilization or the wilderness?" The answer is civilization, for only the "civilized" mind could define the world of Native farmers, fishers, and gatherers and hunters, coexisting with forests, crops, and animals, as a "wilderness." Calling the area beyond secure European control "frontier" or "wilderness" makes it subtly alien. Such a viewpoint is intrinsically Eurocentric and marginalizes the actions of nonurban people, both Native and non-Native.[36]

The band of interaction was amazingly multicultural. In 1635 "sixteen different languages could be heard among the settlers in New Amsterdam," languages from North America, Africa, and Europe.[37] In 1794, when the zone of contact had reached the eastern Midwest, a single northern Ohio town, "the Glaize," was made up of hundreds of Shawnee, Miami, and Delaware Indians, British and French traders and artisans, several Nanticokes, Cherokees, and Iroquois, a few African American and white American captives, and whites who had married into or been adopted by Indian families. The Glaize was truly multicultural in its holidays, observing Mardi Gras, St. Patrick's Day, the birthday of the British queen, and Indian celebrations.[38] In 1835, when the contact area was near the West Coast, John Sutter, with permission of the Mexican authorities, recruited Native Americans to raise his wheat crop, operate a distillery, a hat factory, and a blanket company, and build a fort (now Sacramento). Procuring uniforms from Russian traders and officers from Europe, Sutter organized a 200-man Indian army, clothed in tsarist uniforms and commanded in German![39]

Our history textbooks still obliterate the interracial, multicultural nature of frontier life. *American History* devotes almost a page to Sutter's Fort without ever hinting that Native Americans were anything other than enemies: "Gradually he built a fortified town, which he called *Sutter's Fort.* The entire place was surrounde(
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Indians."

The historian Gary Nash tells us that inte
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The historian Gary Nash tells us that interculturation took place from the start in Virginia, "facilitated by the fact that some Indians lived among the English as day laborers, while a number of settlers fled to Indian villages rather than endure the rigors of life among the autocratic English."[40] Indeed, many white and black newcomers chose to live an Indian lifestyle. In his *Letters from an American Farmer,* Michel Guillaume Jean de Crévecoeur wrote, "There must be in the Indians' social bond something singularly captivating, and far superior to be boasted of among us; for thousands of Europeans are Indians, and we have no examples of even one of those Aborigines having from choice become Europeans."[41] Crévecoeur overstated his case: as we know from Squanto's example, some Natives chose to live among whites from the beginning. The migration was mostly the other way, however. As Benjamin Franklin put it, "No European who has tasted Savage Life can afterwards bear to live in our societies."[42]

Europeans were always trying to stop the outflow. Hernando De Soto had to post guards to keep his men and women from defecting to Native societies. The Pilgrims so feared Indianization that they made it a crime for men to wear long hair. "People who did run away to the Indians might expect very extreme punishments, even up to the death penalty," if caught by whites.[43] Nonetheless, right up to the end of independent Indian nationhood in 1890, whites continued to defect, and whites who lived an Indian lifestyle, such as Daniel Boone, became cultural heroes in white society.

Communist Eastern Europe erected an Iron Curtain to stop its outflow but could never explain why, if Communist societies were the most progressive on earth, they had to prevent people from defecting. American colonial embarrassment similarly went straight to the heart of their ideology, also an ideology of progress. Textbooks in Eastern Europe and the United States have handled the problem in the same way: by omitting the facts. Not one American history textbook mentions the attraction of Native societies to European Americans and African Americans.

African Americans frequently fled to Indian societies to escape bondage. What did whites find so alluring? According to Benjamin Franklin, "All their government is by Counsel of the Sages. There is no Force; there are no Prisons, no officers to compel Obedience, or inflict Punishment." Probably foremost, the lack of hierarchy in the Native societies in the eastern United States attracted the admiration of European ob-

servers.[44] Frontiersmen were taken with the extent to which Native Americans enjoyed freedom as individuals. Women were also accorded more status and power in most Native societies than in white societies of the time, which white women noted with envy in captivity narratives. Although leadership was substantially hereditary in some nations, most Indian societies north of Mexico were much more democratic than Spain, France, or even England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. "There is not a Man in the Ministry of the Five Nations, who has gain'd his Office, otherwise than by Merit," waxed Lt. Gov. Cadwallader Colden of New York in 1727. "Their Authority is only the Esteem of the People, and ceases the Moment that Esteem is lost." Colden applied to the Iroquois terms redolent of "the natural rights of mankind": "Here we see the natural Origin of all Power and Authority among a free People."[45]

Indeed, Native American ideas may be partly responsible for our

After Col. Henry Bouquet defeated the Ohio Indians at Bushy Run in 1763, he demanded the release of all white captives. Most of them, especially the children, had to be "bound hand and foot" and forcibly returned to white society. Meanwhile the Native prisoners "went back to their defeated relations with great signs of joy," in the words of the anthropologist Frederick Turner (in Beyond Geography, *245). Turner rightly calls these scenes "infamous and embarrassing."*

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democratic institutions. We have seen how Native ideas of liberty, fraternity, and equality found their way to Europe to influence social philosophers such as Thomas More, Locke, Montaigne, Montesquieu, and Rousseau. These European thinkers then influenced Americans such as Franklin, Jefferson, and Madison.[46] In recent years historians have debated whether Indian ideas may also have influenced our democracy more directly. Through 150 years of colonial contact, the Iroquois League stood before the colonies as an object lesson in how to govern a large domain democratically. The terms used by Lt. Gov. Colden find an echo in our Declaration of Independence fifty years later.

In the 1740s the Iroquois wearied of dealing with several often bickering English colonies and suggested that the colonies form a union similar to the league. In 1754 Benjamin Franklin, who had spent much time among the Iroquois observing their deliberations, pleaded with colonial leaders to consider the Albany Plan of Union: "It would be a strange thing if six nations of ignorant savages should be capable of forming a scheme for such a union and be able to execute it in such a manner as that it has subsisted ages and appears insoluble; and yet that a like union should be impracticable for ten or a dozen English colonies."[47]

The colonies rejected the plan. But it was a forerunner of the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution. Both the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention referred openly to Iroquois ideas and imagery. In 1775 Congress formulated a speech to the Iroquois, signed by John Hancock, that quoted Iroquois advice from 1744. "The Six Nations are a wise people," Congress wrote, "let us harken to their council and teach our children to follow it."[48]

John Mohawk has argued that American Indians are directly or indirectly responsible for the public-meeting tradition, free speech, democ-

***A**s a symbol of the new United States, Americans chose the eagle clutching a bundle of arrows. They knew that both the eagle and the arrows were symbols of the Iroquois League. Although one arrow is easily broken, no one can break six (or thirteen) at once.*

racy, and "all those things which got attached to the Bill of Rights." Without the Native example, "do you really believe that all those ideas would have found birth among a people who had spent a millennium butchering other people because of intolerance of questions of religion?"[49] Mohawk may have overstated the case for Native democracy, since heredity played a major role in office-holding in many Indian societies. His case is strengthened, however, by the fact that wherever Europeans went in the Americas, they projected monarchs ("King Philip") or other undemocratic leaders onto Native societies. To some degree, this projecting was done out of European self-interest, so they could claim to have purchased tribal land as a result of dealing with one person or faction. The practice also betrayed habitual European thought: Europeans could not believe that nations did *not* have such rulers, since that was the only form of government they knew.

For a hundred years after our Revolution, Americans credited Native Americans as a source of their democratic institutions. Revolutionary-era cartoonists used images of Indians to represent the colonies against Britain. Virginia's patriot rifle companies wore Indian clothes and moccasins as they fought the redcoats. When colonists took action to oppose unjust authority, as in the Boston Tea Party or the anti-rent protests against Dutch plantations in the Hudson River valley during the 1840s, they chose to dress as Indians, not to blame Indians for the demonstrations but to appropriate a symbol identified with liberty.[50]

Of course, Dutch traditions influenced Plymouth as well as New York. So did British common law and the Magna Carta. American democracy seems to be another example of syncretism, combining ideas from Europe and Native America. The degree of Native influence is hard to specify, since that influence came through several sources. Textbooks might present it as a soft hypothesis rather than hard fact. But they should not leave it out. In the twelve textbooks I surveyed, discussion of any intellectual influence of Native Americans on European Americans was limited to *Discovering American History,* which pictures a wampum belt paired with Benjamin Franklin's famous cartoon of a divided, hence dying snake. "Franklin's Albany Plan might have been inspired by the Iroquois League," captions *Discovering.* "The wampum belt expresses the unity of tribes achieved through the League. Compare it with Franklin's cartoon." The other eleven books are silent.

But, then, the books leave out most contributions of Native Americans to the modern world. I had expected to find at least such noncontroversial items as food, words, and place names. After all, our regional cuisines—the dishes that make American food distinctive—often combine Indian with European and African elements. Examples range from New England pork and beans to New Orl
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New England pork and beans to New Orleans gumbo to Texas chili.[51] Mutual acculturation between Native and African Americans—due to shared experience in slavery as well as escapes by blacks to Native communities—accounts for soul food being part Indian, from cornbread and grits to greens and hush puppies.[52] Historians have known for centuries that Indians of the Americas domesticated more than half of the food crops now grown around the world. Native place names dot our landscape, from Okefenokee to Alaska. Even nineteenth-century racists relished names like *Mississippi,* meaning "Great River." From *hurricane* to *skunk* to (probably) *OK,* Indian words have been incorporated into English.[53] Notwithstanding all this, only *Land of Promise* and *Triumph of the American Nation* discuss Indian foods, only *Triumph* mentions Indian names, and none of the twelve books deals with Indian words.

Transmitting food and names, mundane though it may seem, involves ideas. Native farming methods were not "primitive." Indian farmers in some tribes drew two or three times as much nourishment from the soil as we do.[54] Place names, too, show intellectual interchange. Whites had to be asking Indians, "Where am I?" "What is this place called?" "What is that animal?" "What is the name of that mountain?" Although textbooks "appreciate" Native cultures, the possibility of real interculturation, especially in matters of the intellect, is foreign to them. This is a shame, for authors thereby ignore much of what has made America distinctive from Europe. In a travel narrative, Peter Kalm wrote in 1750, "The French, English, Germans, Dutch, and other Europeans, who have lived for several years in distant provinces, near and among the Indians, grow so like them in their behavior and thought that they can only be distinguished by the difference of their color."[55] In the famous essay, "The Frontier in American History," Frederick Jackson Turner told how the frontier masters the European, "strips off the garments of civilization," and requires him to be an Indian in thought as well as dress. "Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and plowing with a sharp stick." Gradually he builds something new, "but the outcome is not the old Europe." It is syncretic; it is American.[56]

Acknowledging how aboriginal we are culturally—how the United States and Europe, too, have been influenced by Native American as well as European ideas—would require significant textbook rewriting. If we recognized American Indians as important intellectual antecedents of our political structure, we would have to acknowledge that acculturation has been a *two*-way street, and we might have to reassess the assumption of primitive Indian culture that legitimates the entire conquest.[57] In 1970 the Indian Historian Press produced a critique of our

In the nineteenth century Americans knew of Native American contributions to medicine. Sixty percent of all medicines patented in the century were distributed bearing Indian images, including Kickapoo Indian Cough Cure, Kickapoo Indian Sagwa, and Kickapoo Indian Oil. In this century America has repressed the image of Indian as healer.

histories, *Textbooks and the American Indian.* One of the press's yardsticks for evaluating books was the question, "Does the textbook describe the religions, philosophies, and contributions to thought of the American Indian?"[58] A quarter-century later the answer must still be no.

Consider how textbooks treat Native religions as a unitary whole. *The American Way* describes Native American religion in these words:

These Native Americans [in the Southeast] believed that nature was filled with spirits. Each form of life, such as plants and animals, had a spirit. Earth and air held spirits too. People were never alone. They shared their lives with the spirits of nature.

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Way is trying to show respect for Native American religion, but it doesn't work. Stated flatly like this, the beliefs seem like make-believe, not the sophisticated theology of a higher civilization. Let us try a similarly succinct summary of the beliefs of many Christians today.

These Americans believed that one great male god ruled the world. Sometimes they divided him into three parts, which they called father, son, and holy ghost. They ate crackers and wine or grape juice, believing that they were eating the son's body and drinking his blood. If they believed strongly enough, they would live on forever after they died.

Textbooks *never* describe Christianity this way. It's offensive. Believers would immediately argue that such a depiction fails to convey the symbolic meaning or the spiritual satisfaction of communion.

Textbooks could present American Indian religions from a perspective that takes them seriously as attractive and persuasive belief systems.[59] The anthropologist Frederick Turner has pointed out that when whites remark upon the fact that Indians perceive a spirit in every animal or rock, they are simultaneously admitting their own loss of a deep spiritual relationship with the earth. Native Americans are "part of the total living universe," wrote Turner; "spiritual health is to be had only by accepting this condition and by attempting to live in accordance with it." Turner contends that this life-view is healthier than European alternatives: "Ours is a shockingly dead view of creation. We ourselves are the only things in the universe to which we grant an authentic vitality, and because of this we are not fully alive."[60] Thus Turner shows that taking Native American religions seriously might require re-examination of the Judeo-Christian tradition. No textbook would suggest such a controversial idea.

Similarly, textbooks give readers no clue as to what the zone of contact was like from the Native side. They emphasize Native Americans such as Squanto and Pocahontas, who sided with the invaders. And they invert the terms, picturing white aggressors as "settlers" and often showing Native settlers as aggressors. "The United States Department of Interior had tried to give each tribe both land and money," says *The American Way,* describing the U.S. policy of forcing tribes to cede most of their land and retreat to reservations. Whites were baffled by Native ingratitude at being "offered" this land, *Way* claims: "White Americans could not understand the Indians. To them, owning land was a dream come true." In reality, whites of the time were hardly baffled. Even Gen. Philip Sheridan—who is notorious for having said, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian"—understood. "We took away their country

and their means of support, and it was for this and against this they made war," he wrote. "Could anyone expect less?"[61] The textbooks have turned history upside down.

Let us try a right-side-up view. "After King Philip's War, there was continuous conflict at the edge of New England. In Vermont the settlers worried about savages scalping them." This description is accurate, provided the reader understands that the settlers were Native American, the scalpers white. Even the best of our American history books fail to show the climate of white actions within which Native Americans on the border of white control had to live. It was so bad, and Natives had so little recourse, that the Catawbas in North Carolina "fled in every direction" in 1786 when a solitary white man rode into their village unannounced. And the Catawbas were a friendly tribe![62]

From the opposite coast, here is a story that might help make such dispersal understandable: "An old white settler told his son who was writing about life on the Oregon frontier about an incident he recalled from the cowboys and Indians days. Some cowboys came upon Indian families without their men present. The cowboys gave pursuit, planning to rape the squaws, as was the custom. One woman, however, pushed sand into her vagina to thwart her pursuers."[63] The act of resistance is what made the incident memorable. Otherwise, it was entirely ordinary. Such ordinariness is what our textbooks leave out. They do not challenge our archetypal Laura Ingalls Wilder picture of peaceful white settlers suffering occasional attacks by brutal Indians. If they did, the fact that so many tribes resorted to war, even after 1815 when resistance was clearly doomed, would become understandable.

Our history is full of wars with Native American nations. But not our history textbooks. "For almost two hundred years," notes David Horowitz, "almost continuous warfare raged on the American continent, its conflict more threatening than any the nation was to face again." Indian warfare absorbed 80 percent of the entire federal budget during George Washington's administration and dogged his successors for a century as a major issue and expense. Yet most of our textbooks barely mention the topic. *The American Pageant* offers a table of "Total Costs and Number of Battle Deaths of Major U.S. Wars" that completely omits Indian wars! *Pageant* includes the Spanish-American War, according it a toll of 385 battle deaths, but leaves out the Ohio War of 1790–95, which cost 630 dead and missing U.S. troops in a single battle, the Battle of Wabash River.[64]

At least today's textbooks no longer blame the Natives for all the violence, as did most textbooks written before the civil rights movement. Historians used to say, "Civilized war is the kind *we* fight against *them*,

"Indian Massacre at Wilkes Barre" shows a m lithographs: Indians invading the sanctity of the whites were invading Indian lands and often In this, not the reality, remain the archetype.

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Like the legacy of slavery, the legacy Indeed, conquest ended more recently t fortunate institution by a quarter-centur in our histories; conquest still is not.[66] In Movement, unlike the civil rights move do not teach against the archetype of popular culture. On the contrary, textb any kind to Indian wars.

As a result, my college students stil ask them for five adjectives that apply "knowledge" about Native Americans, particularly from Western movies and n ons West" series by Dana Fuller Ross. Tl hundreds of thousands of copies, claim history have been faithfully followed." *Utah!,* etc.—the novels' covers warn th

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"Indian Massacre at Wilkes Barre" shows a motif common in nineteenth-century lithographs: Indians invading the sanctity of the white settlers' homes. Actually whites were invading Indian lands and often Indian homes, but pictures such as this, not the reality, remain the archetype.

whereas savage war is the atrocious kind that they fight against us."[65] Not one of the twelve history books I examined portrays Natives as savages. The authors are careful to admit brutality on both sides. Some of the books mention the massacres of defenseless Native Americans at Sand Creek and Wounded Knee.

Like the legacy of slavery, the legacy of conquest persists, however. Indeed, conquest ended more recently than slavery, outlasting that unfortunate institution by a quarter-century. Slavery is now taken seriously in our histories; conquest still is not.[66] In this sense, the American Indian Movement, unlike the civil rights movement, has failed. Our textbooks do not teach against the archetype of the savage Indian that pervades popular culture. On the contrary, textbooks give very little attention of any kind to Indian wars.

As a result, my college students still come up with *savage* when I ask them for five adjectives that apply to Indians. Like much of our "knowledge" about Native Americans, the "savage" stereotype comes particularly from Western movies and novels, such as the popular "Wagons West" series by Dana Fuller Ross. These paperbacks, which have sold hundreds of thousands of copies, claim boldly, "The general outlines of history have been faithfully followed." Titled with state names—*Idaho!, Utah!,* etc.—the novels' covers warn that "marauding Indian bands are

spreading murder and mayhem among terror-stricken settlers."[67] In the Hollywood Old West, wagon trains are invariably encircled by savage Indian hordes. In the real West, among 250,000 whites and blacks who journeyed across the Plains between 1840 and 1860, only 362 pioneers (and 426 Native Americans) died in all the recorded battles between the two groups. Much more commonly, Indians gave the new settlers directions, showed them water holes, sold them food and horses, bought cloth and guns, and served as guides and interpreters.[68] These activities are rarely depicted in movies, novels, or our textbooks. Inhaling the misinformation of the popular culture, students have no idea that Natives considered European warfare far more savage than their own.

New England's first Indian war, the Pequot War of 1636–37, provides a case study of the intensified warfare Europeans brought to America. Allied with the Narragansetts, traditional enemies of the Pequots, the colonists attacked at dawn. Surrounding the Pequot village, whose inhabitants were mostly women, children, and old men, the British set it on fire and shot those who tried to escape the flames. William Bradford described the scene: "It was a fearful sight to see them thus frying in the fire and the streams of blood quenching the same, and horrible was the stink and scent thereof; but the victory seemed a sweet sacrifice, and they gave praise thereof to God, who had wrought so wonderfully for them."[69] The slaughter shocked the Narragansetts, who had wanted merely to subjugate the Pequots, not exterminate them. The Narragansetts reproached the English for their style of warfare, crying, "It is naught, it is naught, because it is too furious, and slays too many men." In turn, Capt. John Underhill scoffed, saying that the Narragansett style of fighting was "more for pastime, than to conquer and subdue enemies." Underhill's analysis of the role of warfare in Narragansett society was correct, and might accurately be applied to other tribes as well. Through the centuries, whites frequently accused their Native allies of not fighting hard enough. The Puritans tried to erase the Pequots even from memory, passing a law making it a crime to say the word *Pequot.* Bradford concluded proudly, "The rest are scattered, and the Indians in all quarters are so terrified that they are afraid to give them sanctuary."[70] None of these quotations enters our textbooks, which devote an average of 1¼ sentences to this war.

Perhaps the most violent Indian war began in 1675, when white New Englanders executed three Wampanoag Indians and the Wampanoags attacked—King Philip's War. One reason for the end of peace was that the fur trade, which had linked Natives and Europeans economically,

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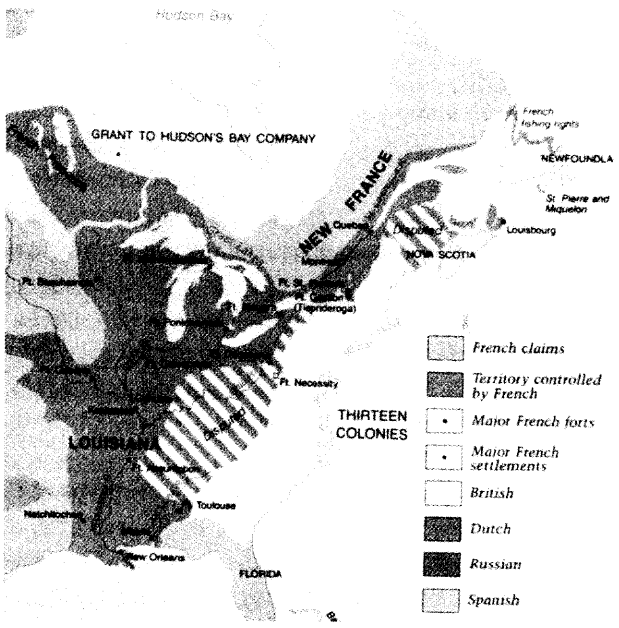
was winding down in Massachusetts.[71] Textbooks could present students with the Native side of this conflict by quoting the Wampanoag leader Metacomet, whom the English called King Philip:

> The English who first came to this country were but a handful of people, forlorn, poor, and distressed. My father was then sachem; he relieved their distresses in the most kind and hospitable manner. He gave them land to plant and build upon. They flourished and increased. By various means they got possessed of a great part of his territory. But he still remained their friend until he died. My elder brother became sachem—he was seized and confined and thereby thrown into illness and died. Soon after I became sachem they disarmed all my people. Their land was taken; but a small part of the dominion of my ancestors remains. I am determined not to live until I have no country.[72]

This was no minor war. "Of some 90 Puritan towns, 52 had been attacked and 12 destroyed. . . . At the end of the war several thousand English and perhaps twice as many Indians lay dead."[73] King Philip's War cost more American lives in combat, Anglo and Native, in absolute terms than the French and Indian War, the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, or the Spanish-American War. In proportion to population, casualties were greater than in any other American war.[74] Nonetheless, five of the twelve books I surveyed leave it out entirely. Most others give it half a paragraph.

War with the Indians started in Acoma, now New Mexico, in 1599, when a Spanish leader avenged the death of his brother by "enslaving most of the villagers and chopping off one foot of all males over 25 years of age."[75] It spread to the Southeast where, "because of fierce and implacable Indian resistance, the Spanish were unable to colonize Florida for over a hundred years."[76] Except for a few minor skirmishes, it ceased in 1890 with the massacre at Wounded Knee. Our histories can hardly describe each war, because there were so many. But precisely because there were so many, the way our textbooks minimize the Indian wars misrepresents our history.

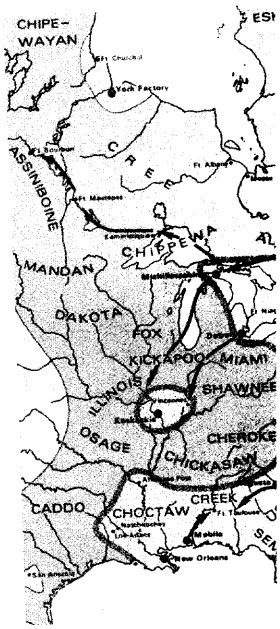
The textbooks also reduce the Indianness of some of our other wars. From 1600 to 1754 Europe was often at war, including three world wars —the War of the League of Augsburg (1689–97), known in the United States as King William's War; the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–13), known here as Queen Anne's War; and the War of the Austrian Succession (1744–48), known here as King George's War. In North America the major European powers, England, France, and Spain, buf-



Most textbook maps, like that above, show "French territory," "British territory," "Spanish territory," and sometimes "disputed territory," with no mention of Indians at all. In maps that include Indian nations, such as the map opposite from D. W. Meinig, The Shaping of America *[[New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986], 1: 209), the function of Indians as buffers between the colonial powers is graphically evident.*

fered from each other by Indian land, fought mainly through their Indian allies. Native Americans inadvertently provided a gift of relative peace to the colonies by absorbing the shock of combat themselves.

Another world war, the Seven Years War (1754–63), in the United States called the French and Indian War, was also fought in North America mostly by Native Americans on both sides. Native Americans not only fought in the American Revolution but were its first cause, for the Proclamation of 1763, which placated Native American nations by forbidding the colonies from making land grants beyond the Appalachian continental divide, enraged many colonists. They saw themselves as paying to support a British army that only obstructed them from seizing Indian lands on the western frontier. After hostilities with Britain broke out, however, the fledgling United Colonies in 1775 were initially more concerned about relations with Indian nations than with Europe, so they sent Benjamin Franklin first to the Iroquois, then to France.[77]



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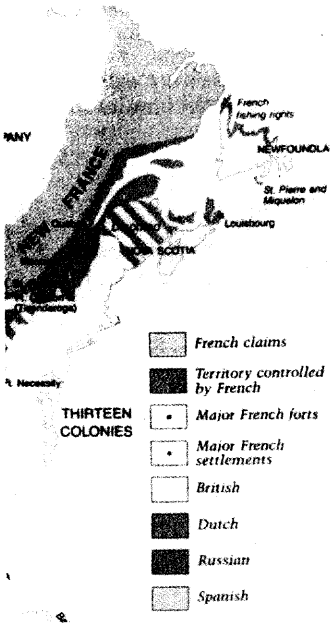

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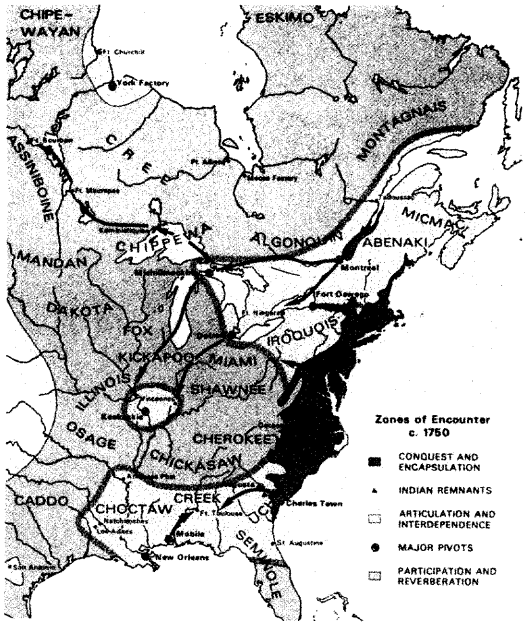

Native Americans also played a large role in the War of 1812 and participated as well in the Mexican War and the Civil War.[78] In each war Natives fought mostly against other Natives. In each, the larger number aligned against the colonies, later the United States, correctly perceiving that, for geopolitical reasons, opponents of the United States offered them better chances of being accorded human rights and retaining their land.

Even in describing the French and Indian War, textbooks leave out the Indians! One of the worst defeats Indians ever inflicted on white forces was the rout of General Braddock in 1755 in Pennsylvania. Braddock had 1,460 men, including eight Indian scouts and a detachment of Virginia militia under George Washington. Six hundred to one thousand Native Americans and 290 French soldiers opposed them, but you would never guess any Indians were there from *The American Tradition:*

On July 9, as they were approaching the fort, the French launched an ambush. Braddock's force was surrounded and defeated. The red-coated British soldiers, unaccustomed to fighting in the wilderness [*sic*], suffered over 900 casualties. Braddock, mortally wounded, murmured as he died, "We shall know better how to deal with them another time."

Tradition thus renders Braddock's last words meaningless, for "them" refers not to the French but to Native Americans.

This is one of many old lithographs that show Indians attacking Braddock, evidence that colonials were aware who defeated Braddock. Today's textbooks make the Native Americans invisible.

In our Revolution, most of the Iroquois Confederacy sided with the British and attacked white Americans in New York and northern Pennsylvania. In 1778 the United States suffered a major defeat when several hundred Tories and Senecas routed 400 militia and regulars at Forty Fort, Pennsylvania, killing 340. After the Revolution, although Britain surrendered, its Native American allies did not. Our insistence on treating the Indians as if we had defeated them led to the Ohio War of 1790–95, and later to the War of 1812.

The never-ending source of dispute was land. To explain this constant conflict, half of the textbooks I examined rely on the cliché that Native Americans held some premodern understanding of land ownership. When students are informed that the Dutch bought Manhattan for $24 worth of trade goods, presumably they are meant to smile indulgently. What a bargain! What foolish Indians, not to recognize the potential of the island! Not one book points out that the Dutch paid the *wrong tribe* for Manhattan. Doubtless the Canarsees, native to Brooklyn, were quite pleased with the deal. The Weckquaesgeeks, who lived on Manhattan and really owned the land, weren't so happy. For years afterward they warred sporadically with the Dutch.[79]

Europeans were forever paying the wrong tribe or paying a small faction within a much larger nation. Often they didn't really care; they merely sought justification for theft. Such f even have worked in their favor, for they faction against another. The biggest sing tribe took place in 1803. All the textbook the size of the United States by buying Lou points out that it was not France's land to French never consulted with the Native Native Americans never even *knew* of the really sell Louisiana for $15,000,000. Fran territory. The United States was still payir Louisiana throughout the nineteenth cer them for it: the *Army Almanac* lists more Louisiana Purchase from 1819 to 1890. T all our textbooks do, is Eurocentric. Equ textbooks use to show the Lewis and C Native Americans invisible, implying th vacant land from the French. Although th tion during the winter of 1804–05 and winter, even these tribes drop out. Appare on their own.

Some textbooks chide Natives for not sold their land, they transferred not only the rights to the property's game, fish, a regarded the land in the same way we reg *Promise.* Textbook authors seem unaware twentieth century, including sales amon the rights to farm, mine, and otherwise private land was considered public and a good conduct. Moreover, tribal negotia deeds and treaties specifically reserved h traveling rights to Native Americans.[80]

Six of the twelve histories I studied av about land ownership. Showing the influ Indian history, several of them even poi *whites'* not abiding by accepted concep textbook authors never develop this isc understanding of Indian wars. The mo of 1812, for example, was land—Span (Canada), but most of all Indian land. Vermont to the Georgia Piedmont, wh the boundaries of white settlement ever The British, on the other hand, wanted

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merely sought justification for theft. Such fraudulent transactions might even have worked in their favor, for they frequently set one tribe or faction against another. The biggest single purchase from the wrong tribe took place in 1803. All the textbooks tell how Jefferson "doubled the size of the United States by buying Louisiana from France." Not one points out that it was not France's land to sell—it was Indian land. The French never consulted with the Native owners before selling; most Native Americans never even *knew* of the sale. Indeed, France did not really sell Louisiana for $15,000,000. France merely sold *its claim* to the territory. The United States was still paying Native American tribes for Louisiana throughout the nineteenth century. We were also fighting them for it: the *Army Almanac* lists more than fifty Indian wars in the Louisiana Purchase from 1819 to 1890. To treat France as the seller, as all our textbooks do, is Eurocentric. Equally Eurocentric are the maps textbooks use to show the Lewis and Clark expedition. They make Native Americans invisible, implying that the United States bought vacant land from the French. Although the Mandans hosted the expedition during the winter of 1804–05 and the Clatsops did so the next winter, even these tribes drop out. Apparently Lewis and Clark did it all on their own.

Some textbooks chide Natives for not understanding that when they sold their land, they transferred not only the agricultural rights, but also the rights to the property's game, fish, and sheer enjoyment. "Indians regarded the land in the same way we regard the sea," to quote *Land of Promise.* Textbook authors seem unaware that most land sales before the twentieth century, including sales among whites, transferred primarily the rights to farm, mine, and otherwise develop the land. Undeveloped private land was considered public and accessible to all, within limits of good conduct. Moreover, tribal negotiators typically made sure that deeds and treaties specifically reserved hunting, fishing, gathering, and traveling rights to Native Americans.[80]

Six of the twelve histories I studied avoid this cliché of Indian naïveté about land ownership. Showing the influence of the new scholarship in Indian history, several of them even point out that the problem lay in *whites'* not abiding by accepted concepts of land ownership. But the textbook authors never develop this isolated admission into a general understanding of Indian wars. The most important cause of the War of 1812, for example, was land—Spanish land (Florida), British land (Canada), but most of all Indian land. All along the boundary, from Vermont to the Georgia Piedmont, white Americans wanted to "push the boundaries of white settlement ever farther into the Indian country." The British, on the other hand, wanted to "keep a sort of Indian buffer

state between the United States and Canada."[81] Only three textbooks inquire reasonably into the causes of this war.[82] The others simply repeat the pretext offered by the Madison administration—Britain's refusal to show proper respect to American ships and seamen—even though it makes no sense. After all, Britain's maritime laws had been in place since 1807 and caused no war until the frontier states sent War Hawks—senators and representatives who promised military action to expand the boundaries of the United States—to Congress in 1810. After going on for two pages about the alleged maritime reasons for the war, *The American Tradition* admits its puzzlement: "The West and the South, oddly enough, were the most anti-British regions of the nation even though they were the least affected by Britain's policies toward American shipping." *Land of Promise* is similarly perplexed: "Where, you must wonder, were the War Hawks of New England? After all, it was New England ships and sailors who bore the brunt of [Britain's] attacks."

Like its predecessors, the War of 1812 cannot be understood so long as its Indian origin is obscured. Whites along the frontier wanted the war, and along the frontier most of the war was fought, beginning in November 1811 with William Henry Harrison's attack on the Shawnees and allied tribes in Indiana, called the Battle of Tippecanoe. The United States fought five of the seven major land battles of the War of 1812 primarily against Native Americans. Nonetheless, unlike Canadian histories, none of our textbooks recognizes the involvement of Native Americans.[83]

All but two textbooks miss the key result of the war. Some authors actually cite the "Star-Spangled Banner" as the main outcome! Others claim that the war left "a feeling of pride as a nation" or "helped Americans to win European respect." *The American Adventure* excels, pointing out, "The American Indians were the only real losers in the war." *Triumph of the American Nation* expresses the same sentiments, but euphemistically: "After 1815 the American people began the exciting task of occupying the western lands." The other ten books simply ignore the key outcome: in return for our leaving Canada alone, Great Britain gave up its alliances with Indian nations in what would become the United States.

Without war materiel and other aid from European allies, future Indian wars were transformed from major international conflicts to domestic mopping-up operations. This result was central to the course of Indian-U.S. relations for the remainder of the century. Thus Indian wars after 1815, while they cost thousands of lives on both sides, would never again amount to a serious threat to the United States.[84] Although Native Americans won many battles in subsec the slightest doubt over who would win in th

Another result of the War of 1812 was the "A century of learning [from Native America A century and more of forgetting—of calli rationalize conquest—was beginning."[85] Aft longer play what sociologists call the role of portant other who must be taken into acco that Indians had ever been significant in our changed: until 1815 the word *Americans* had to Native Americans; after 1815 it meant Eu

Ironically, several textbooks that omit Kin tive American role in the War of 1812 foc Plains wars as Geronimo's Apache War of maybe forty Apache fighters.[87] The Plains w line of the textbooks, since they pitted w nomadic Indians. The Plains Indians are the M love to mourn: authors can lament their p inevitable, hence untroubling.

The textbooks also fail to mention how t have reverberated through our culture. Carl "our acquiescence in Indian dispossession character."[88] As soon as Natives were no lor image deteriorated in the minds of many wh shown how this process unfolded in Virgini the 1640s: "It was the ultimate powerlessne racial inferiority, which made it possible to rights."[89] Natives who had been "ingenious," of apprehension" in 1610 now became "s melancholy, [and] slovenly." This is another cognitive dissonance. Like Christopher Colu changed his attitudes toward Indians. Washi Native Americans early in his life, but after 1790 he would come to denounce the Ohio human except the shape."[90]

This process of rationalization became un the War of 1812. In 1845 William Gilmore ing prejudices . . . have been fostered as nec and unsparing hand with which we have sm habitations and expelled them from their co Walker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

Canada."[81] Only three textbooks his war.[82] The others simply repeat dministration—Britain's refusal to ıips and seamen—even though it ıritime laws had been in place since frontier states sent War Hawks— mised military action to expand the Congress in 1810. After going on ıaritime reasons for the war, *The* ement: "The West and the South, British regions of the nation even y Britain's policies toward American arly perplexed: "Where, you must ew England? After all, it was New the brunt of [Britain's] attacks." 1812 cannot be understood so long hites along the frontier wanted the f the war was fought, beginning in y Harrison's attack on the Shawnees ıe Battle of Tippecanoe. The United or land battles of the War of 1812 . Nonetheless, unlike Canadian his- ognizes the involvement of Native

key result of the war. Some authors nner" as the main outcome! Others ; of pride as a nation" or "helped ct." *The American Adventure* excels, ians were the only real losers in the *ation* expresses the same sentiments, e American people began the exciting ." The other ten books simply ignore leaving Canada alone, Great Britain nations in what would become the

ıer aid from European allies, future om major international conflicts to This result was central to the course mainder of the century. Thus Indian ıousands of lives on both sides, would ıreat to the United States.[84] Although Native Americans won many battles in subsequent wars, there was never the slightest doubt over who would win in the end.

Another result of the War of 1812 was the loss of part of our history. "A century of learning [from Native Americans] was coming to a close. A century and more of forgetting—of calling history into service to rationalize conquest—was beginning."[85] After 1815 Indians could no longer play what sociologists call the role of conflict partner—an important other who must be taken into account—so Americans forgot that Indians had ever been significant in our history. Even terminology changed: until 1815 the word *Americans* had generally been used to refer to Native Americans; after 1815 it meant European Americans.[86]

Ironically, several textbooks that omit King Philip's War and the Native American role in the War of 1812 focus instead on such minor Plains wars as Geronimo's Apache War of 1885–86, which involved maybe forty Apache fighters.[87] The Plains wars fit the post-1815 story line of the textbooks, since they pitted white settlers against seminomadic Indians. The Plains Indians are the Native Americans textbooks love to mourn: authors can lament their passing while considering it inevitable, hence untroubling.

The textbooks also fail to mention how the continuous Indian wars have reverberated through our culture. Carleton Beals has written that "our acquiescence in Indian dispossession has molded the American character."[88] As soon as Natives were no longer conflict partners, their image deteriorated in the minds of many whites. Karen Kupperman has shown how this process unfolded in Virginia after the Indian defeat in the 1640s: "It was the ultimate powerlessness of the Indians, not their racial inferiority, which made it possible to see them as people without rights."[89] Natives who had been "ingenious," "industrious," and "quick of apprehension" in 1610 now became "sloathfull and idle, vitious, melancholy, [and] slovenly." This is another example of the process of cognitive dissonance. Like Christopher Columbus, George Washington changed his attitudes toward Indians. Washington held positive views of Native Americans early in his life, but after unleashing the Ohio War in 1790 he would come to denounce the Ohio Indians as "having nothing human except the shape."[90]

This process of rationalization became unofficial national policy after the War of 1812. In 1845 William Gilmore Simms wrote, "Our blinding prejudices . . . have been fostered as necessary to justify the reckless and unsparing hand with which we have smitten [the Indians] in their habitations and expelled them from their country." In 1871 Francis A. Walker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, considered Indians *beneath*

morality: "When dealing with savage men, as with savage beasts, no question of national honor can arise." Whatever action the United States cared to take "is solely a question of expediency."[91] Thus cognitive dissonance destroyed our national idealism. From 1815 on, instead of spreading democracy, we exported the ideology of white supremacy. Gradually we sought American hegemony over Mexico, the Philippines, much of the Caribbean basin, and, indirectly, over other nations. Although European nations professed to be shocked by our actions on the western frontier, before long they were emulating us. Britain exterminated the Tasmanian aborigines; Germany pursued total war against the Herrero of Namibia. Most western nations have to face this history. We also have to admit that Adolf Hitler displayed more knowledge of how we treated Native Americans than American high schoolers who rely on their textbooks. Hitler admired our concentration camps for Indians in the west "and often praised to his inner circle the efficiency of America's extermination—by starvation and uneven combat" as the model for his extermination of Jews and Gypsies.[92]

Were there alternatives to this history of war? Of course, there were. Indeed, France, Russia, and Spain all pursued different alternatives in the Americas. Since the alternatives to war remain roads largely not taken in the United States, however, they are tricky topics for historians. As Edward Carr noted, "History is, by and large, a record of what people did, not of what they failed to do."[93] On the other hand, making the present seem inevitable robs history of all its life and much of its meaning. History is contingent upon the actions of people. "The duty of the historian," Gordon Craig has reminded us, "is to restore to the past the options it once had." Craig also pointed out that this is an appropriate way to teach history and to make it memorable.[94] White Americans chose among real alternatives and were often divided among themselves. At various points in our history, our anti-Indian policies might have gone another way. For example, one reason the War of 1812 was so unpopular in New England was that New Englanders saw it as a naked attempt by slaveowners to appropriate Indian land.

Peaceful coexistence of whites and Native Americans presents itself as perhaps the most obvious alternative to war, but was it really possible? In thinking about this question, we must take care not to compare a static Indian culture to changing modern culture. We have seen the rapid changes in independent Native cultures—adaptation to an economy based on hunting and trapping, the flowering of multilingualism, development of more formal hierarchies. Such changes would no doubt have continued. Thus we are not talking about bow-and-arrow hunters living side by side with computerized urbanites.

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We should keep in mind that the thousands of white and black Americans who joined Indian societies must have believed that coexistence was possible. From the start, however, white conduct hindered peaceful coexistence. A thousand little encroachments eventually made it impossible for Indians to farm near whites. Around Plymouth, the Indians leased their grazing land but retained their planting grounds. Too late they found that this did not keep colonists from letting their livestock roam free to ruin the crops. When Native Americans protested, they usually found that colonial courts excluded their testimony. On the other hand, "the Indian who dared to kill an Englishman's marauding animals was promptly hauled into a hostile court."[95] The precedent established on the Atlantic coast—that Indians were not citizens of the Europeans' state and lacked legal rights—prevented peaceful white-Indian coexistence throughout the colonies and later the United States. Even in Indian Territory, supposedly under Native control, whether Indians were charged with offenses on white land or whites on Indian land, trial had to be held in a white court in Missouri, miles away.[96]

Since many whites had a material interest in dispossessing Indians of their land, and since European and African populations grew ever larger while plagues continued to reduce the Indian population, plainly the United States was going to rule. In this sense war only prolonged the inevitable. Another alternative to war would have been an express commitment to racial harmony: a predominantly European but nonracist United States that did not differentiate between Indians and non-Indians. U.S. history provides several examples of relatively nonracist enclaves. Sociologists call them triracial isolates because their heritage is white, black, and red, as it were. For centuries, these communities occupied swamps and other undesirable lands, wanting mostly to be left alone. The Revolutionary War hero Crispus Attucks was a member of such an enclave: an escaped slave of Wampanoag, European, and African ancestry. The Lumbee Indians in North Carolina comprise the largest such group. Other triracial isolates include the Wampanoags in Massachusetts, the Seminoles in Florida, and smaller bands from Louisiana to Maine.[97]

The first British settlement in North America, Roanoke Island in 1585, probably did not die out but was absorbed into the nearby Croatoan Indians, "thereby achieving a harmonious biracial society that always eluded colonial planters." Eventually the English and Croatoans may have become part of the Lumbees. The British never learned the outcome of the "Lost Colony," however. Frederick Turner has suggested that they did not want to think about the possibility that British settlers had survived by merging with Native Americans. Instead, in the words

of J. F. Fausz, "tales of the 'Lost Colony' came to epitomize the treacherous nature of hostile Indians and served as the mythopoeic 'bloody shirt' for justifying aggressions against the Powhatan years later." Triracial isolates have generally won only contempt from their white neighbors, which is why they have chosen rural isolation. Our textbooks isolate them, too: none mentions the term or the peoples.[98]

A related possibility for Natives, Europeans, and Africans was intermarriage. Alliance through marriage is a common way for two societies to deal with each other, and Indians in the United States repeatedly suggested such a policy.[99] Spanish men married Native women in California and New Mexico and converted them to Spanish ways. French fur traders married Native women in Canada and Illinois and converted to Native ways. Not the British. Textbooks might usefully pass on to students the old cliché—the French penetrated Indian societies, the Spanish acculturated them, and the British expelled them—for it offers a largely accurate summary of European-Indian relationships.[100] In New England and Virginia, English colonists quickly moved to forbid interracial marriage.[101] Pocahontas stands as the first and almost the last Native to be accepted into British-American society, which we may therefore call "white society," through marriage. After her, most interracial couples found greater acceptance in Native society. There their children often became chiefs, because their bicultural background was an asset in the complex world the tribes now had to navigate.[102] In Anglo society "half-breeds" were not valued but stigmatized.

Another alternative to war was the creation of an Indian state within the United States. In 1778, when the Delaware Indians proposed that Native Americans be admitted to the union as a separate state, Congress refused even to consider the idea.[103] In the 1840s Indian Territory sought the right enjoyed by other territories to send representatives to Congress, but white Southerners stopped them.[104] The Confederacy won the backing of most Native Americans in Indian Territory, however, by promising to admit the territory as a state if the South won the Civil War. After the war Native Americans proposed the same arrangement to the United States. Again the United States said no, but eventually admitted Indian Territory as the white-dominated state of Oklahoma—ironically, the name means "[land for] red people" in Choctaw.

Our textbooks pay no attention to any of these possibilities. Instead, they dwell on another road not taken: total one-way acculturation to white society. The overall story line in contemporary American history textbooks about American Indians is this: We tried to Europeanize them; they wouldn't or couldn't do it; so we dispossessed them. While more sympathetic than the account in earlier textbooks, this account falls into the trap of repeating as history the propagan the nineteenth century as a rationale for ren cans stood in the way of progress. The only Back when white Americans were doing the were shrill. They denounced Native culture nomadic. Often writers invoked the hand o favor those who "did more" with the land.[105] is done, our histories can see more virtue in t they still picture Indians as tragically differe acculturate.

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the trap of repeating as history the propaganda used by policymakers in the nineteenth century as a rationale for removal—that Native Americans stood in the way of progress. The only real difference is the tone. Back when white Americans were doing the dispossessing, justifications were shrill. They denounced Native cultures as primitive, savage, and nomadic. Often writers invoked the hand or blessings of God, said to favor those who "did more" with the land.[105] Now that the dispossessing is done, our histories can see more virtue in the conquered cultures. But they still picture Indians as tragically different, unable or unwilling to acculturate.

American History tells of misguided liberals who

> tried to get Indians to settle down on farms and become "good Americans." They wanted Indians to give up their customs and religions and copy the culture of the whites. They did not care that this would destroy the Indians as a distinct group of people. They believed that the change would be the best thing that could happen both to the Indians and to their white neighbors on the frontier.

American History appears to offer a sympathetic treatment of a tragic clash of two irreconcilable lifestyles in the Ohio Valley around 1800. This treatment mimics Pres. Thomas Jefferson, who told a delegation of Cherokees in 1808, "Let me entreat you therefore, on the lands now given [*sic*] you to begin every man a farm, let him enclose it, cultivate it, build a warm house on it, and when he dies let it belong to his wife and children after him."[106] Other textbooks share Jefferson's view and lament that if only the Indians had become farmers like us, everything would have turned out better. *Triumph of the American Nation* commiserates, "Two such different ways of life could not long exist peaceably side by side. Conflict was inevitable."

The trouble is, it wasn't like that. The problem was not Native failure to acculturate. In reality, many European Americans did not really want Indians to acculturate. It wasn't in their interest. At times this was obvious, as when the Massachusetts legislature in 1789 passed a law prohibiting teaching Native Americans how to read and write "under penalty of death."[107] The United States claimed to be willing to teach the Indians to farm, but Indians in Ohio already were farmers! *American History* fails to mention that the Cherokees were visiting Jefferson precisely to ask the president to assign their lands to them in severalty [as individual farms] and to make them citizens.[108] Jefferson put them off. John Peterson has pointed out that a visitor catching sight of a Mississippi farm in 1820 would have had no way of knowing whether it was

When they stress Natives' alleged unwillingness to acculturate, American histories slip into the story line of the official seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. "Come Over and Help Us" is white settler propaganda, which grew into an archetype of well-meaning Europeans and tragically different Indians.

European or Choctaw until the farmers themselves came into view.[109] The Choctaws didn't need to "settle down." *The American Way* asks students, "Why were the Indians moved further west?" Its teachers' edition provides the answer: "They were moved so the settlers could use the land for growing crops." We might add this catechism: What were the Indians doing on the land? They were growing crops! When Jefferson spoke to the Cherokees, whites had been burning Native houses and cornfields for 186 years, beginning in Virginia in 1622.

No matter how thoroughly Native Americans acculturated, they could not succeed in white society. Whites would not let them. "Indians were always regarded as aliens, and were rarely allowed to live within white society except on its periphery."[110] Native Americans who amassed property, owned European-style homes, perhaps operated sawmills, merely became the first targets of white thugs who coveted their land and improvements. In time of war the position of assimilated Indians grew particularly desperate. Consider Pennsylvania. During the French and Indian War the Susquehannas, living peaceably in white towns, were hatcheted by their neighbors, who then collected bounties from authorities who weren't careful whose scalp they was Indian. Through the centuries and ac recurred. In 1860, for instance, Californ 800 Wiyots, a tribe allied with the whites, *other* tribes' cattle raids.[111]

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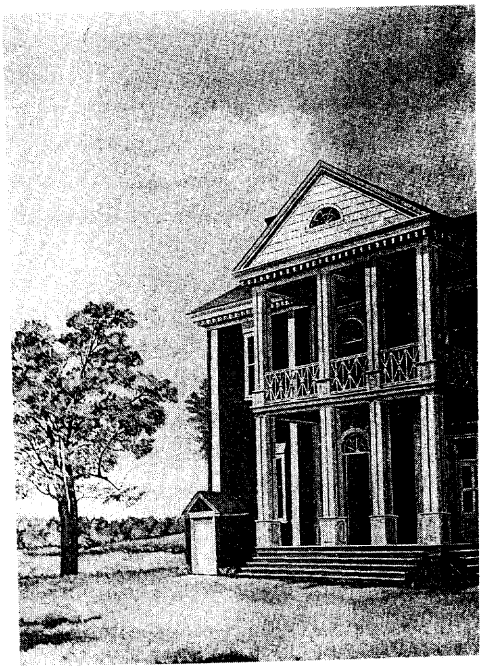

***A** census taken among the Cherokee in Georg This Country Was Ours, 289) showed that the mills, 1 powder mill, 69 blacksmith shops, 2 to spinning wheels, 172 wagons, 2,923 plows, cattle, 46,732 swine, and 2,566 sheep." So planters, including Joseph Vann, who cultivatec steamboat, mill, and tavern, and owned this m sheriff and other whites in Murray County, whc appropriated the house for themselves, accord*

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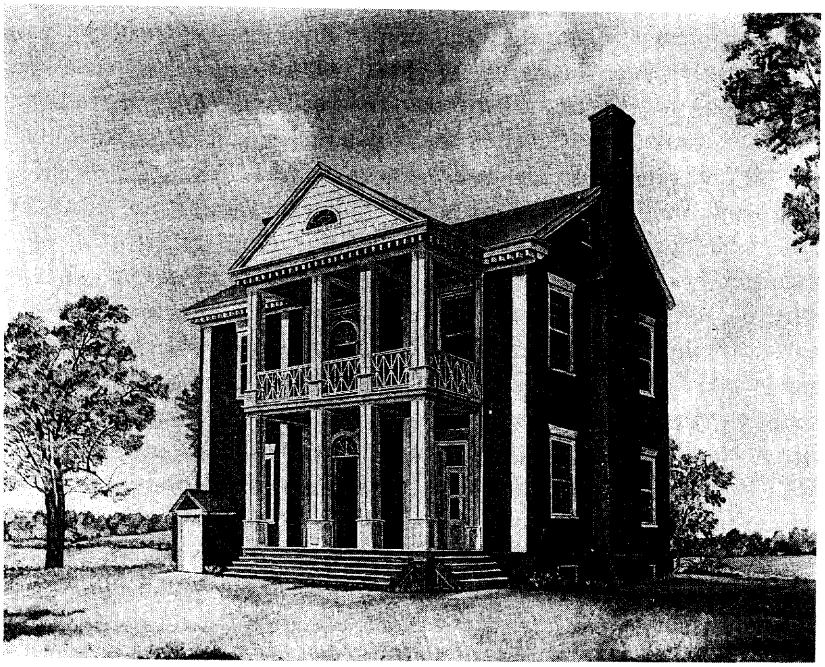
ties who weren't careful whose scalp they were paying for, so long as it was Indian. Through the centuries and across the country, this pattern recurred. In 1860, for instance, California ranchers killed 185 of the 800 Wiyots, a tribe allied with the whites, because they were angered by *other* tribes' cattle raids.[111]

Occasionally textbooks acknowledge that most Native Americans were settled, but they do not let these settled Indians interfere with the traditional story line. Early on, *American History* admits that the Ohio Indians were farmers: "Unlike the tribes who lived by hunting, many of these Indians had taken up farming. For them, moving would mean more than having to find another hunting ground." But forty pages later, when trying to rationalize the Indians' removal: "They tried to get



A *census taken among the Cherokee in Georgia in 1825 (reported in Vogel, ed.,* This Country Was Ours, *289) showed that they owned "33 grist mills, 13 saw mills, 1 powder mill, 69 blacksmith shops, 2 tan yards, 762 looms, 2,486 spinning wheels, 172 wagons, 2,923 plows, 7,683 horses, 22,531 black cattle, 46,732 swine, and 2,566 sheep." Some Cherokees were wealthy planters, including Joseph Vann, who cultivated 300 acres, operated a ferry, steamboat, mill, and tavern, and owned this mansion. It aroused the envy of the sheriff and other whites in Murray County, who evicted Vann in 1834 and appropriated the house for themselves, according to Lela Latch Lloyd.*

Indians to settle down on farms and become 'good Americans.' " If the author of *American History* cannot remember from one chapter to the next that the Indians didn't need to settle down, we can hardly expect his readers to. The story line is too powerful an archetype. Most of the textbooks I studied describe the acculturation achieved by the Indians of the Southeast, the "Five Civilized Tribes," and point out that the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole nations were exiled to Oklahoma anyway. Nonetheless, our culture and our textbooks still stereotype Native Americans as roaming primitive hunting folk, unfortunate victims of progress.

Ironically, to Native eyes, Europeans were nomads. As Chief Seattle put it in 1855, "To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their resting place is hallowed ground. You wander far from the graves of your ancestors and seemingly without regret." In contrast, Indian "roaming" consisted mainly of moving from summer homes to winter homes and back again.[112]

One way to understand why acculturation couldn't work for most Natives is to imagine that the United States allowed lawless discrimination against all people whose last name starts with the letter *L*. How long would *we* last? The first non-L people who wanted our homes or jobs could force us out, and we would be without resources. People around us would then blame us L people for being vagrants. That is what happened to Native Americans. In Massachusetts, colonists were constantly tempted to pick quarrels with Indian families because the result was likely to be acquiring their land.[113] In Oregon, 240 years later, the process continued. Ten thousand whites had moved onto the Nez Percé reservation by 1862, so a senator from Oregon suggested that the United States should remove the nation. Sen. William Fessenden of Maine pointed out the problem: "There is no difficulty, I take it, in Oregon in keeping men off the lands that are owned by white men. But when the possessor happens to be an Indian, the question is changed altogether."[114] Without legal rights, acculturation cannot succeed. Inmuttooyahlatlat, known to whites as Chief Joseph, said this eloquently: "We ask that the same law shall work alike on all men. If an Indian breaks the law, punish him by the law. If a white man breaks the law, punish him also. Let me be a free man—free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to talk and think and act for myself."[115] It was not to be. Most courts simply refused to hear testimony from Native Americans against whites. After noting how non-Indians could rise through the ranks of Native societies, Peter Farb summed up the possibilities in white society: "At almost no time in the history of the United States, though, were the Indians afforded similar opportunities for voluntary assimilation."[11] simply stood out as a target.

The authors of history textbooks occasio tions in writing. In the teachers' edition instance, Nancy Bauer states: "It is the goal will understand America, be proud of its determination to improve, and welcome the citizens in *The American Way*." That the au reasonable attention to Indian history follov

It is understandable that textbook author a way that students can feel good about about the past. Feeling good is a human ne that history cannot bear without becomi Indian history as a tragedy because Nati would not acculturate is feel-good history Indian wars, textbooks help us forget tha from Native Americans. Today's college stu a list of U.S. wars, never think to include I a whole. The Indian-white wars that domi to 1815 and were of considerable import peared from our national memory.

The answer to minimizing the Indian v Telling Indian history as a parade of whit history for those who want to wallow in whites are bad. What happened is more c the history we tell must be more comple reveal some of the division among whites to the alternatives to war. Seven of the tex of Salem, who in the 1630s challenged royal patent to the land, asserting, "The it," unless they sold it. (The Puritans ren to Rhode Island.)[117] Five textbooks ment in 1881 paid to provide copies of her fan American policies, *A Century of Dishon* gress.[118] Eight of the textbooks tell ho Marshall waged a titanic struggle over Ge Cherokees. Chief Justice Marshall found President Jackson ignored the court, re Marshall has made his decision; now le book brings any suspense to the issue as throughout our first century as a nation tian denominations—Quakers, Shakers,

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opportunities for voluntary assimilation."[116] The acculturated Indian simply stood out as a target.

The authors of history textbooks occasionally announce their intentions in writing. In the teachers' edition of *The American Way,* for instance, Nancy Bauer states: "It is the goal of this book that its readers will understand America, be proud of its strengths, be pleased in its determination to improve, and welcome the opportunity to join as active citizens in *The American Way.*" That the author could not possibly pay reasonable attention to Indian history follows logically.

It is understandable that textbook authors might write history in such a way that students can feel good about themselves by feeling good about the past. Feeling good is a human need, but it imposes a burden that history cannot bear without becoming simple-minded. Casting Indian history as a tragedy because Native Americans could not or would not acculturate is feel-good history for whites. By downplaying Indian wars, textbooks help us forget that we wrested the continent from Native Americans. Today's college students, when asked to compile a list of U.S. wars, never think to include Indian wars, individually or as a whole. The Indian-white wars that dominated our history from 1622 to 1815 and were of considerable importance until 1890 have disappeared from our national memory.

The answer to minimizing the Indian wars is not maximizing them. Telling Indian history as a parade of white villains might be feel-good history for those who want to wallow in the inference that America or whites are bad. What happened is more complex than that, however, so the history we tell must be more complex. Textbooks are beginning to reveal some of the division among whites that lent considerable vitality to the alternatives to war. Seven of the textbooks tell of Roger Williams of Salem, who in the 1630s challenged Massachusetts to renounce its royal patent to the land, asserting, "The natives are the true owners of it," unless they sold it. (The Puritans renounced Williams, and he fled to Rhode Island.)[117] Five textbooks mention Helen Hunt Jackson, who in 1881 paid to provide copies of her famous indictment of our Native American policies, *A Century of Dishonor,* to every member of Congress.[118] Eight of the textbooks tell how Andrew Jackson and John Marshall waged a titanic struggle over Georgia's attempt to subjugate the Cherokees. Chief Justice Marshall found for the Cherokees, whereupon President Jackson ignored the court, reputedly with the words, "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it!" But no textbook brings any suspense to the issue as one of the dominant questions throughout our first century as a nation. None tells how several Christian denominations—Quakers, Shakers, Moravians, some Presbyterians

—and a faction of the Whig Party mobilized public opinion on behalf of fair play for the Native Americans.[119] By ignoring the Whigs, textbooks make the Cherokee removal seem inevitable, another example of unacculturated aborigines helpless in the way of progress.

Native Americans would have textbooks note that, despite all the wars, the plagues, the pressures against their cultures, Indians still survive, physically and culturally, and still have government-to-government relations with the United States. As recently as 1984, a survey of American history textbooks complained that "contemporary issues important to Native peoples were entirely excluded."[120] The books I examined were somewhat better. The American Indian Movement spurred three major Indian takeovers in the early 1970s: Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., and Wounded Knee, South Dakota. Nine of the twelve textbooks mention at least one of these incidents; *The American Tradition* and *Triumph of the American Nation* competently explain the causes and results of all three. Seven of the twelve textbooks make a reasonable attempt to cover the principal issues facing Native Americans in the twentieth century. *Discovering American History* and *Triumph of the American Nation* do a good job. *Life and Liberty* and *Discovering American History* offer maps showing Native American lands today.

Anti-Indian racism has eased considerably in the twentieth century. Ironically, the very fact that the United States is beginning to let Natives acculturate successfully, albeit on Anglo terms, poses a new threat to Native coexistence. Poverty and discrimination helped isolate Indians. If Native Americans can now get good jobs, as some can, buy new vehicles and satellite televisions, as some have, and commute to the city for part of their life, as some do, it is much harder to maintain the intangible values that make up the core of Indian cultures.[121] Only one textbook raises perhaps the key question now facing Native Americans: can distinctively Indian cultures survive? *Discovering American History* treats this issue in an exemplary way, inviting students to experience the dilemma through the words of Native American teenagers. The other textbooks cannot raise this issue because they remain locked into non-Indian sources and a non-Indian interpretive framework. Textbooks still define Native Americans in opposition to civilization and still conceive of Indian cultures in what anthropologists call the ethnographic present —frozen at the time of white contact. When textbooks show sympathy for "the tragic struggle of American Indians to maintain their way of life," they exemplify this myopia. Native Americans never had "a" way of life; they had many. Indians would not have maintained those ways unchanged over the last five hundred years, even without European and African immigration. Indians have long strug of life. That autonomy we took from them. Ev American leadership into "progressives" who "traditionals" who want to "remain Indian." put other Americans into this straitjacket. We we want from the past or from other cultures. practices of the 1780s while retaining the American medical practitioners who abandoı embrace pasteurization from France and ant seen as compromising their Indianness. We transportation or housing while remaining "A and stay "Indian" in our eyes.

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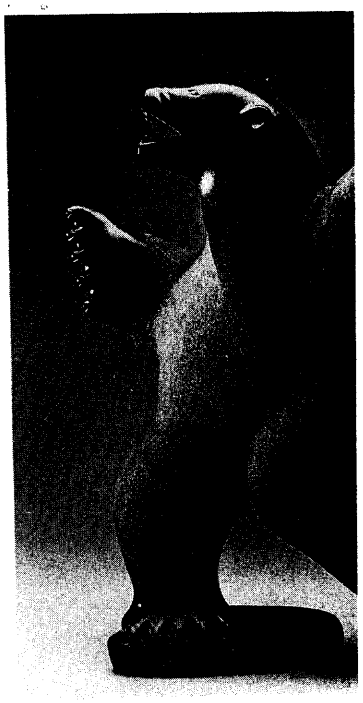

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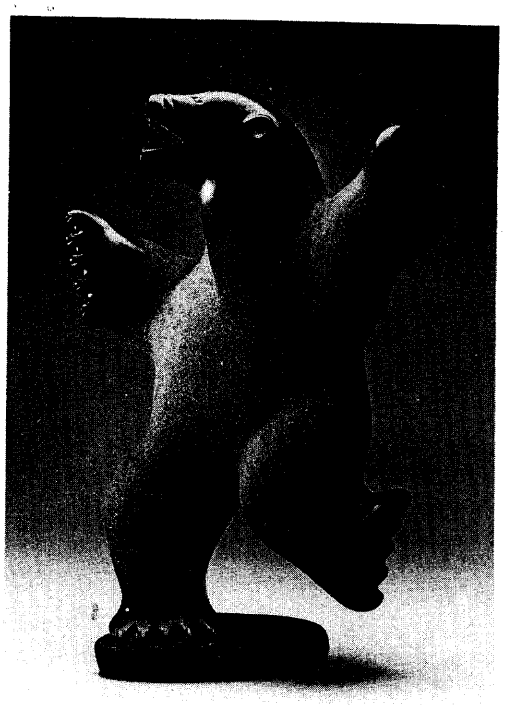
Improved histories might increase the chances for syncretism on both sides of our ideological frontier. If we knew the extent to which Indian ideas have shaped American culture, the United States might recognize



Perhaps Native Americans can break through the dilemma of acculturation and become modern and Indian. Certainly their artists have accomplished this. Only since the 1930s have Inuit artists in Canada been carving soapstone, a material that in the previous century their ancestors used for making pots. This sculpture, "Dancing to My Spirit," by Nalenik Temela, is a beautiful example of syncretism.

Native American societies as cultural assets from which we could continue to learn. At present, none of our textbooks hints at this possibility; even the more enlightened ones merely champion better treatment for Indians and stop short of suggesting that our society might still benefit from Indian ideas.

Even if no Natives remained among us, however, it would still be important for us to understand the alternatives foregone, to remember the wars, and to learn the unvarnished truths about white-Indian relations. Indian history is the antidote to the pious ethnocentrism of American exceptionalism, the notion that European Americans are God's chosen people. Indian history reveals that the United States and its predecessor British colonies have wrought great harm in the world. We must not forget this—not to wallow in our wrongdoing, but to understand and to learn, that we might not wreak harm again. We must temper our national pride with critical self-knowledge, suggests Christopher Vecsey: "The study of our contact with Indians, the envisioning of our dark American selves, can instill such a strengthening doubt."[122] History through red eyes offers our children a deeper understanding than comes from encountering the past as a story of inevitable triumph by the good guys.

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