

August 2019

The Sainly Indian: American Catholic Identity in the Indian Sentinel, 1902-1922

Abigail Clare Joranger
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.uwm.edu/etd>



Part of the [History of Religion Commons](#), [Indigenous Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Joranger, Abigail Clare, "The Sainly Indian: American Catholic Identity in the Indian Sentinel, 1902-1922" (2019). *Theses and Dissertations*. 2203.
<https://dc.uwm.edu/etd/2203>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by UWM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UWM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact open-access@uwm.edu.

THE SAINTLY INDIAN: AMERICAN CATHOLIC IDENTITY IN *THE INDIAN*
SENTINEL, 1902-1922

by

Abbie Joranger

A Thesis Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in History

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

August 2019

ABSTRACT

THE SAINTLY INDIAN: AMERICAN CATHOLIC IDENTITY IN *THE INDIAN SENTINEL*, 1902-1922

by

Abbie Joranger

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2019
Under the Supervision of Professor Rachel Buff

This study examines how Catholics writing about Native Americans in the early twentieth century used the popular and political discourse surrounding Native Americans to Americanize the image of American Catholics. It also examines the ambiguity that many Catholic authors displayed towards becoming full participants in American culture, and how that ambiguity was expressed through these writings even while the authors expressed their wish to be accepted as American citizens. The pieces analyzed in this study consist of articles from *The Indian Sentinel*, a magazine published by the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions for the purpose of raising funds for Catholic Indian Mission schools in the United States. Published beginning in 1903 and featuring stories that were mainly written by Missionaries or other Catholic religious workers, the articles offer a fascinating view of the common issues being discussed among American Catholics in the early twentieth century as well as the common discourses and images surrounding Native Americans during the same period.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	4
2. Chapter 1: The Political Indian	14
3. Chapter 2: The Civilized Indian	37
4. Chapter 3: The Romantic Indian	72
5. Chapter 4: The Saintly Indian	92
6. Conclusion	111
7. Bibliography	113

Introduction

The early twentieth century has often been described as the nadir of Indian-white relations in the United States. Decades of treaties pushed Indians onto smaller and smaller reservations, and Government-supported assimilation programs had done their level best to stamp out traditional culture. Try as they might to ease a livelihood out of their government-appointed land—on single-family farms, as was required by civilization policies—Indians found themselves pulled into a cycle of debt and poverty. Modern historians have developed a narrative of this period in which the dominant White Anglo-Saxon Protestant American culture had almost total control over the lives of Native Americans. This narrative is not completely wrong, and it does a neat job of making the plight of Native Americans understandable to modern students. However, it ignores several complicating factors.

The first factor is that not everyone who worked as a government-appointed “Indian Civilizer” was a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. From the moment the hemispheres were permanently connected by Columbus, Catholics worked closely with Native Americans. This was usually in a missionary capacity, but all missionary efforts involved some civilization attempts, and by the early twentieth century conversion and civilization were inexorably linked. This means that many Native Americans were being taught the basics of acceptable American culture by a group that were themselves a disadvantaged minority.

American Catholics never faced the same challenges as their African-American, Native American or Asian brethren. While they were certainly maligned by plenty of American Protestants, they had a secure footing in American politics and, for those born on American soil,

the benefits of full citizenship. However, they saw themselves as being separate from mainstream American culture and believed that they were being persecuted for their nonconformity—which, to some degree, they were. When Catholics discussed their missionary efforts among Native Americans, it was always with an extra layer of meaning. They saw themselves as saviors of souls and examples of civilization, but they also saw themselves as fighting *with* the Indians against an often-hostile government. They also inhabited an odd grey space in American culture in that, while they were exposed to and often emulated elements of popular culture, they were just as likely to reject mainstream culture in favor of their own mores and traditions. Thus they viewed Native Americans through an odd double-lens of Americanism and Catholicism. Each of these lenses painted Native Americans with a distinct set of beliefs and expectations.

The second confounding factor is one that this study will not, unfortunately, have much opportunity to address. Native Americans may have been at a disadvantage when dealing with white Americans, but they were not without agency. Modern historians have begun to fill in this narrative gap with stories of the resilience and ingenuity with which Indians navigated their new white-dominated world. Because this study depends almost entirely on sources written by white Americans for a white audience, it is sadly lacking in such stories. These sources may have purported to explain the wishes and needs of Native Americans, but their authors were simply too culturally distant from Indians (and too concerned with their own agendas) to accurately convey the daily struggles of reservation life.

This study is an in-depth look at the *Indian Sentinel*, a magazine published by the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions (BCIM) starting in 1902. It was the brainchild of William Ketcham, director of the BCIM and founder of the Society for the Preservation of the Faith among Indian

Children, which had the stated goal of providing funds for the continually struggling Catholic Missions scattered across the Indian Reservations of the United States. The purpose of this study is to closely examine the first two decades of the *Sentinel's* run in order to determine how the authors viewed the place of both Native Americans and—perhaps more importantly—Catholics in American culture. I believe that many of the articles in the *Sentinel* served to cement the legitimacy of Catholics in American society, while other articles demonstrated how Catholics both engaged in and distrusted American cultural practices. While the subject of the *Indian Sentinel* was Catholic Indian missions, in reality the publication said much more about the Catholics who wrote it than it did about the Indians they wrote about. The argument presented by this study is that these articles show a deep desire for American Catholics to advertise themselves as “true Americans,” but that they also show the need for American Catholics to maintain their own identity in the face of American Protestantism.

In order to fully understand the articles written in the *Indian Sentinel*, it is necessary to outline the nature, layout and management of the magazine. The history of its creation will be discussed later, but for now it is vital that the reader understand that the purpose of the magazine was to raise funds for the Catholic Indian schools of the United States. The *Sentinel* was inaugurated by Father William Ketcham, head of the Bureau of Catholic Indian missions, for precisely that purpose in 1902. The individual articles of the *Sentinel* may have informed, entertained, or frightened its readers, but all of these effects were secondary to the ultimate goal of persuading American Catholics to donate money—or, even better, to convince them to recruit other readers to swell the ranks Indian Mission donors. The first issue stated its purpose with the following heading on the inside cover:

THE INDIAN SENTINEL.

AN ANNUAL

Published in the Interest of the

Society for the Preservation of the Faith among Indian Children

By the

BUREAU OF CATHOLIC INDIAN MISSIONS

941 F Street, Washington, D. C.

Subscription (which includes membership in the “Preservation Society”), 25 cents a year.

HELP SAVE THE INDIAN CHILDREN!

The same page included a letter from Ketcham which stated the two conditions of membership in the Society as an annual payment of twenty-five cents and frequent prayers for the success of the Society. The final item on the page was another letter, this one by Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, in which his Eminence expressed his support for the goals of the Society.¹ The back inside cover of the issue contained four letters of approval, each from a prominent American Catholic Leader. The back cover included instructions for Society promoters, including information on how to collect the names of recruits and where to send the 25 cent membership fee.² The following issue added another page of letters of approval directly after the inside cover, and in 1910 this page was printed with the ultimate seal of heavenly approval: A commendation from Pope Pius X himself, proclaiming the support of His Holiness for the Society’s cause. The same issue added a notice for “Indulgences that may be gained by

¹ “The Indian Sentinel: An Annual,” TIS 1902-1903, p. ii

² “Letters of Approval,” TIS 1902-1903, p. iii; “Instructions for Promoters,” TIS 1902-1903, p. iv

Members of the Preservation Society,” decoratively outlined so that it stood out on the page.³ An indulgence, in Catholic law, is a remission of sin given to god which helps lessen the amount of suffering that one must endure in reparations for their sins. This was traditionally understood as a reduced sentence in purgatory. The notice in the *Sentinel* offered an indulgence of one hundred days in exchange for the recital of a prayer begging god to lend spiritual aid to the Indian people. In other words, the *Sentinel* was offering spiritual benefits in exchange for cash and prayers from Catholic Americans. Material rewards were also offered, albeit modest ones. From 1907 to 1909 the sentinel ran a promotion offering a promoter’s certificate to anyone who recruited another member to the society, as well as a promoter’s badge (containing the Society’s seal) for any member who promoted twelve additional people. The promoter who obtained the most new members would receive a handwoven Navajo blanket.⁴

For the first fourteen years of its publication, the *Sentinel* was an annual offering that sandwiched stories of Indian missionaries between promotional materials. This pattern continued until 1916. That year, the *Sentinel* split into a quarterly format and gained a new chief editor in Ms. Inno McGill. In an introductory letter of the first quarterly issue, Ketcham noted McGill’s “literary career” in Washington D.C., but little other information is given about the new manager of the *Indian Sentinel*.⁵ What is clear is that this shift was something of a relaunch for the *Sentinel*, leading to new formats, new designs and even the introduction of a table of contents in the second quarterly issue. However, its inside cover remained the same as it had been since 1910, a letter of commendation was still printed on the back inside cover, and the back cover remained a list of instructions for promoters, adding only a small photograph of a teepee next to

³ “The Indian Sentinel: An Annual,” TIS 1910, p. ii

⁴ “Promoters! Attention!!” TIS 1907-1909, p. 1

⁵ Wm. H. Ketcham, “A Call!” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 1

a log cabin at the very bottom.⁶ There was also a short-lived advertisement section which included ads for a weekly Catholic Magazine called “The Missal,” a religious goods importer, and a chocolate company, among other things. This experiment only lasted for four issues, so it must not have proven an effective source of income.⁷

From the above, the purpose of the *Sentinel* becomes clear. It was a money-making venture designed to convince American Catholics to donate to the Catholic Indian missions. Its contents are therefore largely designed to elicit the sympathy of its readers. It took several years for the editors of the *Sentinel* to determine precisely what sorts of stories they wanted to feature, and the first several issues featured a few outliers. Eventually, the *Sentinel* settled on a number of basic entries. The first page of every issue—after the promotional material previously discussed—was a photograph of either a prominent Catholic figure, a saint, or an Indian. This was always followed by a poem, which often dealt with the subject of the preceding image. Every issue included at least one piece—and usually several—that described the history and daily life one mission school. It was also common for writers to produce a piece on a particular Indian tribe. These pieces usually focused on the history of Catholicism among the tribe, and in later issues they might focus on traditional Indian lore or practices. Also common were pieces on a single prolific missionary or saint. These pieces ranged in tone from factual histories to near-hagiographies, with most falling somewhere in between. Each issue also included an editorial which described current events affecting Catholic Indian missions. Before the 1916 split to quarterly form, the editorials also reported the annual earnings of the Preservation society. The

⁶ “The Apostolic Delegate Commends the Preservation Society,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. iii: “Instructions to Promoters,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, p. iv

⁷ TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 35-38

split also ushered in a section on “Catholic Indians,” which highlighted individuals who were deemed worthy of recognition in stories that never extended beyond a page or two.

Several other themes in the *Sentinel* are evident. After several years issues began to be dedicated to either specific tribes or specific Catholic figures. The 1916 issue was the “Fray Junipero Serra Issue,” while the October 1918 issue was the “Pueblo Number.” These titles created a “theme” around which most—but not all—of the stories in that issue were written. For example, the April 1918 issue was dubbed the “Navajo Number” and included stories on Navajo myths and religion, a mission on Navajo land, and the daily life of the Navajo.⁸ Another clearly evident arc is that the stories themselves became shorter, particularly once the paper switched to a quarterly format. Early issues had stories that could extend beyond ten pages, while later issues pared the contributions down to a more digestible length.

Another key factor is who wrote the articles. This can be hard to determine, because many articles were not attributed to a specific author. These articles were simply signed “contributed.” This was far more common in the earlier issues: after 1916 many articles were given known authors. The majority of these authors were Catholic Missionaries, and almost all were male. The pre-1916 articles were almost certainly written by missionaries, but there is a distinct possibility that many were written by women religious workers. In 1907, Father Ketcham asked Father MacMillan of St. Labre’s mission to write an article. The priest agreed, and added that he would get one of the Sisters to write a history of the mission.⁹ Since the Nuns who ran mission schools often had a firsthand knowledge of Mission history and life, they were a natural choice when it came to writing pieces on mission schools. It is also conceivable that

⁸ “Contents,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 1

⁹ “Charles Lusk to William Ketcham, May 13, 1907,” BCIM series 1, Box 55, folder 9.

many of those Nuns would have considered it a sign of pride to have their work attributed to them, as they considered their primary role to be that of a Missionary worker, not of a writer. (Male authors did not seem to feel this aversion to publicity.) However, Nuns were less likely than male priests to venture off the Mission into the reservation, and they would have had far less exposure to Indian lore or customs. Therefore, articles dealing with those topics were usually written by men.

There are some indications that the editors of the *Sentinel* hoped for a more diverse group of authors. In the first quarterly issue released, William Ketcham included the following announcement in his introductory letter:

“An appeal has been issued to all missionaries, to priests, to Sisters, to educated Indians; to all persons familiar with, and to all friends of the Indian, for literary contributions to THE INDIAN SENTINEL....

....The INDIAN SENTINEL wishes to help in the forward movement and Invites the Indian to make this journal his own.”¹⁰

The suggestion that Indians “make the journal their own” was never fulfilled. Besides the Student’s chapter, which features letters from pupils at the mission schools, and a smattering of contributions from highly educated Native Americans, the magazine remained almost entirely a white endeavor. Either the *Sentinel*’s staff failed to solicit more Native writers or they were confident that white authors could better convey what their readers were hoping to read. Besides priests and nuns, a few articles were penned by Catholic lay people, but these contributions remained uncommon.

¹⁰ Wm. H. Ketcham, “A Call!” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 1

Considering its stated purpose, the real measure of the *Sentinel's* success is how much money it made. In that respect, the magazine was something of a failure. The reported earnings of the Preservation Society from the years 1903-1916 are as follows:

1903.....	\$32,432.41
1904.....	\$22,708.75
1905.....	\$14,957.21
1906.....	\$23,401.16
1907.....	\$18,129.81
1908.....	\$14,811.75
1909.....	\$21,482.63
1910.....	\$27,657.30
1911.....	\$20,982.84
1912.....	\$39,144.03
1913.....	\$32,681.60
1914.....	\$29,589.45
1915.....	\$26,063.33
1916.....	\$42,885.54

If those numbers look hefty, it's because it's hard to imagine the sheer scale of the enterprise that the . The 1903 returns amounted to about a quarter of what the BCIM needed to cover all its costs.¹¹ In reality, most of the funding came from other sources. Indian tribal funds were often used to cover some costs, but as we will see, the use of Tribal funds by sectarian schools was a contentious issue that often ran into legal opposition. The most steady supply of income for the Preservation Society was a single extremely wealthy Philadelphia heiress. Katherine Drexel used her considerable fortune to support the Missions schools and eventually formed (and became Mother Superior of) the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and

¹¹ "Editorial," TIS 1903-1904, p. 26

Colored people, an order of nuns dedicated to the promotion of Catholicism among the country's nonwhite citizens. In 1907, Drexel wrote a single check to the Society for the amount of \$22,397.44--considerably more than the full earnings for the preservation society for that year.¹² She also provided nearly all the funding for the Holy Rosary Mission on the Pine Ridge reservation and for the Sacred Heart Institute in Oklahoma--among countless other establishments.¹³ One editorial estimated her total contributions to Mission schools to be over a million dollars as of 1905. The same article noted that she contributed around 100,000 dollars *annually*—even at its peak in 1916, the Society was pulling in less than half of that amount.¹⁴

It may not have been the key source of income for the Society, but the money earned from the *Sentinel* was still vital. Even Mother Drexel's funds were not inexhaustible, and Government funding was precarious. Anything that could be made needed to be made.

The entirety of this study will rely on the *Indian Sentinel* as its key primary source, and each chapter will focus on one role that the writers assigned to their Native American subjects. This “role” could be that of a victim of government oppression, a savage in need of civilization, a potential Catholic, or a romanticized personification of America's lost frontier. Each chapter will also examine how Catholic Missionaries used these articles to portray themselves as fully American while also explicitly rejecting some aspects of American culture.

The first chapter is titled “The Political Indian” and it shows how *Sentinel* authors railed against the injustices of the United States Government—committed against both Catholics and Indians—while also highlighting Catholic Indian patriotism. These articles positioned Catholics

¹² “Charles Lusk to J. B. Currier, May 13, 1907” BCIM Series 1, Box 55, folder 9

¹³ “Holy Rosary Mission School, Pine Ridge, South Dakota,” TIS 1908, p. 31; “Sacred Heart Institute, Vinita, Oklahoma,” TIS 1914, p. 15

¹⁴ “Editorial,” TIS 1904-1905, pp. 31-32

as true defenders of American ideals and Indian rights while showing how they, like the Indians, were victimized by Government bigotry. The second chapter, titled “The Civilized Indian” describes how *Sentinel* authors portrayed the need for civilization among the Indians while showcasing how Catholic Missionaries were on the vanguard of civilization efforts. This chapter may have the most and clearest examples of authors aligning the goals of the missionaries with the goals of the government. However, the chapter also shows how the authors stopped short of showing Indians interacting with non-Catholic whites or taking part in mainstream American culture.

The final two chapters handle similar themes. Both show how Native Americans in the early twentieth century were romanticized by White popular culture, and both show how authors of the *Sentinel* romanticized Indians in their own stories. The third chapter, titled “The Romantic Indian,” highlights examples where authors used tropes that were common in popular culture. In doing so it shows how even Catholic priests, leading highly isolated lives and facing very unromantic day-to-day conditions, felt compelled to show their readers a version of Native Americans that conformed to what was being shown to them in books, fairs, photographs and art. The fourth and final chapter, titled “The Sainly Indian” shows how some authors combined popular tropes with Catholic tradition to create a new sort of Native American. This new Indian was both romantically American and fiercely Catholic, and in doing so it satisfied the Catholic need for both acceptance in and separation from American life.

At its simplest, this is a study of one American minority using another American minority to prove its own suitability for American life. Through the stories of the *Indian Sentinel*, one small group of American Catholics could emphasize their patriotism, their political savvy and

their investment in American cultural symbols to prove that they themselves were “real Americans.”

Chapter 1: The Political Indian

The history of Catholicism in America is the story of a group that repeatedly found itself on the verge of entering American mainstream society—only to be pulled off it and thrust back into the “minority” category by the shifting tide of world affairs. Catholics received some prominence during the American Revolutionary War, when several high-profile Catholics became respected revolutionary leaders. Combined with the general sense of optimism and pluralism that came over American society in the post-revolutionary years, this led to Catholics receiving a modicum of acceptance in American society. This faded in the mid-nineteenth century, when an influx of Catholic immigrants—particularly those from Ireland—stirred up a wave of “nationalist” thinking that vilified foreign influences on American soil. Because so many immigrants were Catholic, Catholicism became deeply connected with foreignness in the minds of many Americans. The rise of the Know-Nothing party in the 1850’s, an organization that was virulently anti-Catholic and anti-Immigrant, heightened American Catholics’ feelings of marginalization.¹⁵ While many Irish Americans eventually rose to positions of prominence later in the century, a new wave of German Catholics in the 1880’s only renewed the public’s fears of a “Catholic Menace.” German immigration died down considerably after 1900, and the more culturally German immigrant Catholics were replaced by a more Americanized second

¹⁵ Philip Gleason, *Speaking of Diversity: Language and Ethnicity in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 272-275

generation.¹⁶ In the meantime, however, a new wave of immigration had begun. This time the immigrants originated from Eastern and Southern Europe, and once again they were largely Catholic. Anti-immigrant fears surged again—eventually leading to the closing of America’s doors to most foreigners in the mid-1920’s—and the spirit of xenophobia and nativism that permeated the country combined with rising racial tensions in the south to usher in the golden age of the second Ku Klux Klan. The Klan, though more widely known for its violence against African Americans, was also a leading force in American Anti-Catholicism.¹⁷

Part of the Anti-Catholicism that appeared in the United States throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century stemmed from the perceived connection between “Catholics” and “foreignness.” In a period when both the government and the mainstream press pushed for the assimilation of foreigners, any reluctance to conform to norms of American society were sharply criticized. Catholics, who often wanted to maintain the customs and traditions of their homelands, were viewed with suspicion and derision by American-born nativists. Other Americans feared that Catholics’ allegiance to the foreign Pope meant that their loyalty would always be in questions. Whatever the reasons, Catholics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were in a unique position. While Catholics were undoubtedly a marginalized group, there were enough wealthy, well-established Catholics in America to grant them some political and cultural power. These “Americanized” leaders sought to mold the Catholic Church into a fully American Institution, but many Catholics were bitter about the unequal treatment they had received from the American government and resisted the attempts of these well-meaning few.

¹⁶ Gleason, *Speaking of Diversity*, 282

¹⁷ Gleason, *Speaking of Diversity*, 284

This is the atmosphere in which Catholic Native American Missions took shape. The missions and towns written about in the *Sentinel* were usually isolated backwaters that had little to do with the chaotic politics of the eastern cities, and the missions themselves warranted barely a thought from the average urban Catholic. However, the men and women who ran those missions—and who contributed articles to the *Sentinel*—were not from the places they served. Many were born in foreign countries and were well-traveled and worldly. Others were born in America and were trained for their religious life in European cities. These were people who were aware of politics and of the struggles facing the Catholic Church. The *Sentinel* itself was run out of an office in Washington D.C., at the epicenter of American politics. It's founding institution, the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, was also based in D. C. and had frequent interactions with government officials. This means that the articles that appear in the *Sentinel* were often imbued with the sense of frustration felt by Catholics working under a government that was often hostile toward them. However, these are also people who sought a greater sense of connectedness an inclusion in American society. They wanted greater status in American politics and greater representation on the Reservations. If they wanted to achieve any of those goals, then they needed to prove their own “Americanness.” Therefore, the *Sentinel* includes articles that are hostile towards government agencies and articles that applaud them.

The history of Catholic Missionary work is rife with examples of tension between the Catholic Church and the American government. Without a doubt, some of these tensions were the result of genuine acts of anti-Catholic bias on the part of the government. Others were simply the result of the two parties' different goals and methods. Either way, it's important to place the history of Catholic Mission work among Native Americans in its historical context to understand

the articles of the *Sentinel*. The history of Catholic-government tensions also directly resulted in the creation of the *Indian Sentinel*.

Catholic had carried out missionary work in North America since the moment Christopher Columbus landed in 1492. Spain was the first to send missionary Franciscans to the New World in order that the souls of the natives might be saved from the thrall of Satan. The establishment of the Jesuit order in 1534 yielded an army of priests who were eager to save souls in the newly discovered places of the world, and soon French Jesuits had established missions among the Indians of North America. Catholics never forgot this long history, and in many cases they considered the ongoing conversion of non-Christians both a right and a duty that they had inherited from their missionary forefathers. The struggles that Catholics faces in America meant that Catholic Indian missions faced a decline in the early years of the Republic, but they never fully disappeared.

One thing that must be understood is what the purpose of the Catholic Mission was. The goal of missionary *work* was to develop a self-supporting Catholic Church that was firmly rooted in the local community. The purpose of the Mission as an institution was to help this process along by converting individuals, training new religious leaders, and adjusting the customs of the native population to whatever degree was necessary to ensure that they were living according to the moral standards prescribed by Rome. Once this was accomplished, the Missionaries themselves—the nuns, priests and lay workers who ran the mission—would disband and the locals would continue the Church themselves.¹⁸ In some ways this system meshed perfectly with

¹⁸ Harvey Markowitz, “The Catholic Mission and the Sioux: A Crisis in the Early Paradigm,” In *Sioux Indian Religion: Tradition and Innovation*, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 114

United States Indian policy, but in other ways the missionary system was forced to adapt to the unique circumstances of the Native American.

Before the mid-nineteenth century, the main goal of U.S. Indian Policy was to get the Indians out of the way. This “removal-isolationist” policy involved pushing Native Americans onto undesirable land far out of the way of white settlers. Often, as in the case of the Cherokee Trail of Tears, this was done forcefully and with disastrous results. This was also the period when Indians began to be considered “wards of the State,” which gave the government considerable power over them. After the Civil War politicians began to rethink the removal-isolationist policy. White settlers were beginning to push west: chunks of land that had previously been remote and unattractive looked increasingly promising to land-hungry pioneers. Allowing Indians to remain on their reservations permanently seemed untenable. It would be far more profitable—and far more attractive to western voters—to end the Reservation system and open the entire West for white settlement. Therefore, the government started to treat Reservations as sort of “halfway houses” for civilization. Under President Grant’s new “Peace Policy,” Reservations became spaces on which the work of civilization could be carried out by trustworthy individuals with the Indian’s best interests at heart, and no one seemed more apt for the job than the numerous Religious organizations who were scrambling for a missionary “cause” to pursue after the abolishment of Slavery. Therefore, the Bureau of Indian Affairs divided Indian reservations amongst the many denominations that showed an interest in missionary work. The missionary efforts of individual churches was therefore limited to the reservations that they had been assigned. The United States Government expected these religious workers to do the legwork of civilization: Missionaries would build the schools, provide the staff

and supplies to run them, and pursue civilization efforts on the Reservations, while the government would provide food, clothing and tuition for each student.¹⁹

Participating in the Peace Policy could have provided ample opportunity for Catholics to engage in missionary work, but their hopes were quashed when they were only granted control over eight Reservations. Catholics were appalled by this decision and viewed it as a plot to foist Protestantism onto heavily Catholic Native populations. Those populations had been created by a long history of Catholic Missionary work that included the efforts of such Catholic icons as Fathers De Smet and Mazzuchelli. Catholics felt that a part of their American heritage was being stolen from beneath their feet. It was this controversy that gave birth to the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. Created in 1874, the BCIM aimed to fight for greater Catholic presence on Indian reservations.²⁰

However, at the end of the 1870's, the American public began to express dissatisfaction with the Peace Policy, and both the US government and a new crop of Indian Rights activists concurred. Assimilation, they all agreed, was not happening quickly enough. Westward migration was increasing dramatically, leading to confrontations between white settlers and Native Americans. Civilization programs needed to be increased and the Government needed to take a more direct role in remedying what the press had begun to dub "the Indian Problem." In 1881 the government allowed the Peace Policy to lapse, and the education of Native American children was taken over by either Government schools or missionary schools run on a contract system. The reasoning behind this new policy was that education was the surest way to assimilate Indians into White society, thereby erasing the need for reservations. Under this

¹⁹ Markowitz, "The Catholic Mission and the Sioux," 116-120

²⁰ Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present*, (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985), 262-293

system, Catholic Missionaries could sign an annual contract with the government that would allow them to operate their own schools relatively independently, and they would receive a stipend for each child enrolled. This system proved beneficial for the Catholics, who increased the number of Missionary-run schools on Indian reservations from seven in 1874 to sixty-three in 1910. The creation of schools had become one of the most important factors of Catholic Missionary activity.²¹

The *Sentinel* was not born out of simple Catholic zeal, although there was certainly more than enough of that to go around in America in 1902. Rather it was born out of a genuine financial crisis that threatened all Catholic Mission Schools. In 1896 Congress passed the Browning Ruling, which effectively removed the right of Indian parents to choose where their students would attend school. The ruling stipulated that all Government Indian schools must be filled before enrollment could begin in sectarian schools. Catholics saw this as an infringement on religious liberty, while the Government saw it as necessary for its new policy of increased government oversight for assimilation programs. Either way, it led to a sharp decrease in enrollment in Catholic Indian schools, putting their very existence at risk. Furthermore, in 1900 Congress ended the financial support that had until then been given to contract schools, which in previous years had totaled as much as four and a half million dollars. With this safety net pulled swiftly out from under them, the BCIM found itself scrambling for new sources of funding. The Indians could not always use their own money to support the tribal schools (although some evidence suggests that they would have been reluctant to do so if they had the opportunity) and the collections for Indian and Negro Missions collected in Catholic churches did not even

²¹ Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience* 262-293, and Dominic B. Gerlach, "St. Joseph's Indian Normal School, 1888-1896," *Indiana Magazine of History* 69, no. 1 (1973), 1-2.

approach the necessary sums. To make matter worse, in 1901 Joseph A. Stephens, the BCIM director who had been instrumental in building the presence of missions schools after the Peace Policy lapsed, died and left the directorship to Revered William H. Ketcham. Fortunately Ketcham proved to be an energetic leader. He successfully campaigned to have the Browning Ruling revoked, and he formed the Society for the Preservation of the Faith among Indian Children within months of taking his post. It was this Society that began publication of the *Indian Sentinel*. Essentially operating as propaganda, the aim of the *Sentinel* was to recruit more members for the Society and to make the nation's Catholics more aware of the plight of Catholic Indian Schools.²²

It's hardly surprising, then, that the first several decades of the *Sentinel* are bursting with articles that highlight instances of anti-Catholicism on the part of the government. The cessation of government rations to children attending Indian schools was formalized in 1900 and was a particular target of Catholic ire. The editorials in the 1903-1904 issue railed against congress for refusing to revoke the ruling that had ended rations to mission schools and singled out Senator Lodge of Massachusetts as particularly virulent anti-Catholic. The article didn't mince words, noting that Lodge was "not only a bigot, but he appears to delight in being as conspicuous as possible in his anti-Catholic work."²³ Two years later the editorial claimed that the ration policy constituted "the use of public monies to the detriment of religion."²⁴

Another frequently-discussed issue was the use of tribal funds to support mission schools. Because Indians were considered "wards of the State," their tribal funds were held in a tribal

²² Francis Paul Prucha, *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 57-64.

²³ "Editorial," TIS 1903-1904, p. 28

²⁴ "Editorial," TIS 1905-1906, p. 31

“treasury” that was administered to by the US government, rather as a parent administers to the funds of their offspring. After Catholics lost access to government funds to support their mission schools, they began seeking ways to access tribal funds for financial support. Initially several schools were supported this way, but in 1906 another crisis struck that threatened this lifeline. It began on the Rosebud Indian reservation, where the Indian Rights Association—a non-Indian group that fought for greater Indian autonomy and citizenship rights—mounted a case against St. Francis school, which was using tribal funds for support. The IRA argued against the government making payments to the mission schools, effectively turning St. Francis into a test case for whether or not Catholic Mission schools could have access to tribal funds. According to the author of the *Sentinel* article which outlined the case, the case was the result of protestant missionaries who worked to turn the Indians against the Catholic Mission. (Many *Sentinel* authors seemed to be under the impression that Protestants spent more time undermining Catholics than they did running their own missions.) The author also claimed that “A decision against the Mission Schools would be a victory granted by the Court to bigotry.”²⁵ The court initially ruled against St. Francis. This decision was eventually reversed, but the argument over the use of tribal funds for mission schools continued. In 1916 a government decision prevented Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians from making contracts with mission schools that would allow the use of government funds. The *Sentinel* proclaimed this another example of “government tyranny.”²⁶

In other instances, government forces—generally in the form of the government-appointed Indian Agents who were in charge of administrative matters on each reservation—

²⁵ “Catholic Indian Schools: St. Francis,” TIS 1907, pp. 21-28

²⁶ “Editorial,” TIS 1916, p. 24

were accused of directly interfering with individual mission schools. A missionary stationed at St. Benedict's school claimed that the local Indian agent tried to force the mission off the reservation. He was stopped, according to the author, by the protestations of the Indians themselves. Another author accused the Agent at Fort Belknap of going so far as to levy false charges against the mission and diverting the reservation's water supply in an attempt to drive the Catholics out.²⁷ An article on St. Agnes' School claimed that Anti-Catholic "Elements" were manipulating Indian parents to remove their children from Catholic schools and transfer them to government schools. These insidious forces, they claimed, told the parents of the "dungeon-like conditions" at the Catholic schools. These efforts kept attendance at St. Agnes low until 1905.²⁸ Even the famous Dawes act--which was usually praised by whites as a progressive step forward for Indian Assimilation--was criticized by an author who claimed that the act broke up missionary land.²⁹

One of the greatest enemies of the Catholic Indian Mission was the Government school. Because of the Protestant bent of most government schools, those institutions were viewed by Missionaries as being nothing more than Protestant conversion machines hiding behind their government designation. Therefore, both government and Protestant schools were viewed as competitive forces that worked tirelessly to draw Indian students away from the "one true faith." Father Van Den Broeck claimed that Protestants had been trying to "pervert" the Indians with their missionary efforts since the 1870's and accused them of being more interested in conversion than in the Indian's material well-being.³⁰ (Van Den Broeck failed to specify how Catholic missionaries differed in this respect.) A 1912 article seemed to suggest that Protestant

²⁷ Placidus F. Sialm, S. J., "Catholic Indian Schools: St. Paul's Mission and School," TIS 1912, p. 29

²⁸ "Catholic Indians Schools: St. Agnes' Academy, Ardmore, Oklahoma," TIS 1915, pp. 21-22

²⁹ (Rev.) Hubert A. Post, S. J., "Among the Flathead," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 51

³⁰ "The Menominees," TIS 1904-1905, p. 20

and Mormon schools existed for the sole purpose of drawing students away from Catholic Mission schools.³¹ An editorial in the 1905-1906 issue argued that government schools like Hampton Institute were nothing more than sectarian Protestant schools, claiming that anti-Catholicism had led to the rise of Protestant institutions.³² Haskell Institute was similarly criticized, with one author describing it as "notorious as a school where Catholics are proselytized systematically."³³ An article in the 1916 issue titled "Are Catholic Indian Schools Necessary" outlined the path to Protestant conversion that Catholic children were placed on when they attended government institutions. According to the author, parents were "tricked" into sending their children to government schools. There the students were slowly but surely drawn away from their Catholic Faith.

"He is marched into the Protestant Sunday school and is already imbibing evangelistic principals before he begins to realize what has happened. When he finds himself with the crowd in some Protestant church, he fears to complain to his superiors, of whom he stands in awe. He does not dare to write to his parents or his pastor for the authorities might see his letter and he dreads their displeasure. Even if a visiting priest should search him out and find him, he fears to avow himself even then—the fierce eyes of a fanatical disciplinarian are upon him, or he sees the storm gathering on the forbidden face of some hard-featured matron. So, because of his timidity, he remains in the Protestant ranks. He soon has reason to congratulate himself. He can join the Y. M. C. A., which controls the entire social life of the school. He observes the hard lines into which those have fallen who declared themselves Catholics and requested to attend the services conducted by the priest. He also notices that many of these Catholics, as soon as they reach the age where they can choose for themselves, leave the Catholic Church and become Protestants and thereby ease their lot and become the pampered pets of the institution....He goes back home a Catholic hater in every sense of the word."

The author ended the article by asking his readers if they would be willing to send their children to a government boarding school where they might face such circumstances.³⁴

³¹ "Indian Missionaries: Father Mathias," TIS 1912, p. 47

³² "Editorial," TIS 1904-1905, p. 31-32

³³ "Editorial," TIS 1916, p. 26

³⁴ "Are Catholic Indian Schools Necessary?" TIS 1916, pp. 47-48

While the cases of anti-Catholic biases discussed in the *Sentinel* may have been exaggerated, they undoubtedly still happened. Missionaries clearly felt enormous pressure from competing Protestant and Government schools. More than just the potential loss of souls, the loss of students put the very existence of missionary schools in danger. This argument formed the backbone of many of the articles that called for readers to contribute money to the missionary cause. By claiming that the very government of the United States was against them, the authors highlighted the precariousness of their situation and the desperate need for funds.

A potential danger of railing against the government was that it might emphasize the supposed divide between Catholicism and American society. Catholics occupied an uncertain position America, and while the exact degree to which Catholics wanted to take on American customs differed hugely from group to group, they could generally agree that they wanted to be viewed as American citizens. The fact that Catholics were acutely aware of their perceived “foreignness” may suggest that railing against government policy would be out of character for them, or potentially dangerous given the political climate. In actuality, *Sentinel* authors used these arguments to *emphasize* their Americanness by portraying themselves—or their Native American congregations—as the parties who were upholding true American ideals. It’s also worth noting that complaining about government policy has always been one of the most “American” activities one could engage in. Therefore, *Sentinel* authors were simply engaging in a practice of public discourse that was as old as the country itself.

One of the most common arguments made in the *Sentinel* was that policies that impeded access to Catholic schooling were infringing upon the religious freedom of Indian parents. For example, the government’s policy of withholding rations from Catholic students—which would undoubtedly influence the choice of an Indian parent when choosing where to send their

children—was described by one author as constituting “the use of public monies to the detriment of religion” and noted that such actions were a greater risk to constitutional integrity than any “favoring” of Catholic schools that might occur.³⁵ Authors also attacked groups that engaged in anti-Catholic action as going against the constitutional right to religious freedom. One author, recalling the prominence of the Know-Nothing party in the 1890’s and its deleterious effects on Indian missions, called the group “Unamerican.”³⁶ In statements like these authors managed to portray themselves as the true defenders of American ideals who were under attack from anti-Catholic bigots.

Authors also frequently capitalized on the poor conditions on Native American reservations to show how they were the ones who were truly invested in uplifting Indians. In 1909 an author complained that the government was not doing enough to civilize the Northern Cheyenne. He bemoaned the fact that there was no compulsory education system on the reservation despite the fact that “There is no place in all the land where the want of such a law is so sadly felt.”³⁷ Even more frequent was the accusation that past government actions had led to the deplorable present state of the Indians, and that the Catholic missionaries were fulfilling a long-overdue civil duty to better the lot of the Indians. Articles that took this route often portrayed Native Americans as victims of government greed and aggression. At the funeral of Chief Horn Bear, Father Charles Warren Currier included the following passage in his sermon:

“Come, white men, persecutors of the Indians, gather around this bier, and let your tears fall upon this coffin, tears of practical sorrow. There is no sadder story, none more tragic, than the story of the American Indian....The white man has failed to grasp his opportunity. He was

³⁵ “Editorial,” TIS 1905-1906, p. 31

³⁶ P. F. Hybelos, “Catholic Indian Schools: St. George’s School, Puyallup Reservation, Washington,” TIS 1915, p. 12

³⁷ “Catholic Indian Schools: St. Labre’s Mission,” TIS 1909, p. 6

sent to build up, to civilize; he has brought the race to which he was sent to the verge of extinction.”³⁸

In following this line of argument, some authors showed a surprising understanding of historical events. An author writing in 1921 described Custer’s last stand as a tragedy brought about by white aggression. He cites the discovery of gold in the Black Hills in the 1870’s as the inciting incident for the conflict, as the discovery led to white soldiers invading the area, which resulted in the fracture and scattering of the Cheyenne people. He also noted that when the conflict finally ended it was due to the fatigue and hunger of the Indians—and that this hunger only continued when they returned home to lands that had been cleared of the invaluable buffalo.³⁹ In fact, it was surprisingly common for authors to state that White aggression had been the cause of the Indian uprisings in the 1870’s. Another author had a similar description of the events that followed the discovery of gold in the Black Hills:

“The discovery of gold in the Black Hills called for the immediate action of a paternal government, and the old story of another Indian robbery for the benefit of an admiring and thankful public.”⁴⁰

The same author penned a harrowing description of the Cheyenne’s attempted escape from Fort Robinson, which resulted in a massacre.

“Under cover of night, the leaders made good their escape from the astonished sentries, but when day broke a long line of nearly two hundred Cheyenne corpses told only too plainly the story of another Indian massacre. A resident of the country who went over the ground the morning after the slaughter, told me what a heart-rending sight it was, to see a mother lying cold in death with her babe clasped to her bosom, both pierced by a soldier’s bullet.”⁴¹

Hardworking, godly Catholics were therefore left to pick up the pieces left behind by decades of greedy government policy. This attitude was perfectly summed up by the official

³⁸ “Hollow Horn Bear,” TIS 1914, pp. 9-10

³⁹ Wm. Arendzen, “The Cheyenne and their Catholic Mission,” TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 64-66

⁴⁰ Rev. P. M. Gallagher, “The Northern Cheyenne, Past and Present,” TIS 1909, p. 19

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20

Resolution that the Society adopted in 1911, which stated that “The story of the treatment of the Indians is sufficiently sad, and our tardy justice demands that we should do everything in our power to foster and extend the salutary work of Catholic Education among them.”⁴² Once again, Catholics placed themselves on the moral high ground by claiming that they were the ones steering Indians towards civilization. It was also common for authors to portray Indians as particularly vulnerable to either moral corruption or poor conditions. The article “Are Catholic Indian Schools necessary” followed its description of conditions that pulled children away from Catholicism with the argument that Indian children were less able than white children to resist these corrupting influences. Indians, the author explained, were naturally more tractable and timid and therefore less likely to object to efforts to proselytize them.⁴³ It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that throughout the *Sentinel* Native Americans are attributed very little agency. It was assumed that without the helping hands of white Catholics, Indians would simply wallow in the horrendous conditions that their reservations had been left in. Despite their insistence on the Indians’ rights to religious freedom, Missionaries saw the Indians in much the same way the United States Government did: as “wards” who could not be trusted to pursue their own best interests.

In a similar vein, authors often emphasized how, throughout history, Catholics had been on the forefront on Indian civilization while the United States government—and the Protestant majority they identified with—had lagged far behind. This often involved reminding readers of the early efforts of European missionaries. An article on the Franciscans stated that “Eighty years before the unsympathetic puritans landed at Plymouth Rock, the Franciscan Father Marcos de

⁴² “Editorial,” TIS 1911, p. 19

⁴³ “Are Catholic Indian Schools Necessary?” TIS 1916, pp. 46-47

Niza...planted the Standard of Salvation at the very heart of the continent.” The article went on to point out that it had been Franciscan sisters who had pioneered the work of Indian education in North America.⁴⁴ Another article lauded the Franciscans of California for holding back the ”despotism of Russian rule.”⁴⁵ The comment was clearly meant as a criticism of Russia’s then-Tsarist regime. Therefore, it was Catholics—even those associated with the decidedly un-democratic Spanish crown—who had laid the groundwork for Indian civilization efforts long before Protestant Americans had considered the topic.

Another curious pattern in articles that attack government policies is that the authors rarely singled out specific government officials. The attack against Senator Lodge was a rarity: authors usually either referred to “the government” or “congress” as monolithic structures, or they pointed out the actions of unnamed Indian agents. When they did refer to a public official by name, it was usually to congratulate them on their fair treatment of Catholic Indian schools. For example, Francis E. Leupp, who served as Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1904-1909, seemed to be held in high esteem by many missionaries and was often mentioned favorably in articles.⁴⁶ It was also common for authors to mention policies put in place by specific presidents that supported Catholic Missions. The Editorial in the 1905-1906 issue praised president Roosevelt for his attitudes towards Indian education, and a later article congratulated president Wilson on his choice to appoint Isidore B. Dockweiler to the Board of Indian Commissioners.⁴⁷ The first quarterly issue, released in 1916, included an section dedicated to ”The Men who Mold the Indians’ Destiny,” which featured government officials whom Catholic missionaries held in

⁴⁴ ”Esperanza,” ”St. Francis and the Indian Missions,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 5-6

⁴⁵ ”Juniper Serra: Apostle of California,” TIS 1915, p. 4

⁴⁶ A. M. Mandalari, S. J., ”Religious Instruction In Government Indian Schools: The Albuquerque School,” TIS 1914, p. 39

⁴⁷ ”Editorial,” TIS 1905-1906, p. 31: ”Mr. Isidore B. Dockweiler Appointed Member of the Board of Indian Commissioners by President Wilson,” TIS 1914, p. 48

high regard. The most prominent subjects of the piece were Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane and Commissioner Cato A. Sells, newly-appointed head of Indian Affairs. Lane was described as the "Flower of the President's Cabinet" while Sells was lauded as "able, kindly, truly sympathetic with the Indians." The piece also included photos of nine other men that the editors deemed worthy of Catholic esteem.⁴⁸ In general, when *Sentinel* authors were not railing against government-sponsored injustices, they seemed remarkably eager to express their good opinion of government officials. This allowed them to curry favor with government officials, and it also presented a new narrative that combated that common refrain that Catholics were incapable of participating in American culture. In these stories, the fault was not with Catholics who refused to cooperate with government officials, but with government officials who refused to cooperate with Catholics. These "friendly officials" were proof that Catholics could operate effectively within America's political system.

By participating in the discourse about government policies, portraying themselves as fighting for true American ideals, and speaking highly of government officials who were favorable to Catholics, *Sentinel* authors helped to make themselves look more "American." However, they could also accomplish that end in a much more straightforward manner. Examples of overt patriotism are rife in the pages of the *Sentinel*. Some examples simply state the patriotic qualities of the missionaries. For example, an article on Father Chirouse describes him as a staunch patriot who always spoke of the United States government with admiration—despite the fact that that same government had accused him of colluding with Indian during the Cayuse war.⁴⁹ Other articles noted the long history of Catholic priests working with the

⁴⁸ "The Men who Mould the Indian's Destiny," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 12-13

⁴⁹ Chas. M. Buchanan, "Father Chirouse and the Indian Uprising," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 7, pp. 25-26

government to achieve peaceful resolution to conflicts with Indians. Father De Smet was particularly lauded on this account, with one article pointing out that he discussed the “Indian Situation” with Abraham Lincoln at length. The same article noted that he was recruited by the government to help “tame the savages” and that he was instrumental in the creation of a treaty with the Sioux in 1868.⁵⁰ Another article mentioned that it was a Jesuit priest who convinced Chief Seltise to refrain from joining Chief Joseph in his “war against the whites” in 1877.⁵¹

However, an even more common tactic was to highlight patriotic activities among Catholic Indians. In this way the *Sentinel* focused on not only the patriotism of Catholic Missionaries, but on their ability to spread patriotic ideals to those they taught. Occasionally this involved discussing the history of patriotic actions among Catholic Indians. A 1913 article on the Indians of Maine included a photograph of the “Monument to the Penobscot Indian patriots of the revolutionary war,” which was erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution. The article went on to state that the Penobscot involvement in the Revolution was a “tribute to their Catholic faith and Independent spirit.”⁵² Another issue featured a photo of students from St. Anne’s mission in Elbowoods, North Dakota, dressed in their uniforms and brandishing an American flag.⁵³ An article on the Catholic Congress of Crow Indians described how the opening procession was led by an “Indian Warrior” carrying a United States flag, followed by Indian Chiefs on horseback carrying banners that displayed religious symbols.⁵⁴ By tying patriotic activity to Catholicism, the articles made it clear that Catholic missionary activity could go

⁵⁰ T. J. Campbell, S. J., “Father De Smet,” TIS 1916, p. 4

⁵¹ “Catholic Indian Schools: De Smet Mission and School,” TIS 1913, p. 24

⁵² William Hughes, “The Happiest People in the World: The Three Hundredth Anniversary of Catholic Missions in Maine,” TIS 1913, pp. 12, 17

⁵³ “St. Anne’s Mission, Elbowoods, North Dakota,” TIS 1905-1906, p. 47

⁵⁴ Photograph: Untitled, TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 23

beyond the instilling of religious principles. It could foster a sense of patriotism and national pride in a people who had spent decades fighting American control.

One of the most fascinating examples of displayed patriotism is a single photo that appeared in the 1905-1906 issue. The photograph showed a group of female students at Holy Childhood Indian School in Harbor Spring, Michigan, all of them dressed as radical temperance worker Carrie Nation.⁵⁵ Catholics have generally not been linked to the temperance movement because of the strong traditions of alcohol consumption existing in many of their most prominent ethnic groups. However, a Catholic temperance movement *did* emerge following Irish priest Theobald Mathew's tour of the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. The movement did not gain any significant momentum until the 1870's, by which point a number of Catholics had entered the growing American middle class and wanted to reflect the moral standards of mainstream American society. The Catholic Total Abstinence Union was formed in 1872, and by 1900 it included over 90,000 members along with its affiliated organizations. The Catholic Press also championed the cause: In the 1890's, Milwaukee's *Catholic Citizen* included a column titled "Whiskey's Work" which documented the evil effects of alcohol.

Much of this temperance work also had defensive overtones. Because early American Catholics had largely been notoriously hard-drinking Irishmen and women, Protestant Americans often conflated alcohol abuse with Catholicism. As secular or protestant temperance groups exploded in the late nineteenth century many became vehemently anti-Catholic, claiming that the scourge of drunkenness in the United States was due to the influence of "Romanism" on the population. Much of this vitriol was aimed towards Eastern European immigrants, whom

⁵⁵ "Holy Childhood Pupils, as 'Carrie Nations' Armed with Bows," TIS 1905-1906, p. 27

Protestant temperance workers saw as dirty, drunken foreigners who were not morally prepared to take part in American society. Many American Catholics felt compelled to defend themselves from this association with “foreignness” that had always been the bane of Catholics living in the United States. Temperance work was one way of proving that they were fully fledged members of American Society.⁵⁶ Therefore, the inclusion of this photograph of Native American “Carrie Nations” can be seen as yet another way that the *Sentinel* was trumpeting its adherence to American ideals. In addition, Alcohol was a real and pressing problem on Native American Reservations, and one that consistently drew the ire of Catholic Priests. This photograph was proof that missionaries were managing to raise the Indians from the pits of drunkenness and debauchery. A particularly curious feature of the photograph is that all the girls are wielding bows and arrows—hardly a symbol typically associated with Carrie Nation, who if anything was more famous for wielding an axe. These girls might have been the missionary’s attempt to craft their own “Native American Carrie Nation” complete with an ethnically appropriate weapon.

Examples of patriotism in the *Sentinel* reached their zenith in the years of World War I. The reasons why are readily apparent. Catholics faced severe suspicion during the war years that arose largely from their perceived “foreignness.” Much of this was connected to the fact that the loyalty of German and Irish Americans was called into question by the American press, and the high number of Catholics represented in those groups meant that Catholics as a whole faced accusations of being “anti-American.” As a result, American Catholics found themselves running a defensive public-image campaign that emphasized their dedication to the war effort.⁵⁷ One example of this public-relations campaign is the July 1918 issue of the *Indian Sentinel*. Titled

⁵⁶ Deirdre M. Moloney, *American Catholic Lay Groups and Transatlantic Social Reform in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 42-48

⁵⁷ Moloney, *American Catholic Lay Groups*, 119-120

"the Red Cross Number" the issue aimed to bring attention to the war effort contributions of Catholic Indians, thereby displaying the loyalty and patriotism of the Catholic missionaries who oversaw their "civilization." The issue begins on a defensive note, with the opening poem by Charles Constantine Pise bemoaning the public's questioning of Catholic loyalty.

"They say I do not love thee,
Flag of my native land,
Whose meteor-fold above me,
To the free breeze expand;
Thy broad stripes proudly streaming,
And they stars so brightly gleaming."⁵⁸

To underscore the message, Pise revealed that he had written the poem while "seated beneath the Dome of the capital."⁵⁹

However, the bulk of the issue is dedicated to discussing the work of Indians in support of the war effort. Curiously, in this instance the *Sentinel* strayed from only discussing Catholic Indians, although they certainly were the focus of most of the articles. For example, one article discussed the work Mrs. Franklin K. Lane, the wife of the Secretary of the Interior and the driving force behind the War Work association. It was this association that came up with the idea of selling Indian handicrafts to contribute to the war effort, to which Indians eagerly responded by donating handmade items.⁶⁰ The issue later noted that 5,000 Indians were serving in the United States army at the time of publication and that Indians had subscribed nearly ten million dollars in liberty bonds.⁶¹ Another article, titled "Indian Gifts to Civilized Man" discussed the

⁵⁸ Charles Constantine Pise, D. D., "Flag of My Native Land," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, p. 3

⁵⁹ "Charles Constantine Pise, D. D.," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, p. 9

⁶⁰ Mrs. Franklin K. Lane, "The Interior Department War Work Association, and First Annual Statement," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, pp. 7-9

⁶¹ "Catholic Indians and the War," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, p. 15

historical contributions of Indians to white culture. For example, it discussed the produce first cultivated by Native Americans, such as corn and potatoes, that would help sustain soldiers fighting overseas. The article also asserted the physical aptitude of the Native American man, who would make a fine soldier. The article makes no mention of Catholicism, or indeed of religion in general, but the most curious detail is who the article is attributed to. It is signed “Gertrude Bonnin,” the writer and activist who is better known today by her Indian name, Zitkala-Sa.⁶² Zitkala-Sa was not a Catholic: She received her education from Quaker missionaries and later eschewed Christianity in favor of traditional Native American beliefs. However, Zitkala-Sa was a prominent author and notable champion of Indian rights, and so her name carried a great deal of prestige. In addition, by focusing on all Indians, and not just Catholics, the *Sentinel* could show its support for the spirit of national unity that was being promoted by government propaganda.

The issue also took plenty of opportunities to highlight the contributions of Catholics to the war effort. An article on the origins of the Red Cross pointed out that the international organization was founded by the Catholic Saint Camillus.⁶³ In addition, a full fifteen pages of the issue was dedicated to a section titled “Catholic Indians and the War,” which went state-by-state to account the contributions of Catholic Indians. In Arizona, Papago Indians undertook the task of watching the southern boarder because troops could not be spared for the duty. In California girls at St. Boniface’s school knitted garments for soldiers while schoolboys from Idaho grew victory gardens. In Kansas priests emphasized the love of one’s country in their sermons, while a St. Francis’ school “every boy learned to plow” in order to produce fuel for the battle for

⁶² Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa), “Indian Gifts to Civilized Man, TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, p. 13-14

⁶³ “Origins of the Red Cross,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, pp. 11-12

democracy. St. Mary's School in Red Lake, Minnesota adopted the phrase "food conservation" as their "slogan" and happily lived off "war bread." Students in Nebraska were also praised for their knitting, and the notes on other states made it clear that this was one of the main war-related activities for Indian students. Two photographs of students from St. Francis school in South Dakota showed different stages of this process; one photograph showed four boys in a needle-making workshop, while a second showed a group of girls putting their newly-made tools to use. At the La Point School in Wisconsin even boy students took up knitting needles to make warm garments for American soldiers. Pennsylvania's section included a list of current and past Catholic students of Carlisle Indian school who were serving in the armed forces, while a photograph from South Dakota showed eight boys in drilling uniforms and military-inspired hats. The photograph was titled "Future Warriors, Stephan, South Dakota."⁶⁴

The Red Cross issue might be the most extreme example of pro-Americanism in the first twenty years of the *Sentinel*, but it was by no means an aberration. From its very first issue the authors of the *Indian Sentinel* invested considerable effort in proving that being Catholic was not incompatible with being an American. To illustrate this point, it is worth once again pointing out how little agency Indians were granted by the missionaries. Indians could not reach civilization on their own, and Catholics were the best possible option for bridging the gap between savagery and assimilation into American society. Protestant missionaries were treacherous and only interested in conversion, while the Government was praised only insofar as it supported Catholic missionary work.

⁶⁴ "Catholic Indians and the War," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no 9, 15-31

Chapter 2: The Civilized Indian

The Catholic Mission schools of the early twentieth century stood at an uncomfortable meeting point between differing ideas. They were born out of the belief that the Indian was capable of total assimilation into white culture and that the education of the Indian child was imperative to the civilization of the Indian race. However, this belief no longer held sway in popular opinion by the time the *Sentinel* was published, meaning that its authors and editors faced the emerging belief that there *were* clear physical and mental differences between Indians and whites, and that those differences presented an insurmountable obstacle to Indian education. The *Sentinel* is therefore rife with examples of both “civilized” and “savage” Indians.

The “old” idea—that Indians were capable of civilization—gained prominence in the 1870’s. At this point the Peace Policy was becoming increasingly unpopular among whites, partly because it closed large chunks of land off to white settlers and partly because both Indian and white activists had begun to protest conditions on the reservations. At the same time, anthropology emerged as a respected profession within the United States through the creation of both the Bureau of Ethnology and the Anthropological Society of Washington. By and large the anthropologists of the late nineteenth century subscribed to the theory of social evolution, which held that societal development had three stages—savagery, barbarism, and civilization—and that all human cultures could be placed somewhere on that scale. However, most proponents of this theory—including one of its most famous American supporters, Henry Morgan—also believed that there were no inherent differences between the races. Therefore, all humans who occupied the “lower” orders of societal development could progress to higher stages of development. The United States government saw the attraction in proving that it could make upstanding “white” citizens out of previously “savage” peoples, and so it began putting policies in place with the aim

of promoting civilization projects among Native Americans.⁶⁵ By doing this the government could achieve its goal of abolishing the reservation system, thereby placating the white settlers who were scrambling for open land.

The centerpiece of this new strain of policymaking was the Indian boarding school. These institutions were the brainchild of Captain Richard Henry Pratt, who coined the now-infamous phrase “kill the Indian, save the man.” Pratt began his civilizing career when he was charged with transporting seventy-two Indian hostages to Fort Marion in 1875. Once there, rather than having his prisoners simply sit in their cells, he recruited white religious and lay teachers to assist in “civilization” classes for the Indian men. Many of these men were eventually sent off to white homes where they could work and gain further knowledge of “civilized” living. Pratt’s experiment was so successful, and attracted so much positive press, that he later applied this method to Indian Children. Pratt established Carlisle Indian School in 1879 with the intent of teaching Indian children to become “white” citizens. The operation of the school hinged on completely separating the children from their families and cultures and immersing them in white civilization, thereby replacing their old culture with a new one in the hopes that upon returning home they would instruct their elders in proper behavior.⁶⁶

Pratt’s school proved hugely popular among American politicians, who quickly pursued a series of reforms which gave more money to the creation of Indian boarding schools. The mission schools of the Peace Policy era were replaced by a system of nationally-regulated schools, many of which were government-run.⁶⁷ However, this policy also allowed for religious

⁶⁵ Fredrick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 1-39

⁶⁶ Jennifer Graber, *The Gods of Indian Country: Religion and the Struggle for the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press), 126-143

⁶⁷ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 67

schools to continue their work so long as their curriculum was in line with that of the government schools. Catholics largely agreed to adhere to this trend, focusing their missionary efforts on schools that stressed the civilization of Indian children. Therefore, *Sentinel* authors often emphasized the programs at their schools that encouraged “civilized” behavior in their students. However, between the onset of the government’s new assimilation campaign and the inaugural issue of the *Sentinel* public opinion and government policy had both changed, and their articles also reflected the newer, more pessimistic view of Indian capabilities.

Beginning in the 1890’s, a chain of American ethnologists put forth the new theory that human races were inherently different and that whites were intellectually and morally superior to all other specimens. One of the most prominent supporters of this theory, W. J. McGee, suggested that while the move from savagery to civilization was possible, racial differences made the transition slow and difficult for less developed peoples. His successor, William Henry Holmes, took this view even further by suggesting that nonwhites would eventually die of completely—thus promoting the extinctionist theory that would plague American race relations for decades.⁶⁸ At the same time, whites had settled in the western states in greater numbers, and their increased population meant that their elected officials held considerably more political clout than they had in the 1870’s and 1880’s. These politicians generally opposed expensive assimilation policies.⁶⁹ These shifting views meant that, as the authors of the *Sentinel* first began to write, they were facing a public that had begun to believe in inherent racial differences and that no longer wholeheartedly supported Indian Assimilation. Therefore, many authors wrote in a matter that assumed that racial differences were real. However, they were also dedicated to

⁶⁸ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 115-145

⁶⁹ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 109-113

convincing their audience that mission schools—which carried out the civilization process that now seemed so far-fetched—were necessary for Indian well-being. This was necessary, of course, to convince their readers to donate their time and money to the Indian Missions, as donors were unlikely to be interested in supporting a lost cause. The focus on the necessity of Catholic “civilizers” was also an excellent way to demonstrate the compatibility of Catholicism and Americanism. It proved that Catholics were not only capable of upholding the ideals of American culture, but were also adept at instilling those values in a “savage” population. These two goals—fundraising and Americanizing—were accomplished via a three-pronged attack in which authors first asserted that Indians were in desperate need of civilization, then described the Catholic Missions’ civilization programs and their success, and finally proved that Catholics, rather than members of other religious denominations, were the group best-prepared to make the lessons of assimilation and civilization stick.

The contributors to the *Sentinel* often engaged in the trope of “racial typing,” which involved the attribution of certain characteristics to different races. This practice was completely in line with the dominant theory that nonwhites were innately separate from whites, and often “separate” meant “inferior.” Nonwhites were therefore ascribed undesirable qualities that justified their low standing in American society. African-Americans were described as animalistic and sexually deviant, Asians dubbed were cunning and untrustworthy, and Native Americans became childlike and lazy. Plenty of missionaries seemed to take these stereotypes to heart, and more than one author bemoaned the “laziness” of his Indian charges. One author described the Arapaho as “unsteady workers” who were prone to gambling,⁷⁰ while the

⁷⁰ “Present Day Arapahoes,” TIS 1907, pp. 44-45

Northern Cheyenne were described as having a “love of idleness like others of their race.”⁷¹ Children did not escape this criticism, as the students at St. John’s School for the Osage were deemed “averse to physical and mental exertion.”⁷² The students at Red Cliff, Wisconsin received a somewhat less scathing analysis: the author explained that they were “naturally shy and reticent with a natural love of freedom and ease” which made confining them to a classroom and keeping them focused on their schoolwork a trying task.⁷³ In all cases, the authors insinuated that these faults could be remedied through schooling and exposure to whites, thereby highlighting the ability of missionary work to mitigate Indian’s natural inferiority. Several authors ascribed to their subjects and innate inability to manage their finances, which was considered a cornerstone of a civilized (and capitalist) life—and which was probably always on the mind of the missionaries, whose institutions were in perpetual debt. One writer irritably described the American Indians as “just big children” who were incapable of saving money.⁷⁴ Natives needed guidance in matters of labor and finances, and Catholic Missionaries were quick to promote this as one of the key goals of their programs.

Interestingly, the broader question of the general abilities of Native Americans has no clear answer. Authors who address this question seem split, with some insisting that Indians were incapable of reason while others just as firmly opined that they were every bit as capable and competent as whites. In the former category, the author of “Ideas and experiences of a missionary” wrote “the Indian readily believes: he is not of a rationalistic turn of mind.”⁷⁵ The same article that bemoaned the Cheyenne’s idleness stated that “the Indian can never be brought

⁷¹ Rev. P. M. Gallagher, “The Northern Cheyenne, Past and Present,” TIS 1909, p. 23.

⁷² “St. John’s School for Osage boys,” TIS 1910, p. 11

⁷³ “The Immaculate Conception Indian Mission, Stephan, South Dakota,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁴ Father Chrysostom Verwyst, O. F. M., “Ideas and Experiences of a Missionary,” TIS 1908, p. 45

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 44

to reason as a white man.⁷⁶ Such accounts often approached fatalism, and seemed to conform to ethnologists' scientific assertions that nonwhite peoples would never reach a level of "civilization" on par with whites. The aged missionary who penned "21 year among the Chippewa" was one such example, writing that even after years of living among "civilized" whites, the average Chippewa was still "Indian at heart....irresolute, fickle, always changing his opinion, distrusting of the white man, cheating if he can, not paying his debts, taciturn in presence of whites, slow, naturally indolent, always borrowing things and not returning them, throughout an unreliable character."⁷⁷

Other authors were eager to point out positive qualities in the American Indians that would make them good candidates for civilization. Some flatly denied claims of Indian inferiority. An article describing the Navajo students at St. Michael's school was quick to point out that "they show that they are by no means inferior to the whites so far as memory, intelligence and understanding are concerned."⁷⁸ The Navajo in general seemed to come off well towards the missionaries: and earlier article called them "as a rule, very alert and intelligent, ever ready to learn, and open to conviction."⁷⁹ The editors also brought in non-Catholic views to prove their point—a tactic that they often used when they wanted to prove themselves unbiased. The second issue of the *Sentinel* included a short piece titled "Mental Capacities of the Indian," which quoted none other than J. B. Benedict, the U. S. Supervisor of Indian schools. In it he states that Native Americans clearly possessed the same mental capabilities as white men, and if given equal opportunities an Indian boy would naturally equal a white boy in terms of

⁷⁶ Rev. P. M. Gallagher, "the Northern Cheyenne, Past and Present," TIS 1909, p. 24

⁷⁷ Simon Lampe, O. S. B., "Twenty-one Years among the Chippewas of Minnesota, TIS 1910, p. 38.

⁷⁸ Fr. Anselm Weber, O. F. M., "St. Michael's Mission and School for the Navajo Indians," TIS 1908, p. 23

⁷⁹ Fr. Anselm Weber, O. F. M., "Letters from Indian Missionaries: St. Michael's Arizona, January 26, 1905." TIS 1905-1906, p. 44

achievement.⁸⁰ Such a view was becoming increasingly unpopular as the first decade of the twentieth century wore on, and so to have such a statement from a government official must have been a godsend to the missionaries.

Whether or not Native Americans were capable of civilization was only half the argument. The Missionaries also needed to prove that Indians *needed* help being civilized, and this meant proving that their current state was unacceptable. As Mission Priests spent much of their time visiting Indian homes and villages, either attempting conversions or making sickbed calls, they were in an ideal position to comment on the day-to-day lives of Native Americans. While not all Missionaries expressed horror at what they saw, many were willing to express disgust and moral outrage in order to highlight the importance of civilizing efforts.

Native American cultural practices were often the object of scorn for these missionaries. An article on the Arapaho described them as a “highly uninteresting lot of Indians,” going on to add that “arts they have none: Their music is of the most primitive sort, indeed it is but a monotonous succession of drawling, weird and almost unearthly yelps: nor could the most careful anatomy reveal a poetic vein in their make-up.”⁸¹ Even their cooking received criticism, as one author writing about the Chippewa claimed that they were too lazy to prepare anything worth eating.⁸² What the Missionaries saw as a lack of work ethic was also blamed for the general disinterest the Indians displayed towards cooking or handiwork, which was seen as “degrading for a free-born native.”⁸³ Marriage customs were a source of constant aggravation to the priests, to whom any union not blessed in a Catholic ceremony was inherently sinful.

⁸⁰ “Mental Capacity of Indians,” TIS 1903-1904, p. 25.

⁸¹ J. B. Sifton, S. J., “Present Day Arapahos,” TIS 1907, p. 42

⁸² Simon Lampe, O. S. B., “Twenty-one Years among the Chippewas of Minnesota, TIS 1910, p. 42

⁸³ P. F. Hylebos, “St. George’s School, Puyallup Reservation, Washington,” TIS 1915, p. 11

Chippewa couples were noted as often living together for months or years before marriage, only to be divorced due to "Drunkenness and shiftlessness on the part of the husband, insubordination on the part of the wife, or both...." Other writers described young girls as being "sold to the highest bidder," after which the girl's extended family would begin harassing the groom's family for resources.⁸⁴ Families that remained married also received censure, with two separate authors complaining that Indians didn't physically discipline their children enough.⁸⁵ Interestingly, despite their tendency to ridicule Indian women for their physical appearance, mannerisms or lack of motherly instincts, authors were just as quick to claim that Native women were terribly treated in traditional cultures. An article on the Crow Indians described Crow men idly smoking pipes and talking amongst themselves whilst around them the women toiled away on daily tasks,⁸⁶ while another author wrote "it is difficult for us Christians to form an adequate idea of the pitiable condition of the wife of the Indian in the former years."⁸⁷ Perhaps if Native Culture could be lifted closer to that of white "civilized" culture, then the conditions Indian woman would begin to improve.

However, it was Indian traditions and religious practices that drew the greatest ire from Missionaries. Medicine men were their constant foe and were blamed for planting "superstitions" in the minds of Indians who might otherwise be ushered along the road to civilization.⁸⁸ Among other things, medicine men were responsible for the spread of the Ghost Dance, a practice which according to the missionaries increased tensions between tribes and the government to such a

⁸⁴ Rev. Aloysius Vrebosch, "The Crow Indians and Missionary Efforts Among Them," TIS 1909, pp. 26-27.

⁸⁵ Simon Lampe, O. S. B., "Twenty-one Years among the Chippewas of Minnesota," TIS 1910, pp. 38-39; "Holy Family Mission School, Blackfeet Reservation, Montana," TIS 1912, p. 36

⁸⁶ Rev. Aloysius Vrebosch, "The Crow Indians and Missionary Efforts Among Them," TIS 1909, p. 26

⁸⁷ P. Aloysius Hermanutz, O. S. B., "St. Benedict's Mission and School for Chippewa Indians, White Earth, Minnesota," TIS 1911, p. 30

⁸⁸ Rev. Aloysius Vrebosch, "The Crow Indians and Missionary Efforts Among Them," TIS 1909, p. 29; 1912, 43-44

degree that many schools had to be closed until conditions became less volatile.⁸⁹ "Dreamers," or Indians who believed that they received prophetic visions, were also a constant thorn in the Missionary's side. In one missionary's description of his travels, he described a confrontation with a Dreamer woman who went on a tirade against the Missionary's conversion efforts. The meeting became heated, but the missionary and his companions later enjoyed a good laugh over "the crazy fit of that learned Sempuelsh woman."⁹⁰ The use of the term "learned" is interesting here, as "learned" Indians would seem to be the ultimate goal of the missionaries. Perhaps "learned" was meant to be used ironically, but it's just as likely that the Dreamer was educated at a non-Catholic schools, or that she received her education secondhand from a white-educated Indian. Either way, the suggestion here is that a learned Indian is not necessarily a good Indian.

Individual medicine men and dreamers may have been annoyances, but at least they were lone individuals whom a priest could ignore or publicly admonish. Communal rites and religious traditions were harder to stamp out. Even Catholic Indians who had attended boarding schools often continued to attend such events due to their enduring value to Indian communities. Priests, of course, did not see these festivities as important declarations of unity and tribal pride, but as roadblocks to full civilization and Christianity.

J. B. Carroll's article on the Piegan fourth of July celebrations, ominously titled "The Fourth of July Dishonored," is prime example of such shortsightedness. According to Carroll, Piegians used the holiday as an excuse to practice their "heathen" customs. He saw the week-long celebration, which was often observed by white tourists, as one of the greatest threats to Indian uplift. He lamented that baptized children, whom the missionaries had carefully instructed in

⁸⁹ William Arendzen, "The Cheyenne and their Catholic Mission," TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 70-71.

⁹⁰ "Extract from a Letter of a Rocky Mountain Jesuit Missionary," TIS 1906, pp. 33-34

Catholic doctrines, could be seen “decked out in paints and feathers, looking like demons that had just emerged from the lower regions.” Participating in this rite also tended to put Indians into debt, which Carroll saw as another instance of the Indians’ inability to handle finances. Perhaps most grievously, the entire event seemed to Carroll to be an example of what he called the Piegan’s “lack of Christian sincerity.” They didn’t attend church often enough, they only prayed for “earthly” things rather than eternal salvation, and they would like to be Christians at Easter but Pagans on the Fourth of July. Even when given basic instructions in Catholicism Indians continued to practice it incorrectly in Missionary’s eyes. Not only was more guidance needed from religious leaders, but harsher steps had to be taken to abolish practices like the Piegan Fourth of July celebration.⁹¹ Such an article also had the benefit of displaying the patriotism (and therefore Americanism) of Catholic missionaries and the pains they took to instill it in Native populations.

Another article that takes aim at traditional practices is one of the few pieces written by William Ketcham himself. Ketcham usually contributed only pieces on his work on Indian Language translations, but he made an exception when he witnessed the cremation practices of the Cocopah Indians. He noted an air of excitement about the proceedings and reported that the Superintendent of the Fort Yuma reservation thought that the Cocopah became happier the more burials they had to attend, to the point that they were “practically frantic” during epidemics. Besides the general air of excitement, Ketcham objected to the extremely public displays of grief. The Cocopah wept and wailed continuously during the ceremony, and the men parted their hair from ear to ear so that half of it hung over their faces, giving them (according to Ketcham) a “grotesque” appearance. Preceding the burning the possessions of the deceased were distributed

⁹¹ J. B. Carroll, S. J., “The Fourth of July Dishonored,” TIS 1910, pp. 28-33

amongst the crowd. When the funeral pyre was lit, the participants threw their clothing into the fire: Ketcham reported being told that the mourners used to strip naked for this stage of the ceremony, but had gotten into the habit of wearing two layers of clothes so that only the outer one was burned. Ketcham came from a tradition where funerals were somber affairs that focused on the soul's reunification with God, and so his reaction to the Cocopah ceremonies was particularly virulent: "Whatever they are, the practice of burning dead bodies is most repulsive and in all their mourning there is not one note of hope." To Ketcham, Mission work was necessary to "rescue these poor, benighted people from the thrall of the fire demon."⁹²

In a later issue, missionary A. van der Velden had a similar reaction to dances among the Chippewa. He claimed that while white tourists tended to view them as innocent forms of entertainment, they were actually highly damaging to the Chippewa's moral character. The Missionary posted at the reservation was invited by a tribal chief (he assumed that he only received an invitation because he was expected to provide food) but was cryptically warned against attending on the fourth day. He responded that he would only come if he was permitted to watch the entire dance, but through a mixture of hearsay and being conveniently close to the ceremonies during interesting periods, he managed to gain a fair idea of the proceedings. While the type of dance is not stated in the article, his account suggests that the Chippewa were engaging in a sun dance. His description gives clear evidence of how shocking he found the ritual.

"If the dancer is able to keep up the bodily movements for the prescribed time his name is proclaimed as an accredited dancer by the chiefs, sitting in a semicircle. Those so proclaimed are hailed by the acclamations of the whole crowd....However, if amongst these approved dancers one or another ambitions a higher position (to be an officer) he steps forward and declares that far from being exhausted by the recent test he is ready and able to stand much more. Then he is

⁹² William H. Ketcham, "A Cocopah Cremation," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 11, pp. 36-39.

put to the torture. If he comes out of this ordeal without having winced or betrayed pain he is then and there publicly declared to be very brave....

...A Loop was first tied to the top of the middle pole, and through this loop a long lariat was passed, leaving its two ends hanging down. Then the skin of the young man's breast was pulled until a two-edged knife could be passed clean through the skin at either side. Through these openings or wounds a strong stick was passed, so that it entered the breast at one side, passed between the skin and the breast bone and out through the opposite side, leaving part of the stick protruding at each side. A loop was made and passed over the protruding ends of the stick. This loop was then fastened firmly to one end of the dangling lariat. Ready and strong hands now grasped the other end of the lariat and began to pull up the young man."

It is worth noting that the priest was not actually present at this portion of the ceremony, and while the author (not the same person as the priest) mentioned observing several sun dances it's not clear if he was ever privy to this portion. Nevertheless, it is described with an amount of detail that suggests some fascination on the part of the purportedly shocked priest.

While the priest did not observe the second ritual himself, he did come across a young man after the dance who failed to complete it and was shunned by the rest of the tribe as a result. The priest expressed pity for the young man and anger at the culture that allowed such a ceremony to take place. In addition, he eventually uncovered the "fourth day" event that the chief suspected he would object to. This portion involved entering a makeshift lodge where they attempted to placate the devil. The priest explained that, while the Chippewa had a "good but crude" knowledge of both God and Satan, they had a tendency to misconstrue the Devil as a figure to be placated rather than rejected. Again, the priest's absence at this event makes it hard to verify what truly happened.⁹³

Articles on "barbaric" Native customs may have improved the magazine's readership, but the BCIM needed more than just subscription fees to support its schools. What they were really after was larger donations. For that to happen, writers had to illustrate how Missionary men and

⁹³ A. Van Der Velden, S. J., "Cheyenne Dances," TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 95-98

women were working to “improve” their Indians—all while stressing how a shortage of funds could cause the Indians to fall back to their old ways. In essence, lurid descriptions of unsanitary teepees and barbaric dances showed the imminent threat that made the civilizing work performed by missionaries so necessary.

The keystone to all civilization efforts was, of course, the school. This concept had been cemented in the American mind ever since Pratt created the Carlisle Indian school, and Catholic missionaries saw no reason to dispute these claims. Despite competing with government schools for resources and students, and despite their concern over the proselytizing influence of schools such as Haskell,⁹⁴ Catholic schools showed remarkably similar methodology to their government counterparts. Part of this was due to the fact that the BCIM signed a contract with the Indian Office at every reservation where a school was established, and so Government demands had to be complied with to some degree. These contracts would stipulate that students would receive industrial training that was divided on the basis of gender and that students be instructed in the “duties and privileges of American citizenship.”⁹⁵ However, the number of articles that painstakingly described school programs that were clearly designed for the “Americanization” of Indians is far too high to be explained by forced compliance with government standards. By giving detailed accounts of training that emphasized conformity with white American culture, the authors were once again proving their inclusion in mainstream society. There is also no indication that the missionaries themselves had anything against the government’s policy of assimilation-focused training. If the authors of the *Indian Sentinel* did not agree with the government’s preferred training methods, then they probably would not have highlighted

⁹⁴ “Catholic Instruction in Government Schools: U.S. Indian School, Genoa, Nebraska.” TIS 1916, p. 20

⁹⁵ “1904 St. Joseph’s Contract.” BCIM Series 1, box 47, Folder 42.

industrial training so clearly in their articles. The missionaries—or at least the reading Catholic public—shared the government’s enthusiasm for non-religious civilization methods.

Each issue of the *Sentinel* includes several articles that focus on specific Mission schools, and descriptions of the education received by the students are frequently included. This is particularly true in earlier issues when individual articles tended to be longer and more detailed descriptions could be given. A description of the daily routine for students at St. Boniface’s Industrial school in Banning, California is well-matched by several other articles and can be seen as a good representation of school life. The students woke at 5:30 and attended morning prayers at 6:15, with an additional hour of religious instruction being given for one hour three days of the week. At 7:15 breakfast was served by older female students, after which chores that contributed to the upkeep of the mission were completed by all students. Schoolwork began at 9:00 and was divided into three classes based on age. Classes ended at 11:30 and dinner was served at noon. In the afternoon the student body was divided into two groups which rotated between industrial training and further school work. Supper was served at 5:00, and the evenings were given to recreation time, divided by gender. As part of their schoolwork, girls were given training specifically tailored to their assumed future role as a wife and mother. The Laundry was done by “strong, healthy girls” every Monday morning, and every month a group of four girls was assigned to kitchen duty. Here they were taught to prepare “everything that will be useful to them in making a good and honest living.” However, it was boys who were given the task of baking on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Eight boys also worked on the mission farm.⁹⁶ An article written a decade later about the daily routine at St. Mary’s mission is remarkably similar given the time lapse, although it goes into greater detail about the girl’s industrial

⁹⁶ “St. Boniface’s Industrial School, Banning, California,” TIS1 905-1906, pp. 18-23.

training. Like many other articles, it emphasized their work in the sewing room, which was described as the "center of activity" during the industrial training portion of the day. The room was equipped with six sewing machines that girls used to make their own dresses. They also made laces and doilies that were used in the chapel.⁹⁷ Another article mentioned that their female students specialized in Mexican drawn work (a type of embroidery), lacemaking and carpet-weaving.⁹⁸

The emphasis on girl's sewing was a near-constant throughout the early run of the *Sentinel*. It provided an opportunity for authors to illustrate Indian girls engaged in womanly, civilized work while also emphasizing their industry and productivity. Photographs of girls working in the sewing room were also a common occurrence. A photograph taken by a lay instructor at St. Francis Mission school in South Dakota shows four neatly-dressed girls bent over their sewing machines while a fifth girl presents her work to a supervising nun. Pictures of St. Mary and a crucified Christ that are clearly displayed on the wall behind the girls brings and air of saintly calmness to the scene. A picture from another St. Mary's school (this one in Oklahoma) has a more rustic setting and no sewing machines, but a similar air of domestic industry. It shows girls of a range of ages--once again dressed in neat dresses--bent over handheld needlework.⁹⁹ The girls' handiwork was not only shown in the pages of the *Sentinel*. St. Bernalillo's school in New Mexico won several prizes for an selection of handiworks that it exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition.¹⁰⁰ The main draw of this training, however, was not artistic merit but domesticity. Girls were given "opportunities...for acquiring all the

⁹⁷ St. Mary's Institute, Bayfield, Wisconsin," TIS 1916, pp. 11-12

⁹⁸ "St. Mary's Industrial Boarding School, Odanah, Wisconsin," TIS 1905-1906, p. 10

⁹⁹ "St. Mary's Academy, Sacred Heart, Oklahoma," TIS 1907, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ "The Indian School of the Sisters of Loretto, Bernalillo, New Mexico," TIS 1904-1905, p. 37.

accomplishments that help to make a perfect housekeeper and a useful member of society.”¹⁰¹

An article on the Arapaho Indians praises the Girls’ school for its ”Splendid work for the uplifting of Arapaho womanhood,”¹⁰² while an article on the Holy Rosary Mission in Pine Ridge, South Dakota notes that the students are ”introduced by the sisters into all the mysteries of dairying, cooking, housekeeping, plain and fancy needlework, and all the other occupations that find a place in a thrifty and well-regulated home.”¹⁰³ Boys, too, were given industrial training, although theirs steered them towards farming or a traditional trade. At St. John’s school in Oklahoma, boys were taught farming, gardening, baking, blacksmithing and tailoring.¹⁰⁴ In the ”student’s chapter” section of the April 1919 issue, a young boy from the Holy Rosary Mission expressed his desire to be a shoemaker when he grew up.¹⁰⁵ This pattern of emphasizing domesticity in female students and industry in male students was entirely keeping with the views of male and female roles widely held (though not always followed) in American society.

In order to compel readers to contribute money, it was imperative that the children attending these schools appeared to be happy and healthy. The articles of the *Sentinel* are full of happy children who tranquilly attend to their daily tasks before cheerfully frolicking about during their recreation time. At St. Elizabeth’s Indian school, time passed quickly for the “happily working children.”¹⁰⁶ Likewise, St. Mary’s industrial school in Oklahoma was described as a ”haven safety” where Indian Girls could be instructed in ”all the details of Domestic Science.”¹⁰⁷ At another St. Mary’s, this one in Wisconsin, the girls completed their

¹⁰¹ St. Mary’s Institute, Bayfield, Wisconsin,” TIS 1916, p. 12

¹⁰² J. B. Sifton, S. J., ”Present Day Arapahos,” TIS 1907, p. 46

¹⁰³ ”Holy Rosary Mission School, Pine Ridge, South Dakota,” TIS 1908, p. 31

¹⁰⁴ ”St. John’s School for Osage Boys,” TIS 1910, p. 11

¹⁰⁵ Frank Giroux, ”Student’s Chapter,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 44.

¹⁰⁶ ”St. Elizabeth’s Indian School, Purcell, Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory,” TIS 1904-1905, p. 39

¹⁰⁷ ”St. Mary’s Academy, Sacred Heart, Oklahoma,” TIS 1907, p. 30.

laundry duty in a room that was "bright, airy and cheery" and supplied with the newest modern equipment,¹⁰⁸ and two nuns on a visit to an Arizona mission came across a schoolyard full of "happy, gamboling children."¹⁰⁹ Proper civilization was a gentle, pleasant process that children universally enjoyed after getting over their native propensity towards idleness. The truth, of course, is rather more complicated, and not only because the happiness of the students is rather suspect. The workload of the students served more than an educational purpose. It was essential to keeping the schools open. Students provided labor that contributed to feeding and housing the student body as well as the teachers and missionaries. Most mission schools had nowhere near the funds necessary to hire the staff that would have been required to complete this work, and before a sizeable student population was assembled virtually all of the work at the schools was done by Nuns.¹¹⁰ Even with just a handful of students, this was a ridiculous workload, and as more students began attending it would have been unsustainable. Female students did not always sew their own dresses to practice their needlework: At St. Benedict's in Minnesota, the school was too low on funds to clothe any of the children, so the girls were responsible for that duty as well.¹¹¹ St. Mary's Industrial school in Wisconsin--the same school that boasted of its bright and cheery laundry room--sold the pupil's handicrafts to raise extra money.¹¹² The same article that showed five girls happily working with sewing machines included a photograph of a large group of girls stuffing cornhusks into bags. The caption on the picture explained that many mission schools were too poor to afford mattresses, so the girls gathered husks from the corn that the boys harvested as part of their farm training to use as bedding.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ St. Mary's Institute, Bayfield, Wisconsin," TIS 1916, pp. 11-12

¹⁰⁹ "Through the Papago Desert," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 5, p. 8.

¹¹⁰ J. M. Cataldo, S. J., "Mission School, Slickpoo, Idaho," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 15

¹¹¹ Thomas M. Neate, S. J., "Letters from Indian Missionaries: The Umatillas," TIS 1911, p. 37

¹¹² St. Mary's Institute, Bayfield, Wisconsin," TIS 1916, p. 12

¹¹³ P. F. Digmann, S. J., "St. Francis Mission," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 13

Mentions of the schools' financial woes are clearly meant to elicit the sympathy of the readers, but to make sure the tactic didn't backfire the authors needed to remove any suggestion of students being deprived. An article on a Mission school on Arizona noted that meat was served only once a week, no butter was available and dried fruit had to substituted for fresh, but such revelations were rare.¹¹⁴ Authors generally made no mention of the effects the shortages may have had on the students, and even the article about the Arizona mission was quick to reassure readers that the students still received adequate nutrition. The mission schools needed to keep their students happy in order to deserve funding, but they had to be destitute enough to need it. It was a tricky balance to strike.

Descriptions of wild Indian children being molded into upstanding citizens were powerful incentives for money to be sent, but in theory any properly equipped school could accomplish that result no matter its religious orientation. The Catholic Missionaries needed a way show their superiority to the government schools that threatened their own survival. This required a more spiritual argument, and so *Sentinel* authors often alluded to a spiritual battle for the souls of Indians that only Catholic institutions could win.

The idea of "spiritual warfare for the Pagan's soul" was nothing new: It had existed since Columbus first set foot on the New World and only gained momentum as European powers scrambled to colonize the continent. Many of the Spanish *conquistadors* firmly believed that they were unearthing new terrain not only for the Spanish crown, but for Christianity. The religious fervor that swept through Spain as a response to the Protestant Reformation also resulted in the formation of the Jesuit order, which would constitute the Vanguard of religious

¹¹⁴ "The Padres Still at Work," TIS 1912, p. 17

conversion across the Americas.¹¹⁵ This meant that authors of the *Sentinel* had a long tradition to draw on when they described their own battles against the Satanic influences of Native American culture.

In a 1907 article on the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament (the religious group formed by Mother Katherine Drexel) the author described the “mighty warfare for the souls of the Indian and colored,” adding that “Satan has taken possession of a vast domain of souls, and neutralizes the word of Christ.”¹¹⁶ To such thinkers, the pre-Columbian world of the Americas was a dark land of terror and Godlessness. One author asserted that before the intervention of Europeans, “there was no God, no prayer, no temple, but only the murderous den and Satanic yell of the medicine man.”¹¹⁷ Another author claimed that heathenism, whether it be the “more refined form among the Greeks and Romans” or the “crude, sensual form practiced by the Indians,” ultimately resulted in an existence defined by “darkness, fraud and abomination.” Devilish influences, he added, were clearly at work in their “magical” practices.¹¹⁸ When the *Sentinel* underwent managerial and formatting changes in 1916, the editors took the opportunity to reassert this story in spectacular style.

“...Satan seems to have regarded as his very own the Indian races of both Americas, where he had succeeded in his design of thoroughly alienating human creatures from their Creator; where, in places, as in Mexico, he had triumphed to such a pass that he had himself adored and received human sacrifices by the ten thousands; where, in other places, as in California, he had carried his point in another way, in that he had reduced the natives to such a state as to imagine themselves, save for a scant language, little better than brutes that lived for the sole purpose of gratifying themselves without restraint.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, 15-42

¹¹⁶ “The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People,” TIS 1907, p. 14

¹¹⁷ Paul Gard, “Tulalip Indian Mission,” TIS 1913, p. 34

¹¹⁸ P. Aloysius Hermanutz, “St. Benedict’s Mission and School for Chippewa Indians, White Earth, Minnesota,” TIS 1911, p. 29

¹¹⁹ “Esperanza,” “Why the Indian Sentinel?” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 7

Into this narrative the Catholic inserted their most famous missionaries as heroes who transported the benighted Pagans into the light of the One True faith. Poems were a popular way of conveying this message, and for its first two decades of existence the *Sentinel* always included a poem in the first few pages of every issue. They were an irresistibly romantic way of conveying the plight of the Indians and the saving grace of the Missionaries. The 1915 issue was dedicated to Junipero Serra and began with a poem written by California's well-known poet John S. McGroarty, in which the Franciscan monk was described "winning America for God" and "freeing the heathens from darkness."¹²⁰ A later poem on the Navajo Indians describes them fleeing "pagan thralldom" after receiving the "seraph's sign" from the Missionaries.¹²¹ Besides painting Catholics in a heroic light, these arguments served to weave Catholicism into American history. They were a spiritual extension of the classic Catholic argument that it was Catholics, and not protestants, who had always been on the forefront of the American civilization project. This created a sort of Catholicization of America that had both a historical and theological basis. By Catholicizing America, *Sentinel* authors could Americanize Catholics.

Sentinel authors couldn't simply discuss past missionary struggles. They had to convince their readers that the struggle for the Indian's soul was ongoing and thereby in need of financial support. To emphasize that satanic influences had not been totally vanquished by the great missionaries of the past, authors described current practices among Indians that they believed still held Satan meanings. Van der Velden's description of the Sun Dance is one example. Another practice that often came under fire was the Ghost Dance, a practice that began in the late 1800's and continued in spurts into the early twentieth century. One article written in the early

¹²⁰ John S. McGroarty, "Fray Junipero," TIS 1915, p. 3

¹²¹ W. W., "The Navajo," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 3

1920's included excerpts from the diary of a priest who had been present during the “messiah craze” (a common term that the Catholics used for the Ghost Dance movement) that arose shortly before the massacre at Wounded Knee Creek.

“New of Uprising among the Rosebud Indians.... War Bonnet is discussing the Ghost Dance. It gets more and more the appearance of devilry. The appearing ghosts are said to express dislike for baptized persons....all apparitions are inspiring the Indians with distrust, dislike, contempt and even hatred for the whites.”¹²²

The missionary who wrote this diary entry betrayed a common misconception held by whites who were present during the ghost dance. He assumed that there was a sharp divide between “church-going” Indians, who had accepted God and civilization into their lives, and the “ghost dancing” Indians who clung to pagan traditions. In reality, many of the Sioux Indians who participated in the Ghost Dance also attended Christian churches. In fact, several prominent Ghost Dance leaders maintained that the religion exhorted its believers to attend church and send their children to school.¹²³ Even more striking was the fact that many ghost dancers assumed that the messiah that was to be ushered in by the performance of the Ghost Dance was none other than Jesus Christ.¹²⁴ However, even if the missionary who wrote these entries had been aware of these beliefs or understood the significance of the Ghost Dance, it would have done no good to try and explain such a concept to white Catholics, who saw their religion as a rigid, unchanging structure. The Indian concept of religion as a dynamic, flexible spirituality would have been completely alien to them.

Even more importantly, the authors who reported these diary entries had a vested interest in portraying Ghost Dancing Indians as dangerous and anti-Christian. Like many white officials

¹²² P. F. S., S. J., “Holy Rosary Between Battlefields,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 28

¹²³ Louis S. Warren, *God's Red Son: The Ghost Dance Religion and the Making of Modern America* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 189-190

¹²⁴ Warren, *God's Red Son*, 174

and missionaries at the time they defined all Indians as either “progressive” or “non-progressive.” The progressive Indians were the success stories, while non-progressive Indians were either antagonists or lost souls who had yet to see the light.¹²⁵ By sticking to this formula the authors of the *Sentinel* highlighted the simple good-versus-evil battle that they believed they were fighting. Indians were either lost or saved, and either civilized or barbaric. Therefore, these authors repeated common tropes professed by non-Catholic officials while also making the nature of their work accessible and compelling to a Catholic audience.

To bolster their claims of the saving power of Catholicism, authors provided examples to prove that religious instruction was necessary to complete the “civilization” process. (It should go without saying that “religious” instruction always meant “Catholic” instruction.) An author writing about the Crow Indians claimed that graduates of Indian schools inevitably came back to their old homes and reverted to their old ways, but with a “chip on their shoulder:” they had become overconfident in their “civilization” which had the effect of making them overbearing and intractable to the priests—much like the “Learned Sempuelsh woman” who heckled the missionary over his attempts to convert her. Religious instruction was necessary because it added a moral dimension to their training and taught them humility.¹²⁶ An article on the “Indians of New York” took matters a step further by comparing Catholic Indians to those who had either no religious instruction or Protestant religious instruction. Catholic Indians, he said, were the only ones who “lived decently,” free from the drunkenness and debauchery that plagued other tribes. He stated that “Here God’s grace produced marvelous holiness in many a child of the forest: warriors proud and cruel were turned into humble and merciful servants of the cross: women and

¹²⁵ Warren, *God’s Red Son*, 212-214

¹²⁶ Rev. Aloysius Vrebosch, S. J., “The Crow Indians and Missionary Effort Among Them,” TIS 1909, pp. 30-31

maidens were made as chaste and virtuous as any of the female saints and martyrs of the Palmy days of Christianity.” However, he felt that the state of affairs among the Indians of New York on the whole constituted an embarrassment to civilization efforts. Naturally, he blamed the lack of effectiveness on the dearth of Catholic instruction. He pointed out that the Indians of California had progressed farther because of their continual attention from Catholic clergy. He found this even more compelling because the Indians of California had been ”pillaged of their land” by greedy settlers and the United States Government while the Indians of New York had had their lands protected. Despite the upheavals faced by the Indians of California, the influence of Catholicism had allowed them to progress gracefully from savagery to civilization, while the Indians of New York who had not been fortunate enough to have access to Catholic instruction remained mired in vice and barbarism.¹²⁷ An author writing about the Sioux described the tribes ”army of Catechists” (Indians who had been trained by priests to educate others in the principles of Catholicism) that he claimed had caused the Sioux to advance more quickly in civilization than any other tribe.¹²⁸

Other stories took a more personal approach, providing specific anecdotes that illustrated the influence of Catholicism on the Indians. These stories follow a similar theme to the more general articles, but were able to be more emotionally persuasive because of their intimacy. The story “Sweet Revenge” told the story of Father D’Aste’s longstanding feud with Chief Arlee. D’Aste wanted to reprimand Arlee for his “transgressions” (what these were is never clarified) only to have the irate Indian Chief threaten his life. Arlee proved unable to carry out his threat, and the article insinuates that the holiness of the priests drained Arlee of his willpower,

¹²⁷ William Hughes, ”Indians of New York, TIS 1912, p. 5-12

¹²⁸ ”Editorials,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 4

effectively saving him from his savage nature. However, Arlee still refused to repent, so D'Aste refused to ring the bell that called the tribe to mass until the Chief apologized. Arlee was forced to capitulate under the pressure of his spiritually deprived tribe, and eventually became a staunch Catholic. D'Aste's "revenge" was that he eventually gave the man who tried to kill him the "passport to eternity," thereby saving one more savage soul.¹²⁹ Authors also touted the benefits of baptism for the Indian Character. One story explained how Indian children preparing for Baptism conceived the ceremony. A young girl says that after Baptism, she won't be able to steal anymore, while a group of young boys say that Baptism will prohibit them from killing birds. In a more striking example, a group of schoolgirls were told by a non-Catholic classmate that after baptism they would not be permitted to play with dolls. Their response was to gather up their dolls and burn them in a bonfire. The priests interpreted this as a sign that the girls saw any sacrifice as being worth their faith.¹³⁰

The trajectory seems straightforward: Priests would implement a two-pronged strategy of industrial training and religious instruction, and the students would gain the advantages of civilization. What would happen after graduation, however, was another story. When Captain Pratt had originally dreamed up the Indian Industrial school, he had imagined a future where Indians assimilated completely into white culture. He aimed for a mixture of classroom learning and practical training that would mold the Indian child into a white adult, thereby erasing racial boundaries.¹³¹ It may seem odd, then, that there are almost no instances in the *Indian Sentinel* that feature Indians successfully integrating into white society.

¹²⁹ Hubert A. Post, "Sweet Revenge," TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 1, p. 16

¹³⁰ P. F. Hylebos, "Indians of the Puget Sound Region," TIS 1915, p. 42-45.

¹³¹ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 107-121

The one clear instance that does occur is the article *Kaitcha, the Indian Boy*, written by Mary Lalor Mitchell. In it, Kaitcha comes under the wing of a well-meaning white family after his father is killed at Wounded Knee Creek. Through their support and encouragement he attends St. John's College and becomes a fine, upstanding citizen.¹³² This article was an isolated incident, and it appeared in the second issue of the *Sentinel*, before the magazine had settled into its predominant themes and formats. Other cases that focused on Indian men making their way successfully in the white world received no attention until the issues that came out during the United States' involvement in World War I, and then the focus was Indian men in the Army. Instances where Indians became successfully integrated into white were otherwise left out of the *Sentinel* after Kaitcha's story was published.

We have already seen that by the time the *Sentinel* was in print, the American public was considerably less optimistic about the ability to fully assimilate Indians into white society. This is almost certainly part of the reason that so few "success" stories were published; such stories would run counter to the dominant view of Indian capabilities. However, the writers of these articles were not just Americans. They were American Catholics, and Catholics had another reason for wanting to keep their converted Indians away from white society. Catholicism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century faced an uncomfortable contradiction. While Catholics living in the United States generally wanted to be seen as American citizens, they were less uniformly enthusiastic about joining into American culture. From its foundations in the republican era the Catholic Church had struggled with its place in American society. The ultimate controversy was whether or not the Church should adapt to American culture. Traditionally the Church was seen as an unchanging institution that stood firm against all cultural

¹³² Mary Lalor Mitchell, "Kaitcha, the Indian Boy," TIS 1903-1904, pp. 36-41

upheavals, but there were factions within American Catholicism who challenged this vision and viewed the Church as a growing and evolving *part of America*. This idea produced a batch of “modernist thinkers” in the 1890’s who sought to unite the Church with the ethos of the age, which they termed “Americanism.” John Ireland, the Bishop of St. Paul, was one of the well-known leaders of this movement. However, these optimistic thinkers found themselves at odds with conservative Catholics who resented the progressive thinking of the age and the overwhelming changes occurring in American society. These Catholics saw the Church as an institution that should further barricade itself *against* the modern world. These opposing viewpoints led to a raging debate in the last decades of the nineteenth century over the relationship between the Church and society. This debate also spread to European Catholicism, and eventually the Vatican asserted its authority on the matter. In 1899 Pope Leo XIII issued the *Testum Benevolentiae*, a letter condemning “Americanism” and bolstering the conservative stance. This was followed in 1907 with Pope Pius X’s issuing of the *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, which further condemned modernism. Therefore, by time the *Sentinel* was created Americanist influences had largely been stamped out of mainstream Catholicism, and modern society was something to fight against rather than work with.¹³³ This antagonism came to the forefront when *Sentinel* authors expressed their views on the white settlers who surrounded—and in some cases encroached on—Indian reservations.

Articles often stressed that it was white settlers who “ruined” the moral character of the Indians. They particularly blamed whites for introducing Indians to alcohol, a vice that they viewed as the greatest stumbling block to civilization. An author writing a history of the Menominees said that White settlers took advantage of “Indian Weakness” and supplied them

¹³³ Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, 304-320.

with alcohol, which had the dual effect of the degrading the morality of the Indian and of draining the reservation of money.¹³⁴ Alcoholism was generally bundled together with the vices of gambling and promiscuity, as discussed in an article on St. Mary's school which claimed that white settlers had turned their Indians into "drunkards and gamblers" who sold their daughters into prostitution.¹³⁵ Authors once again took advantage of racial typing to impress upon their readers that Indians were unusually vulnerable to evil and immoral influences. The *Sentinel's* first quarterly issue (the very same issue that reiterated the influence of Satan among Native American culture) included an article titled *Why the Indian Sentinel* which stressed that the work of missionaries involved defending the Indians from the influences of white culture. They pointed out that this duty was implicit in the title *The Sentinel*, with its suggestion of guardianship and protection. The Indians, the author explained, had "stood in need of such guidance and protection ever since they came into contact with the white race." Their "trustful simplicity" and "lack of adequate means of self-defense" meant that they easily fell prey to unscrupulous white men.¹³⁶ Another article noted that Indian were naturally "intensely religious," but if left to the "baneful influence of white men" they quickly descended into immorality.¹³⁷ Yet another priest bemoaned that his work would have been wonderfully easy if he had received the Indians in their "primitive state," but that white settlers had all but ruined the adult Indians on the reservation. Their bad example had caused high rates of divorce and couples cohabitating before marriage.¹³⁸ An article by W. Downey on the Selish Indians made perhaps the most definitive statement in this regard: He darkly suggested that if one investigated the

¹³⁴ "The Menominees (by a Friend of the Indians)," TIS 1904-1905, p. 26

¹³⁵ "St. Mary's Mission, Omak, Washington," TIS 1907, p. 36

¹³⁶ "Esperanza," "Why the Indian Sentinel," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 6

¹³⁷ Rev. Aloysius Vrebosch, S. J., "The Crow Indians and Missionary Efforts Among Them," TIS 1909, p. 36

¹³⁸ "Immaculate Conception School, Stephan, South Dakota," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 13

cause behind an Indian's "fall," nine times out of ten it would be discovered that a white man was behind it.¹³⁹

Whites also drew the missionary's ire by "encouraging" the Indians to continue their Native traditions. The nostalgia that whites were beginning to feel towards Indians had manifested itself in a form of tourism in which whites gathered to observe traditional ceremonies. The author who railed against the damaging effects of the Chippewa dances also noted the tourists who gathered around to observe such rituals, seeing them as an "innocent form of entertainment." Part of his impetus for writing the article was to persuade readers that these dances were highly damaging to Indian character and that such support for them should be stamped out.¹⁴⁰ The article on the Piegan's Fourth of July celebration repeated these sentiments almost word-for-word.¹⁴¹ The "Sioux Issue" of the *Sentinel* made special mention of the "variety shows" that many Sioux performed in. Shows along the lines of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show had sprung up in the late nineteenth century and had grown immensely popular, with some even being performed overseas. While they were undoubtedly less authentic than the ceremonies performed on reservations, they had the same effect of spurring the Indians to maintain their cultural identity. Naturally, the author of the article deemed this detrimental to the Sioux's character.¹⁴²

While part of this vitriol can be ascribed to the anti-societal sentiments beginning to appear in Catholic Society, in other cases there were specific instances where Indians or Missionaries were harassed or harmed by white settlers. The Jesuit J. B. Palladino noted that it

¹³⁹ W. Downey, "The Gently Selish at St. Ignatius," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 3

¹⁴⁰ A. Van Der Velden, S. J., "Cheyenne Dances," TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, p. 95

¹⁴¹ J. B. Carroll, S. J., "The Fourth of July Dishonored," TIS 1910, p. 30

¹⁴² "Holy Rosary Mission School, Pine Ridge, South Dakota," TIS 1908, p. 28

took a group of eight white emigrants only a single winter to succeed in “separating the Indians from their devoted mission.” (Besides the fact that they were headed towards Oregon, the only information given about the emigrants was that they were “men of no religion” who engaged in licentious behavior.)¹⁴³ The stories on the Cheyenne Indians that appeared in the April 1920 issue have some of the most detailed accounts of these encounters. William Arendzen, who had begun his work at St. Labre’s mission among the Cheyenne in April of 1914,¹⁴⁴ described one such incident. A white man was bet \$2.50 that he could shoot a hat off the head of an Indian man...with the Indian being entirely ignorant of the fact that he had been chosen as the target of this unfortunate prank. This resulted the Indian (a man named Black Wolf) being badly injured when the bullet scraped his skull—and outcome that the white man claimed was due to Indians wearing their hats pulled further down their heads than whites did. In retaliation a group of Cheyenne burned down the white man’s house. The Cheyenne arsonists were sentenced to a year in jail: The white sharpshooter received no penalty.¹⁴⁵

Even more startling are the accounts of Aloysius Van der Velden, Arendzen’s predecessor who had been one of the driving forces at St. Labre’s in its formative years. He described how layman and mission worker George Yoakam was assaulted by three masked “cowboys” late in the evening of September 15, 1884. The masked white men burst into the living quarters of the mission and held the resident priest at gunpoint while they dragged Yoakam away. They accused him of “siding with the Indians against the whites” and severely beat him before leaving him to limp back to the mission. This incident shattered the nerves of the

¹⁴³ J. B. Palladino, S. J., “Historical Notes on the Flathead,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 14, p. 15

¹⁴⁴ Irene Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes: Missionaries in the Heart of Indian Country* (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2006), 290

¹⁴⁵ William Arendzen, S. S. E., “The Cheyenne and their Catholic Mission,” TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, p. 68

priest to the point that he left the mission shortly afterwards.¹⁴⁶ This story was repeated in other manuscripts, and in fact it appears that Van den Velden neglected to mention that several terrified Ursuline sisters were also present at the event.¹⁴⁷ Accusations that the missionaries favored the Indians to the disadvantage of the white settlers were a common occurrence, and the mission among the Cheyenne was once again targeted with white aggression when a white shepherd was found killed.¹⁴⁸ These anecdotes are the clearest examples given, but the pages of the *Sentinel* are filled with suggestions that matters between Missionaries and white settlers tended towards antagonism.

Whether because of the erosion of Indian Morality or because of direct attacks on missionaries, it is clear that Catholic missions viewed white westerners with distrust at best and anger at worst. It makes sense, perhaps, that they so rarely alluded to Indians who entered white society: to them hardly a worse outcome could occur. The question then turns to what precisely they expected their Catholicized Indians to become. How did they expect them to live as upright citizens while avoiding society?

Hints can be found in the “Catholic Indians” section of the *Sentinel*. Begun in 1916, this section usually comprised of a few pages near the end of the issue and focused on Indians whom the missionaries felt deserved particular regard for their conduct and spirituality. In other words, they were the missions’ “success stories,” and a guide for what future Indians might become. None of the Indians featured are described living among society, although a few “half-breeds” were featured who served the United States government in some capacity. One such example is John Chee, who worked as a government interpreter before becoming a successful

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 68.

¹⁴⁷ Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes*, 47-48.

¹⁴⁸ Thomas Grant, S. J., “Reminiscences of Threatened Indian War,” TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, p. 79

businessman.¹⁴⁹ It is likely that such a man moved through multiple societal spheres, but his article only mentioned that he became a respected figure among the Navajo who set a good example by sending his children to a mission school. Other articles tended to focus either on older Indians who settled into a simple pious life or young, promising Indian students. (The latter were almost always deceased.) An example of the former is Charles Winoh'caska (which translates to Charles Old White Woman), who attempted to join Chief Sitting Bull's uprising in 1890 but was turned away, and instead became a devout Catholic. At the time of the article he was contented to take care of the mission, becoming something of a fixture around the institution.¹⁵⁰ Peter Rios of San Xavier, Arizona was another featured Indian who worked as an interpreter while his wife spent her time on household duties, pottery and weaving. The author predicted that their daughter would become "as womanly a woman as is her mother."¹⁵¹ Other examples included Itunkasanmatno, or "Leo Weaselbear," who cultivated a prizewinning garden,¹⁵² and Fire Crow, a "simple" man who loved hearing Mass so much that he endeavored to go even after his wife hid his shoes to deter him.¹⁵³ What they all have in common is their simple, unambitious piety. They all endeavor to be nothing more than simple homeowners who maintain a tight community around their church and pursue occupations that keep them away from the poisonous influence of white society.

The reader doesn't need to rely on individual anecdotes to build a picture of missionary's vision. An article titled "The Happiest people in the World: The Three Hundredth Anniversary of Catholic Missions in Maine" described an Indian community pursuing its existence in a way that

¹⁴⁹ Anselm Weber, O. F. M., "Catholic Indians: Chee Dodge," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 8, pp. 32-36

¹⁵⁰ "Catholic Indians," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 40

¹⁵¹ "Catholic Indians: Peter Rios and Family, San Xavier, Arizona," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 5, p. 28

¹⁵² "Catholic Indians," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, pp. 40-41

¹⁵³ A. Van Der Velden, S. J., "Fire Crow" TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 99-101

fully satisfied the missionaries' goals. In it, William Hughes described the tranquil existence of the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians. They lived in a village of grey-shingled houses under the watchful eye of the Catholic Church. By day the men industriously worked at their fishing boats while the women fashioned handicrafts to sell to visiting tourists. At night they returned home to sanitary, well-kept western-style houses, and on Sundays they gathered in common prayer at the village church. To hear Hughes tell it, they had the most peaceful faces, the most musical voices, the best sense of humor and the gentlest manners of any Indians in the country. Hughes seemed entirely besotted, even going so far as to say that, while he often wished to be an Indian, he never wished it more than when he was among the Indians of Maine.

“They have the happiest dispositions; are the most industrious; the most pleasantly situated for the following of their natural bent, woodcraft, hunting and fishing; the most favored in their treatment at the hands of the Government; amongst the best cared for in the matter of religion; the most Catholic in their history; by nature the most intelligent if judged from their legendary lore; in a word, they are the most favored Indians in the country.”¹⁵⁴

The accuracy of these statements may be dubious, but their message is extremely important if one wishes to understand the mindset of Catholic missionaries. The Indians of Maine had only reached this blissful state because they received consistent *Catholic* support. Hughes spends a whole five pages discussing the history of the tribe, in which he describes its missionary history from colonial times to the date of his writing. He makes it clear that it was the hard work and dedication of the missionary priests (the nuns, as usual, go conspicuously unmentioned) that brought the Indians of Maine to their eventual state of total happiness. However, to Hughes this state of “perfection” was *not* one that included Indians intermingling with whites. The Indians may have moved into sanitary, western-style houses and given up their previous carefree ways for a life of industrious labor, but they were still *Indians*, and they were

¹⁵⁴ William Hughes, “The Happiest People in the World: The Three Hundredth Anniversary of Catholic Missions in Maine,” TIS 1913, p. 5.

still separate from Maine's white population. They had frequent dealings with whites because they lived in close proximity to them, but these were largely business dealings. They sold whites the fish they caught, the boats they fashioned and the handicrafts they made, thereby keeping their tribe self-sufficient, but they were their own community, safely insulated from evil influences and guarded by their Catholic caretakers. They lived alongside whites, but not with them. They were civilized, but not assimilated. They were, in other words, the ultimate Catholic Missionary success story.¹⁵⁵

The story of the Indians of Maine also reveals the complex relationship between Catholics and the "Americanization" project that they undertook when they opened a mission school. On one hand, success stories like this one showed that Catholics were capable of civilizing Indians, and for that to be possible, Catholics had to be civilized to begin with. The story of the Indians of Maine displayed all the hallmarks of American virtue such as cleanliness, hard work, industry and piety. It therefore implied that the Catholic missionaries who worked among those Indians possessed the same virtues. It was yet another story that cemented the role of Catholics in American society. However, the story also revealed the low regard that Catholic missionaries held for mainstream America by keeping the Indians separate from whites. Perhaps this is precisely how the authors of the *Sentinel* envisioned the ideal role of American Catholics in society. The ideal American Catholic would be completely American while also insulating him or herself from the surrounding Protestants. Like the Indians of Maine, Catholics were civilized—but that did not mean that they wanted to be assimilated.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 5-20.

Chapter 3: The Romantic Indian

Americans in the early years of the twentieth century inhabited a country with few wild spaces left. The land was crisscrossed by cables and railroad tracks, and white settlements stretched from coast to coast. Americans were increasingly moving out of rural areas and into industrialized cities that were stuffed with smoke and tenements. The “progress” that had been promised in the late nineteenth century had turned out to be a dirty, crowded and harshly unromantic business. The public increasingly turned to images of an older, simpler time, when vast tracts of land had laid unclaimed in the west, with only the primitive, unspoiled Indians patrolling them. Creators of popular culture quickly began to pursue this trend. Fiction writers such as Helen Fitzgerald Sanders produced stories in which Indians, rather than embark down the path of civilization, found themselves continuously drawn back to their beloved wilderness. Stories of tribal mythology and Native handicrafts proved immensely popular with white consumers. Magazines like *Forest and Stream* and *Out West* introduces urban audiences to the glories of the frontier landscape while situating Indians in that landscape as though they were part of the natural environment.¹⁵⁶

As the public devoured stories of wild Indians in the old west, stories of civilization efforts began to lose their appeal. We have already seen how policymakers and anthropologists shifted their views of Indian civilization in the early twentieth century, but that change was just as strong among the popular culture of the time. Sometimes this new “nostalgic” view of Native Americans fed off government policies that placed increasingly less attention to civilization efforts, and sometimes they influenced those policies.

¹⁵⁶ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 95-99

The progression of the white's image of the Native American is elegantly summarized by Fredrick Hoxie's examination of the Native American exhibits at the World's Fairs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In the Philadelphia Fair of 1876, large areas were devoted to evidence of Native progress towards civilization, in accordance with the dominant government policies of the time. Included were examples of missionary work, education and agriculture. The public responded with approval and optimism about the future of the "Indian Race." This optimism had faded somewhat by the Chicago Fair of 1893, with scientists from the Smithsonian working separately from administrators at the Indian Office (they had worked in tandem in 1876) to produce an exhibit that focused on traditional Indian Culture—or rather, on what white American believed constituted "tradition Indian Culture." The public flocked to displays of Indian artefacts and handicrafts, eager to experience the unspoiled existence of the "primitive" Indians. The Indian office, which was more invested in the continuation of civilization efforts, continued to portray Indian advancement, once again focusing on agriculture and classroom learning. Both exhibits met with public approval. By the St. Louis Fair of 1904, however, traditional Indian culture occupied center stage and civilization efforts had been pushed aside. In addition, St. Louis pushed the boundaries by creating an enormous "Congress of the Races" which included displays of all sorts of "primitive" peoples from around the world—and naturally, North America's very own "primitives" were displayed side by side with the indigenous people of Asia, Africa and the Pacific. While the St. Louis fair did include a mock-schoolhouse that showed the civilization of Indian children, it did not emphasize the ultimate assimilation of the Indian race but the correct way to deal with a people who were inherently backwards and primitive.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 82-93

Catering to public tastes is to be expected for fiction writers, magazine editors, and exhibition designers, but it's somewhat more surprising when it appears in a religious publication whose stated goal seems to run counter to public opinions. Indian boarding schools hinged on the idea that Native Americans could and should be civilized, and plenty of authors clearly viewed traditional practices as distractions that needed to be stamped out. However, the *Sentinel* also included huge amounts of material that romanticized Native Americans and their culture. As time wore on, and the era of optimism that had led to the boom in boarding schools faded into the past, these stories became more and more frequent. The "split" into a quarterly format that occurred in 1916 accelerated this process, beginning with its call for submissions that emphasized a desire for a more romanticized portrayal of the missionary's subjects.

"To succeed the INDIAN SENTINEL must tolerate nothing but live, first-hand matter. It should be an authority on the subject it represents. It should carry with it the freshness of the forest, the perfume of the prairies, the "curling smoke of the wigwams." It should be a depository of Indian history, a reliable register of Indian customs and Indian thought, an accurate chronicle of Indian progress. The Indian of today is forging ahead.¹⁵⁸

The *Sentinel* purported to display Indian life—complete with the "perfume of the forest" and the "curling smoke of the wigwams"—but it did so through white American eyes, and in the early twentieth century white American eyes were increasingly viewing Native Americans through a lens of romanticism and nostalgia. *Sentinel* authors may have answered to Indian Agents who still placed emphasis on civilization efforts—even if those efforts were becoming increasingly less ambitious—but the audience of the *Sentinel* was part of an American public that would have seen a magazine about Indians as an excellent way to escape the drudgery of modern life. The following chapter will show how *Sentinel* authors obliged to their demands and produced stories in which traditional Indian life, and not Catholicism or Civilization, were the

¹⁵⁸ Wm. H. Ketcham, "A Call!" TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 1

main draw. It might be suggested that these romanticized depictions served more than simply and entertainment purpose. The Romantic Indian was the ultimate symbol of the “true” America that had been lost in the industrial age. These articles forged a link between that romantic image and the Catholic Missionaries. In other words, these stories were one more way to “Americanize” the Catholic image.

Sometimes the authors tried to reconcile their fascination with Indian traditions to their stated objective, but just as often no attempt was made. Stories of Indian lore, descriptions of Indian festivities and photographs of elaborate Indian costumes were often presented with pains being taken to tie them to the missionary’s goal, but just as often no effort was made to tie such articles to missionary work.

One way to show Indians as romantic and primitive was to use racially typing. We have already seen ways in which Indians were racially “typed” as lazy, wild, pious or honest, but the same technique could be used to label them as noble, brave, and inherently tied to the wilderness—all traits that played into the public’s newfound fascination with the “noble savage.” The children at the day school in Red Cliff, Wisconsin were described as “sturdy, dusky sons and daughters of the mild and docile Chippewa tribe of Indians” who had an “intimate love of freedom and ease.”¹⁵⁹ The resistance of the children to attend school at Holy Family mission in Montana was attributed to “how deeply rooted in the Indian Child is his love of home and the freedom of the plains.”¹⁶⁰ The war-loving nature of the Sioux and the bravery of the flatheads were both highlighted.¹⁶¹ Extolling “Indian virtues” like aggression and bravery was only

¹⁵⁹ Sister M. Seraphica, “Indian Day School, Red Cliff, Wisconsin,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 14

¹⁶⁰ “Holy Family Mission School,” TIS 1912, p. 35

¹⁶¹ “Editorial, TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 4; L. B. Palladino, S. J., “Historical Notes on the Flatheads,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 14, p. 6

possible because the public no longer viewed Native Americans as a threat, and it would only have been attractive to a missionary who had not experienced the dangers of Indian warfare. By the twentieth century warlike Indians simply provoked wistfulness in Americans who longed for the excitement of the frontier. As the following quote demonstrates, it could also speak to a shared “American” heritage that whites could also lay claim to:

“They are passing, those children of the forest, those darlings of nature. They were a powerful race, a race of warriors, a race of men whose sterling manhood we, stepsons of America, seem to have inherited together with the patrimony that is rightfully theirs.”¹⁶²

This quote also includes one of the most ubiquitous phrases of the *Sentinel*. The term “children of the forest” and its close variations was used so commonly by *Sentinel* authors that establishing a count is virtually impossible. It appeared in nearly every issue of the *Sentinel* and was applied to all Indian tribes regardless of whether or not they actually lived in a forest. It was used every time a writer referred to the idyllic, simple life of the Indians of the past, before the coming of the white race had forced them to adapt civilization. It was used to describe the nature of Indians who, despite their Christian faith, still resisted modern American life and remained in the wilderness. The phrase could be both flattering and condescending. For example, when the United States entered World War I the *Sentinel* used the “children of the forest” trope to help dispel the myth that Indians made poor soldier. As one author stated, “Is it any wonder that the son of the forest should be so brave, so fearless, and so vigorous? He is virtually a child of nature and Mother Nature takes good care of him.”¹⁶³ However, its emphasis on the “childlike” qualities of the Native Americans meant that the term was generally used to describe their peaceful and docile attributes. To *sentinel* writers the term evoked the perfect mix of innocence and

¹⁶² J. F. Kearney, S. J., “The Passing of the American,” TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 7, p. 307

¹⁶³ Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa), “Indian Gifts to Civilized Man,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 9, p. 37

primitiveness. “Children of the forest” were untouched by the troubles of modern life while still being docile and teachable. In other words, they were romantic enough to appeal to the reading public while also being excellent candidates for Catholicism. Catholics were hardly the only ones to use the phrase: In fact, in 1891, the part-Creek author Alice Callahan used it in the title of her book “Wynema: A Child of the Forest.” The novel was largely written to inspire rage in its readers over the injustices committed towards Native Americans (notably, it was published shortly after the massacre at Wounded Knee). Therefore, the use of the phrase is once again meant to be sympathetic.¹⁶⁴

Catholics could also display “indianness” in the *Sentinel* by including numerous articles dealing with Indian languages. Here Catholics were on solid footing, as Jesuit missionaries had long made serious efforts to master indigenous languages. In fact, many of the earliest Jesuit Missionaries to Native Americans became expert linguists, and many composed dictionaries and books of catechisms in Indigenous languages. Like the missionaries of centuries later, they firmly believed that the most effective way to evangelize among Indians was to learn the native language, and it was considered a requirement for a Jesuit to gain proficiency in at least one of those languages.¹⁶⁵ Discussions of Indian languages were therefore an excellent way to satisfy the readers’ curiosity about Indian cultures while also highlighting the efforts of missionaries. It also further strengthened the link between Catholics and Indians. A missionary simply working among the Chippewa was one thing, but a missionary speaking Chippewa was an entirely new level of immersion into Native culture.

¹⁶⁴ A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff, introduction to S. Alice Callahan’s *Wynema: A Child of the Forest* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), xiii-xliii.

¹⁶⁵ Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, 56-57

Mentions of Indian languages appeared frequently enough before the 1916 changes to the magazine, but they practically exploded afterwards. Sentinel authors often revealed with pride that they had been given an “Indian name” by their congregation. P. M. Gallagher, who worked among the Northern Cheyenne, was dubbed “Su-Honoe-Maayas” or “Red Hair,” and Father Ketcham himself claimed the moniker of “Wambi Wakita” or “Watching Eagle,” which was given to him by the Sioux.¹⁶⁶ Father Van Den Broek proudly referred to himself as the Indian’s “Mats Maghkotaghkonias,” or “Great Priest.”¹⁶⁷ Authors also frequently stressed the need for missionaries to be able to communicate well in a tribe’s language, and many priests were praised for their linguistic abilities. Missionaries working at St. Paul’s mission in Fort Belknap, Montana, needed to be proficient in at least the Assiniboine, Gros Ventre, Cree and Yankton languages to preach successfully,¹⁶⁸ and one writer stated that “The key to the Indian’s heart is their native tongue,” adding that learning catechisms in their own language brought the Indians nearer to God.¹⁶⁹ Father Martin Ferrard was praised for his work composing a Chippewa dictionary and creating a children’s religious book written in Chippewa.¹⁷⁰ Other authors wrote what were essentially miniature linguistic lessons. Father A. Van der Velden explained that the Cheyenne called themselves Tsit-Sis-Tas, and speculated that the term might mean “striped” because he had noticed that the Cheyenne had a propensity for that pattern.¹⁷¹ P. F. Hylebos explained the linguistic roots of the name of Mt. Tacoma, the indigeno us name for Mt. Rainer. He claimed that “Tacoma” translated roughly to “biggest frozen water,” and also explained some

¹⁶⁶ “St. Labre’s Mission Among the Northern Cheyenne,” TIS 1909, p. 16; “The Great Catholic Sioux Congress of 1910,” TIS 1911, p. 8

¹⁶⁷ “The Menominees,” TIS 1904-1905, p. 24

¹⁶⁸ Placidus F. Sialm, S. J., “St. Paul’s Mission and School,” TIS 1912, p. 30

¹⁶⁹ “Editorial,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 20

¹⁷⁰ Chrysostom Verwyst, O. F. M., “The Chippewa Language,” TIS 1907, pp. 47-48

¹⁷¹ A. Van der Velden, S. J., “The Cheyenne,” TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, p. 73

basic phrases in Chinook. Curiously, he also argued strongly for referring to Mt. Tacoma by its indigenous name. Part of his reasoning was surprisingly progressive: He called the use of the name "Rainier" a "white man's superstition" and argued that landmarks should be referred to by their Indian names. However, the other half of his argument was that Rear Admiral Reignier (the French sailor who gave the mountain its European name) was an unworthy figure to name an American mountain after.¹⁷² Therefore, he was motivated equally by a respect for Native languages and by patriotism.

After 1916, the *Sentinel* began showing the work Catholic linguists by printing materials that had been translated into Indigenous languages. Versions of the Hail Mary and the Lord's Prayer appeared in Choctaw, "Eskimo," Papago, Navajo, and Flathead.¹⁷³ The Choctaw translations received special attention because they were done by Father Ketcham, who also contributed a Choctaw translation of a hymn and a Hail Mary.¹⁷⁴ A young girl writing for the Student's chapter recalled a visit from father Ketcham to St. Mary's industrial school in which he sang Choctaw hymns to the students.¹⁷⁵

Examples of Indian Languages may not have been as romantic as tales of Indian lore or as eye-catching as photographs, but they still gave the public something authentically "Indian" that could satisfy their curiosity about Indigenous life. By showing their proficiency at Indian languages, authors advertised how deeply connected they were to Indian life. However, the

¹⁷² P. F. Hylebos, "Indians of the Puget Sound Region," TIS 1915, pp. 44-46

¹⁷³ Father Ketcham, "Choctaw Hymn and Prayer," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 11; "Eskimo Hymn and Prayer," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 13; Fr. B. O., O.F.M., "The Lord's Prayer (In Papago)" and "The Hail Mary," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 5, p. 7; "The Lord's Prayer (In Navajo)" and "The Hail Mary," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 25; Hubert A. Post, S. J., "The Salish Language," 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 14, p. 17

¹⁷⁴ Wm. H. Ketcham, LL. D., "Choctaw Hymn," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 9, p. 13; Wm H. Ketcham, "Choctaw Hymn and Prayer," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 11.

¹⁷⁵ "Students' Chapter," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 33

opinions of the authors regarding Indian languages tended to differ. Some showed admiration for the languages they learned: Ketcham himself said “some of the most beautiful sentiments every nourished by the Human Heart have been uttered by Indian Orators within my hearing,”¹⁷⁶ while Chrysostom Verwyst called the Cheyenne language “the very embodiment of rule, order and system,” and opined that it was “not inferior to Greek or Latin in its regularity.”¹⁷⁷ Thomas M. Neate expressed similar sentiments when describing the Nez Perce language, saying that it had “all the substantial merits of European language.”¹⁷⁸ However, the same authors who praised native languages for their form and beauty had a tendency to criticize them for being “simplistic” or for lacking a wide vocabulary. Verwyst thought the Cheyenne language beautiful, but he also believed that it was not constructed for abstract thoughts.¹⁷⁹ Simon Lampe held similar views of the Chippewa language, noting that “The Chippewas are often at a loss to express abstract ideas, modern inventions: time, space, room, light, width, depth, length, conscience, virtue, and many things have no correspondence substantive in their language, but must be rendered by a whole phrase.”¹⁸⁰ (Despite the fact that this statement came just after Lampe discussed the complexity of Chippewa at length, it does not seem to have occurred to him that he may have been the one failing to understand his hosts.) What Verwyst and Lampe both seemed to want to express was that the Indian’s primitive, innocent nature made them incapable of designing languages that could achieve higher levels of understanding. Languages were therefore another way to display Indian’s “otherness” and their disconnection to the worries and complexities of modern life.

¹⁷⁶ Victor Murat Locke, “The Catholic Choctaw Catechism,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 21

¹⁷⁷ Chrysostom Verwyst, O. F. M., “The Chippewa Language,” TIS 1907, pp. 47-48

¹⁷⁸ Thomas M. Neate, S.J., “St. Andrews, Umatilla Reservation, Oregon,” TIS 1911, p. 22

¹⁷⁹ Chrysostom Verwyst, O. F. M., “The Chippewa Language,” TIS 1907, pp. 47-48

¹⁸⁰ Simon Lampe, O. S. B., “Twenty-one years among the Chippewas of Minnesota,” TIS 1910, p. 41

Like native languages, traditional handicrafts became objects of fascination during this era. In fact, reservation officials and members of the Indian bureau often encouraged Indians to sell handicrafts for profit. As hopes for total assimilation faded away, the production of handicrafts lost its troublesome connotation and became a harmless way for Indians to produce extra income, thereby allowing them to become more self-sufficient. Ella Cooper, a writer who discussed the education of Native Americans, supported this practice to such a degree that she suggested placing a tariff on similar-looking Japanese work so that the market could be left open for Native workers.¹⁸¹ The *Sentinel* was silent on the subject of tariffs, but it did extoll the craftsmanship of Catholic Indians. At the Great Catholic Sioux Congress of 1910 the missionaries praised the crafts of the women in attendance and gladly accepted their work as gifts. Both William Ketcham and the apostolic delegate in attendance received handmade moccasins—and seemed happy to accept them.¹⁸² Ketcham received a tobacco pouch and hand-beaded saddlebag at a later congress.¹⁸³ When the *Sentinel* ran a promoter's drive in 1907, the prize that it offered to the most successful promoter was a hand-woven Navajo blanket.¹⁸⁴ Even the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians of Maine, whom the *Sentinel* praised for their civilized behavior, were described as excellent craftsmen and craftswomen who made a decent part of their living off the sales of handmade goods.¹⁸⁵ Missionary Chrysostom Verwyst also state his opinion that the canoe was a "masterwork of Indian ingenuity"¹⁸⁶ and Indian Commissioner Leupp was quoted expressing his support for the preservation of Indian Music and

¹⁸¹ Ella H. Cooper, "How to Education the Indians," *Gunton's Magazine (1898-1904)* (May 1902): 452

¹⁸² "The Great Catholic Sioux Congress of 1910," TIS 1911, p. 7

¹⁸³ "The Sioux Congresses," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 30

¹⁸⁴ Wm. H. Ketcham, TIS 1907, p. 1

¹⁸⁵ William Hughes, "The Happiest People in the World," TIS 1913, pp. 6-7

¹⁸⁶ Chrysostom Verwyst, O. F. M., "Ideas and Experiences of a Missionary," TIS 1908, p. 39

Art.¹⁸⁷ While missionaries might object strongly to a host of Indian practices, most traditional art seemed avoid censure.

Even practices that one would expect the missionaries to condemn outright were sometimes treated simply as curiosities. In fact, subjects such as Indian lore and religion were often written by authors who seemed to view their subjects with anthropological fascination rather than horror or disgust. For every author who railed against the demoralizing consequences of Indian dances there was another who cheerfully described the intricacies of Indian mythology for no other reason than to entertain his audience.

Occasionally authors would include a disclaimer in these stories to assure their readers that any truly “Pagan” meaning had been stripped from these rites, but they were always careful to preserve their “Indiannes.” When Ferdinand Ortiz described the Maiden’s Dance at the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico, he was quick to say that although the “mysterious dance” was a “remnant of Paganism,” it no longer included any “objectionable figures.” However, he later betrayed his fascination with the Apache’s “Pagan past” by wistfully conjuring up images of similar rites performed in the pre-Christian era.

“It is a sight that can never be forgotten. It takes one back to the time when the Indians were still wild and dark hills resounded with their songs and yells and the whites, who heard the echoes, whispered that the Apache were dancing and new trouble must be brewing.”¹⁸⁸

Other authors employed a similar tone, seeming to almost idolize the wildness and freedom that they imagined Indians must have displayed in their “Pagan state.” After describing the linguistic origins of the name of Mt. Tacoma, P. F. Hybelos turned his attentions to

¹⁸⁷ “Editorial,” TIS 1906, p. 27

¹⁸⁸ Ferdinand Ortiz, O. F. M., “The Maiden’s Dance, Mescalero Apache Reservation, New Mexico,” TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 126

describing traditional lore. He called the stories he heard “the strangest legends that I presume was ever heard of an Indian tradition,” explaining the tradition belief that, after death, evil people would be turned into animals that corresponded with their worse traits. The fates of “bad women” were even worse: they returned as slaves of neighboring tribes.¹⁸⁹ The 1916 issue contained a short story describing the shrine of Aali Hiyain, which traditional lore held was the site of a human sacrifice performed to save the people from a “great flood.”¹⁹⁰ There are no illusions to Satanic influence or misled devil-worship, and so the story seems to have no point other than to provide lurid entertainment. Another story, titled “The Legend of the Lost Sun and the Hot Springs” is a straightforward retelling of an Indian tale which describes the beginning of the enmity between coyotes and rabbits.¹⁹¹ In “Origin, Religion and Superstition of the Navajo,” Anselm Weber takes delight in providing a lengthy (though perhaps not entirely accurate) account of Navajo history and mythology. When he describes the Navajo creation myth, his tone quickly moves from scientific and precise to that of a storyteller, as though he himself is a Native elder retelling the ancient tale.

“The Twelve lower worlds are subdivided into three parts, called the Dark World, the Red World, and the Blue World. These different divisions were inhabited by the Ant People, the Locust Man and Woman, the Cat People, Snake People, etc. Every animal had its divine ancestral prototype. They spoke and acted as men, not to say as supernatural beings. All these moved up from the lower worlds. In the fourth world the White Body and the Blue Body created First Man and First Woman out of two ears of corn; white ear was changed into man and yellow ear into woman. It was the wind that gave them life. It is the breath that comes out of our mouth that gives us life. When this ceases, we die.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ P. F. Hylebos, “Indians of the Puget Sound Region,” TIS 1915, pp. 43-44

¹⁹⁰ “Aali Hiyain,” TIS 1916, p. 34

¹⁹¹ William Hughes, “Legend of the Lost Sun and the Hot Springs,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 32-33

¹⁹² Anselm Weber, O. F. M., “Origin, Religion, and Superstitions of the Navajo,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 4

By using "we" rather than "they" and setting the story down in a straightforward manner, as though it were fact, Weber blurred the lines between observers of and participants in Indian culture. The point of this article was to make readers feel as though they were present in an ancient, primordial time when this story might be told, huddled around a campfire beneath a canopy of stars. When Weber later described the Fire Dance in the same article, he quickly assured the readers that this "most interesting and most weird" ceremony was all meant for entertainment purposes and was nothing more than harmless fun, but his tone remains fascinated and even reverential.¹⁹³

We do have one case where an author combined Christian morality with the lure of the romantic Indian to create a story that managed to cater to popular tastes while sidestepping the problem of possibly glorifying "paganism." A. S. Patterson wrote "The Legend of La Najagui" as a first-person account as relayed to him by an elderly Indian man. Having the story told first-hand, though mediated through the author, gave the story a sense of authenticity that the author emphasized by copying the storyteller's rustic dialect. The story tells of a beautiful young Christian Indian named Chilipat who was betrothed to a Pagan man named Anacapa. Refusing to be wed to a nonbeliever, Chilipat eloped with her Christian lover, Inyo. Anacapa chased them to the falls at La Najagui, where he was almost killed by Inyo, who was stopped by Chilipat "out of Christian goodness." Anacapa's response was to shoot Chilipat in the back, which sent both her and Inyo over the falls. Inyo survived but Chilipat perished. The twist at the end of the story is that Fernandito, the old Indian who told Patterson the story, was actually Inyo. The story is presented as a Romantic melodrama played out against the background of the untamed wilderness. It is a story perfectly suited to capturing the imagination of a public hungry for

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 6

stories of unspoiled Indians, but with just enough adjustments to make it acceptable for a Catholic audience.¹⁹⁴

The *Sentinel's* stories are intriguing, but they are only half the story when it comes to the magazine's romantic portrayals of Native Americans. Far more striking is the *Sentinel's* use of photographs to give their readers the images of "unspoiled" Indians that they so craved.

In order to understand the *Sentinel's* use of images, it's important to understand just how important photography had become in shaping White American's interest in Native Americans. Perhaps the most well-known example of a photographer who capitalized on this interest was Edward Curtis, who set out to create a comprehensive portfolio of all the Indian tribes still existing in North America. Titled *The North American Indian*, this project became Curtis's life's work and obsession, though it never reached completion. Curtis began this project in the first decade of the twentieth century and continued to work on it for thirty years, creating images by which the American public would become acquainted with "real Indians." Curtis also fancied himself something of an ethnologist, and this wasn't terribly far-fetched. Ethnography was a fledgling field with little in the way of accreditation, and Curtis had taken part in an ethnographic survey before beginning work on the project, meaning that he was enough of an "ethnologist" to satisfy the American public. His aspirations towards serious anthropological work meant that Curtis saw *The North American Indian* as more of a scientific undertaking than an artistic one. However, even when done in the name of science, Curtis's photographs are remarkably artistic and lean strongly towards a "romantic" view of Indians. The pages of the *North American Indian* are bursting with images of traditionally-dressed natives, ritual objects and sacred rites. This

¹⁹⁴ A. S. Patterson, "The Legend of La Najagui," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 8-10

style was entirely intentional: Curtis often manipulated his images by putting his subjects into more “traditional” garments, removing western-looking objects from his compositions or asking his subjects to perform rituals that had not been in common practice for decades.¹⁹⁵ Some of the most iconic and well-known portrayals of Native American life were, therefore, purposefully doctored to appear more “primitive.”

Another photographer who bears examining is Richard Throssel, a part-Crow photographer who worked for a time under Curtis. It was Curtis who convinced Throssel to pursue photography as a career by demonstrating its artistic and money-making potential. Throssel initially worked as a government photographer on the Crow reservation, during which time he was involved in a project meant to raise awareness among the Crow about the danger of unhealthy living habits. Therefore Throssel produced images of “healthy” living habits, which generally included Indians sitting in a western-style house and eating off a western-style table, next to images of “unhealthy” habits, such as eating on the ground or sharing a communal pipe. However, these images never brought Throssel anything resembling fame, and most of them are practically forgotten now. His career took off when he left his government post and established the Throssel Photocraft Company, which specialized in images that were clearly inspired by his mentor. The photographs that won Throssel fame and fortune were those that stripped away modern influences to show the ideal, “primitive” native occupying an unspoiled wilderness.¹⁹⁶

The photographs in *The Indian Sentinel* were generally not taken by professional photographers. Often they were taken by missionaries, and sometimes they were taken by the

¹⁹⁵ Christopher M. Lyman, *The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions: Photographs of Indians by Edward S. Curtis* (New York: Pantheon Books in association with the Smithsonian Institution, 1982) 47-53.

¹⁹⁶ Peggy Albright, *Crow Indian Photographer: The Work of Richard Throssel* (University of New Mexico Press, 1997)

same person who wrote the article to whom they were attached. It's curious, then, that these missionary-photographers often captured images that displayed tropes that one would expect to see in the work of Curtis or Throssel. Images of "civilized" Indians certainly appeared in the *Sentinel*, and articles about Mission schools often relied on them to illustrate the success on their institution. The article on the Indians of Maine also featured plenty of photographs of neatly-dressed Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians posed against western-style houses, but again, those images were meant to illustrate a specific success case. When images did not come attached to a "success story," they often fell back on the "Romantic Indian" trope.

A key example of this tendency is in the photographs that grace the covers of the first fifteen issues—after the restructuring in 1916, photographs no longer appeared on the cover, possibly as a money-saving device. All of the fifteen cover photos included children, with the exception of the 1906 and 1907 covers, which featured photographs of mission buildings. Of these thirteen images of children, eight show children in some form of traditional garment. The 1902-1903, 1913 and 1914 issues show young girls in deerskin or elk-tooth dresses, while the 1908 and 1912 issues show children wearing war bonnets. The 1908 image is actually of a young girl name Lucy Bull Bear, who was permitted to don an item generally reserved for adult men in order to charm westerners.¹⁹⁷ When children were shown in western clothing, it was generally in a school uniform, thereby tying them to a specific civilizing mission. An exception is the 1909 cover, which shows two young boys in bedraggled western dress. However, an article in the issue explains that these boys were found wandering the streets of a Minnesota town, where they were picked up by a group of Franciscan sisters. At the time of the issue the boys were happily

¹⁹⁷ TIS 1908, p. 48

installed at St. Mary's Industrial School in Odanah, Wisconsin.¹⁹⁸ It's fair to say, then, that the cover photos fall into two basic categories. Either images are presented of children who are in some stage of the civilization process, or the theme of civilization is jettisoned entirely and the children are placed in the most traditional-looking outfit available.

With the changes that occurred in 1916, the cover of the *Sentinel* changed to a simple image of a stylized cross printed on brown paper. The cross is clearly designed to resemble a Navajo weaving using a simple block pattern, with fringe hanging from the bottom to emphasize the likeness. The words "Indian Sentinel," the issue and date, and the special designation of that issue (usually a specific tribe or missionary) are printed in red. Also in red is the newly-designed seal of the Society for the Preservation of the Faith Among Indian Children: a circle containing the image of a lone Teepee set against rolling hills, with the society's initials printed around the edges. Volume 2, begun in 1920, changed the image but kept the heavy "Native" imagery. The key image for this volume was an Indian Shawl pattern, again printed in red and black, running down the left margin of the cover with the Society's seal at the top. The *Sentinel* managed to keep hold of its Romantic, nostalgic image while also making the cover vastly simpler to produce, which was doubtless a necessity when it moved from an annual to a quarterly publication.

The focus on children for the covers is understandable, as this was a magazine whose main purpose was to illustrate the plight of Indian children. The photographs on the inside of the sentinel showed a much broader range of ages. In general, any sort of ritual dance was a popular photographic subject. The July 1920 issue included an article on the Maiden's dance as

¹⁹⁸ TIS 1909, p. 48

performed by the apache that included three such photos. In the first, a teenage girl in a buckskin dress stands surrounded by stalks of corn. Her hand is reaching up as though to shyly brush her hair out of her face. In the second, three dancers in their full regalia are surrounded by their elders. A stand of teepees is visible in the background. In the third, a girl is led through the steps of the dance by an older man, presumably the medicine man overseeing the ceremony.¹⁹⁹ A photograph of the Zuni rain dance was featured in the 1909 article, showing a line of traditionally-dressed dancers moving in front of a traditional adobe structure.²⁰⁰ Another favorite image was that of the Native American chief, and it appeared frequently within the pages of the *Sentinel*. The opening photograph of the April 1919 issue (meaning the photograph featured directly after the table of contents) showed an Indian Brave wearing deerskin and a war bonnet. He is identified by the caption as "White Wash—A Catholic Sioux" and the caption above the photograph reads "A Good Type of Dakota Indian."²⁰¹ It's hard to say that the designation of "good type" refers to White Wash's exemplary behavior or to his traditional appearance. While plenty of articles feature solitary headshots of men in war bonnets, the 1914 issue ups the ante by displaying a photo with three Indian braves standing in a row, each sporting a different style of headdress and brandishing a different fierce-looking weapon.²⁰² Even the article on the Indians of Maine, which was meant to show off the most "civilized" of the American Indians, included a lone photograph of a Penobscot chief in full regalia.²⁰³ Some of these portraits seem to have almost certainly been studio portraits that were carefully designed to appear as "Indian" as possible: The portrait of "Manuelito, the Last Great Chief of the Navajo" shows a bare-chested

¹⁹⁹ Ferdinand Ortiz, O. F. M., "The Maiden's Dance, Mescalero Apache Reservation, New Mexico," TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 3, p. 124-127

²⁰⁰ "Zuni Rain Dance," TIS 1909, p. 46

²⁰¹ "White Wash--A Catholic Sioux," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 2

²⁰² "Sioux Chiefs, Cheyenne River Reservation," TIS 1914, p. 37

²⁰³ "Penobscot Chief," TIS 1913, p. 8

man seated on a pile of furs with a blanket spread over his lap. He is surrounded by feathers, furs and whatever other paraphernalia the photographer deemed worthy. The blank background and carefully posing makes it highly unlikely that this photograph was taken anywhere but in a studio.²⁰⁴ The focus on Indian chiefs is yet another symptom of the public's newfound fascination with the "warlike Indian" of the past. Even Catholic missionaries—whose entire purpose was to make the Indians *less* warlike—acquiesced to this trope.

Photographs in *The Sentinel* are generally neatly in line with the article they accompany. Hence articles on Mission schools use photographs of neatly-dressed schoolchildren, while articles that deal with the culture of a certain tribe will focus on more "traditional" lifestyles. However, there are occasions where the photographs presented simply don't mesh with their articles, and these are some of the most interesting photographs to examine.

The article "Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People" is a history of the title institution. It describes the life of its founder, heiress Katherine Drexel, and its growth throughout the years. It includes several photographs of the organization's main buildings and several of notable mission schools, but it is also curiously full of photographs of Pueblo Indians. The article has no particular focus on the Pueblo people—in fact, they are only mentioned in one paragraph which gives a brief history of the founding of St. Catherine's Boarding School in Santa Fe—but their photographs appear consistently throughout its length. A photograph titled simply "pueblos" shows two women and one man lined up in front of an adobe structure, all wearing traditional blankets.²⁰⁵ Another photograph bearing the same title shows three younger individuals in traditional dress, but the shot is wider so that the viewer can more clearly view the

²⁰⁴ "Manuelito, The Last Great Chief of the Navajo," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 2

²⁰⁵ "Pueblos," TIS 1907, p. 5

adobe structure behind the subjects, suggesting that part of the mystique around the Pueblos was there unusual (to a westerner) buildings.²⁰⁶ A third image shows two blanket-clad boys leading a pair of heavily burdened donkeys: the image is somewhat facetiously titled "Indian express."²⁰⁷ With the exception of the last photograph, none show school-aged children who might have attended St. Catherine's Boarding School, and the photograph that does show children has them engaging in a typically "Indian" activity—in this case, using donkeys to haul loads. The purpose of the last photograph is particularly hard to determine. I could have been meant to show the difficulty of Indian life before the coming of white innovations, but it's just as possible that it was meant to give *Sentinel* readers a charming and gently humorous look at life among the Pueblos. Perhaps the reader is meant to assume that they boys are playing at being grown-ups, or perhaps it's meant to inspire sympathy for the overworked Pueblo children. The lack of context makes the meaning hard to decipher, but since no other photograph in this story is overtly negative in its portrayal of Indians, it seems unlikely that this sole photograph was meant to be critical.

Photographs that have little to do with the article they appear in are intriguing enough, but even more curious are the incidents where the photographs seem to directly contradict the article that they accompany. As stated previously, J. B. Carroll's article on the Piegan Fourth of July celebration is a scathing piece that universally condemns displays of traditional Indian culture. The photographs that accompany it, however, could easily appear in a collection of tourist's photographs. With the exception of a photograph of a Piegan tomb—left open to display the bare skeleton—that appears at the end of the article, nothing appears that could be reasonably

²⁰⁶ "Pueblos," TIS 1907, p. 12

²⁰⁷ "Indian Express, New Mexico," TIS 1907, p. 10

said to be “shocking” for western audiences. In the first photograph five girls are lined up in elaborate elk-tooth dresses, smiling broadly and clearly anticipating the festivities.²⁰⁸ Another photograph shows three young girls, once again in elk-tooth dresses, this time smiling at a little boy who is approaching them as though planning a childishly flirtatious encounter.²⁰⁹ The fourth image is perhaps the most striking. In it a young woman sits astride a horse, proudly displaying all of her native finery while gazing imperiously at a camera.²¹⁰

The explanation for the inclusion of photographs of the Pueblo Indians in the article on the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament is relatively easy to guess. Being presented with a lengthy article that included only photographs of buildings and group shots of students in school uniforms, the editors probably decided to fill up some page space with more alluring photographs. The photographs of the Pueblos may have been taken by a Sister or by a worker at St. Catherine’s, so there was at least a moderate excuse for including them. The explanation for the images chosen to accompany Carroll’s piece is more opaque. A distinct possibility is that Carroll had limited control over which photographs ended up in the finished piece. He or the photographer responsible for the images (which may have been him as well) might have presented the editors of the *Sentinel* with a wider range of images that were better suited to delivering Carroll’s themes of debauchery and immorality, and the editors simply picked the images that were likely to have the widest appeal. A more interesting explanation is that these images *were* meant to portray Carroll’s intended message, but somehow failed to do so. This theory is supported by the fact that two images came close to making their subjects look unappealing. One is the image of the “Piegan Tomb,” with its display of naked bones. The other

²⁰⁸ “Piegan School Children Celebrating the Fourth of July,” TIS 1910, p. 28

²⁰⁹ “School Children--Piegan Tribe,” TIS 1910, p. 30

²¹⁰ “Miss Agnes St. Goddard, an Educated Piegan,” TIS 1910, p. 31

is an image of a woman in a towering headdress, pictured in profile so that her face is not visible. The headdress is an elaborate object that gives the impression of dreadlocks flowing down the woman's back, which would certainly make it appear exotic and even "barbaric" to western viewers. What makes this photograph potentially distressing is the inclusion of a young girl being led away by the woman in the headdress. The girl is dirty and bedraggled-looking and stares inscrutably at the camera. She is also the only key figure to appear wearing a western outfit in these photographs (although background figures do in several cases appear to be wearing suit jackets and pants). Her white dress makes her griminess all the more apparent: Had she been wearing a deerskin dress, the image would probably remain perfectly charming.

The question is then why the other images in the story failed to elicit any sense of disturbance in the viewer. One explanation can be found in the work of James Faris, who discussed photographic tropes appearing in images of the Navajo, although he notes that his list of "registers" can be applied to most Native American groups who were photographed during that time period.²¹¹ Faris's registers are a series of lenses through which the western photographic eye viewed Native American subjects. Images like the ones appearing in Carroll's article, with their emphasis on traditional dress and customs, tend to fall under the "Casual surveillance" register, which encompasses images linked to tourism and western curiosity, and the "aesthetic commercial" register, wherein images were specifically composed to be pleasing to the western eye so that they were desirable to purchase. In other words, when white Americans saw images like these, they assumed that they were meant to be taken as intriguing or charming.²¹² Faris notes that these registers didn't just influence the sorts of photographs that

²¹¹ James Faris, "Navajo and Photography," in *Photography's Other Histories*, ed. Christopher Pinney and Nicholas Peterson, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 85

²¹² Faris, "Navajo and Photography," 86

people took of Native Americans: They also informed the discourse that went on around these photographs. Therefore, the fact that whites were so used to viewing these images positively meant that they were incapable of associating them with danger or debauchery. They may associate them with a sort of wildness or "primitiveness," but it was a comfortably distant, harmless wildness that made for pleasant viewing. Carroll may have been trying to show the evils of the Piegan fourth of July celebration in his photographs, but because of the tropes already firmly in place around Native American photographs, he failed.

To put Carroll's predicament in a larger context, it could be said that all authors and photographers who contributed work to the *Sentinel* faced the same problem. Americans of the early 1900's thought they knew what an "Indian" was. They'd been shown images of "Noble Savages" resplendent in feathers and war paint, and there was nothing the *Sentinel* could do to dissuade them from enjoying that image. Therefore, even when an author or photographer might not have wanted to portray romanticism or nostalgia in his work, it was hard to keep the general public from seeing those qualities in whatever "Native" image they were presented with. However, it's also clear that authors of the *Sentinel* were aware of the power of sentiment to keep their readers invested. The editors, authors and photographers of the *Indian Sentinel* used romantic images of Native Americans just as readily as any author, newspaper editor or photographer who was *not* a Catholic missionary, and in doing so they showed that they were much more aligned with American culture than they might feel comfortable admitting.

The conflict between showing Indians as savage or romantic is simply an offshoot of a larger paradox that faces the Catholics who wrote accounts of Indian culture. Much of chapter 2 was about how Catholics used *civilization* projects as a tool for self-Americanization, but as this chapter shows, Catholics were also perfectly willing to capitalize on the "romantic noble

savage”--which would by definition be a symbol of the failure of civilization efforts—to lend their missions an air of American nostalgia. Like many paradoxes that appear in popular culture, there is no way to neatly resolve this one. Catholic authors were presented with two images of Native Americans—civilized and romantic—and chose to use both to their full potential. Both images were capable of soliciting funds and Americanizing Catholic missionaries. So long as no one was inclined to object to the mixed messages, it would have been a waste to use only one image.

Chapter 4: The Saintly Indian

The previous chapter discussed instances in which authors writing for the *Indian Sentinel* deployed common tropes to make “their” Indians seem more appealing to whites. For the most part, these authors stuck to tropes that could be found in any popular-culture discussion of Indians during the early twentieth century. There was nothing particularly “Catholic” about focusing on Indian handicrafts or dances, and while there was a historical tie between Catholic missionaries and Indian languages, nothing was done to tie linguistic examples to Catholic culture. (The obvious exception to this was the translation of Catholic prayers and hymns into native languages.) In general, these stories could have appeared in any American publication with just a handful of modifications to make them palatable to a non-Catholic reader.

However, some writers broke this mold and wrote another kind of story. In these stories, the authors took tales of popular Indian attributes like nobility or primitiveness and wove them together with traditional Catholic stories. In these stories, the authors created a new hybrid Indian. This Indian was fully “Native” in that any reader would be able to recognize any number of tropes that they might see in a pop-culture representation. This “Indian” wore traditional

clothes, lived in a traditional home (preferably a teepee), and showed the requisite connection to the natural world to match any Indian heroine from a novel. She was also completely and devotedly Catholic, and she displayed attributes that a Catholic child might recognize from the lives of the Saints. As result, she forged another link between Catholicism and Americanism.

The use of a feminine pronoun is deliberate, because this Indian is almost always female. The precise reasons why will be discussed later, but for now it is sufficient to outline three glaring examples of this “Romantic Catholic Indian” that appeared in the *Sentinel*. The first two examples appeared in the very first issue, and both had lengthy articles dedicated to them—as was the norm in the early issues before the editors began switching to shorter stories. Both also have a more flowery writing style than pieces in later issues, and are so complimentary towards their subjects that they almost read like hagiographies. Interestingly, both of these articles centered around girls who went on journeys with the Ursuline nun Mother Amadeus Dunne, a driving force in the establishment of many Montana missions. While neither story lists an author, Dunne was also accompanied on both trips by her close companion Angela Lincoln, who later wrote a biography of Dunne that one scholar described as “nineteenth-century hagiography at its most elaborate.”²¹³ The style of the two *Sentinel* pieces is close enough to that description to suggest that Lincoln may well have been the author of one or both of these pieces.

The first of these stories follows Marie Kolinzuten, “The quaint little Flathead girl,” as she accompanied Mother Amadeus across the Atlantic to witness the wonders of Catholicism in Rome. The actual purpose of the trip was to discuss a possible union of all Ursuline orders across the globe, but the author jettisons any mentions of such political talk to focus on her Indian

²¹³ Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes*, 276

subject.²¹⁴ The story describes "the crowning glory of Kolinzuten's life," her audience with Pope Leo XIII, as well as her decision to make a vow of lifelong chastity at the Church of Santissima Annunziata in Florence (she was nine years old at the time). The prose gushes over her adoration of all things Catholic and her general sweetness, and indeed she seems to be the ultimate example of the good Catholic child, except for one curious detail. Throughout the story, the narrator reports that she wore Indian dress. The first paragraph notes that she was "picturesquely clad in buckskin" and her outfit is later described as "poetic." No suggestion is made that she chose this outfit herself, and the Ursuline Sisters who accompanied her never seemed to object to it. In fact, the Sisters "lovingly insisted" upon dressing her in an eagle-feathered war bonnet on her visit to the Vatican. The suggestion here is that she was being dressed specifically to attract attention. A cynical reader might note that her voyage seemed less about exposing her to the wonders of the Vatican than it was about exposing the Vatican to the wonder of her. Dressing the heroin in a deerskin dress and war bonnet also gave readers of the *Sentinel* the opportunity to revel in more nostalgic imagery.

Upon meeting Marie Kolinzuten, Pope Leo XIII asked the Mother Superior accompanying her what diocese she was from and how many other children were being provided for at the same location. Upon learning the answer (five hundred others) he blessed the work of the Sisters.²¹⁵ Marie's Story seems tailor-made to gain financial support for Indian Missions schools (after all, the Pope himself approved) but it was her Catholicism and her Indianness, and *not* her transformation into an Anglo-Saxon poster child, that made her a potential magnet for donor support.

²¹⁴ Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes*, 184-189

²¹⁵ "A Bright Page from a Sweet Life," TIS 1902-1903, pp. 7-10

The second story begins when the narrator tours St. Peters mission and is captivated by a lovely young Indian girl. This girl becomes the focus of the remainder of the story. Named Watzinitha, she is described as a "Half-shy, half loving" sixteen-year old with a "modest, maidenly way." Determined to find out more about Watzinitha, the narrator reports that she was born in Gros-Ventre reservation and that her parents were "model Indians of their kind" who elected to send to the Reservation School to further her education. In 1893 Watzinitha was permitted to accompany the Mother Superior on a business trip to Washington after being identified by her classmates as the "best girl in the school." As in Kolinzuten's story, the actual purpose of the trip—in this case to recruit more nuns for the missions and perhaps secure financial backing—is never discussed.²¹⁶ Watzinitha was far more interesting a subject than either of the nuns accompanying her, and the author deftly manipulated the narrative to make the Indian girl the protagonist. The trip allowed word of Watzinitha's beauty to spread amongst "her own people" and the son of a prominent chief asked for her hand in marriage. The "too-fond Indian mother" (presumably Watzinitha's own) favored the match and appealed to Major Kelly, the Government agent stationed at the Gros-Ventre reservation, to intervene on behalf of the match. Major Kelly agreed and issued the order that Watzinitha be delivered to the chief's son and stationed as an assistant cook at the Agency school.

Upon hearing the news, Watzinitha seemed to lose faith and strength but was supported by the Sisters who urged her to pray for her deliverance. In what the narrator considers an act of self-actualization, Watzinitha addressed a letter to the agent refusing his request. Our narrator exclaims, "is there not much room for reflection in the above words of a poor Indian girl, so firm, and yet so modest? No flattered vanity, no foolish love of independence in that pure heart!" We

²¹⁶ Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes*, 135-137

are also told that Watzinitha's Mother accepted her daughter's wishes, finally realizing that Watzinitha loved St. Peter's mission above all else and would be happy nowhere else. The "poor Indian girl" eventually joined the Order at St. Peter's and took the name Sister Immaculata, but died of consumption only a few months later.²¹⁷ The narrator, however, seems satisfied with this ending. In her short life Watzinitha had made a transformation from a savage to a Catholic of nearly saintly proportions, and had never been forced to leave the religious life she loved before achieving the ultimate goal of being reunited with Jesus Christ.

Both of these stories share key themes with the story of Kateri Tekakwitha, a Mohawk Indian who lived during the early missionary years of the mid-1600s and was nominated for canonization in 1884. A well-known figure worldwide from the early eighteenth century and a revered figure in Catholic America from the 1880's, it is no surprise that Tekakwitha received her own article in the *Sentinel* in 1908. Even more impressively, the article was written by Ellen Walworth, the very woman who wrote the definitive biography of Tekakwitha when the Indian woman was first being considered for canonization.

Tekakwitha was born long before the establishment of any Catholic Mission schools, but she was still an irresistible subject for any writer dealing with Native American Catholics. Walworth's article describes Tekakwitha as a lonely orphan, ostracized by the other Mohawks for her Catholic faith. Tekakwitha eventually made it to the Mission of St. Francis, where she became the first Native American nun and established a convent with a fellow Native Catholic. Like Watzinitha, she died young, succumbing to disease at the age of 24. Much is made of her suffering and disregard for her own health, which is taken as a sign that she was already "on a

²¹⁷ "A Little Indian Life," TIS 1902-1903, pp. 13-23

higher plane" than others at the Mission. She also, like Watzinitha, narrowly avoided a marriage that was supported by her mother and had to fight to retain her chastity. Just like Watzinitha and Kolinzuten, her Catholicism was one of her defining features.

However, Tekakwitha is also a distinctly *Indian* figure. The narrator of the article makes a point that "Being of Iroquois-Algonquin stock, she represents much of the red race in the United States." Her traditional skills of beading, basket-weaving and mat-making are described in terms of admiration, just as sentinel authors praised the handiwork of Penobscot women and those who attended the Catholic Sioux congress. When she died in 1680—after what the narrator describes as a "brief life of industrious toil in lodges and corn fields, of bitter persecution, of hair-breadth escapes and holy friendships..."--she appeared to a Jesuit missionary in a vision, with her face lifted towards heaven and a pot of maize in her hands.²¹⁸

The parallels between Tekakwitha, Marie Kolinzuten and Watzinitha are clear. All three showed their devotion to a Catholic life by taking vows of chastity and all were applauded for their natural grace and goodness. Both Tekakwitha and Watzinitha were forced to turn down marriage proposals to follow their chosen path and both suffered consternation from their tribe for doing so. Both also died young, thereby neatly completing their arc from savage to Saint (literally in Tekakwitha's case). (Interestingly, Kolinzuten also died shortly after returning from her trip to Rome. One has to wonder why the narrator omitted such a poignant detail.²¹⁹) However, none of the three underwent an assimilation process. Tekakwitha's Native skills and Kolinzuten's Native dress are both described in detail, and after death Tekakwitha appeared to a Jesuit Priest carrying one of the most recognizable symbols of Native American womanhood: A

²¹⁸ Ellen H. Walworth, "Our Little Sister Kateri Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks," TIS 1908, pp. 5-12

²¹⁹ Mahoney, *Lady Blackrobes*, 197

basket of corn. While Watzinitha's Indian-ness is never highlighted, it is noteworthy that her name has never been changed to something more European, although this would have been the norm for a child attending a Catholic school. Her decision to take a vow of chastity also prohibited her from joining traditional Anglo-Saxon culture in the role of a wife and mother.

The significance of these parallels becomes even more clear when one realizes that when Tekakwitha was first nominated for Beatification in the 1880's, she was largely considered because of her potential to Americanize the Catholic population in the United States. The precarious position of Catholics at the turn of the century has already been discussed in detail in this paper, as has the myriad ways that Catholics took pains to Americanize their image. The idea of a distinctly *American* Catholic Saint was one very tempting option. Plenty of Jesuit Missionaries were considered for canonization in the late nineteenth century, but it was Tekakwitha who emerged as the favorite candidate. Part of this was due to her association with the Jesuit Martyrs Isaac Jogues and Jean de la Lande. She was born in the same village where those two martyrs had been killed (albeit a decade after those events took place) and those who campaigned for her canonization trumpeted her as a “spiritual child” of Jogues and de la Lande, who were themselves proof of Catholicism’s long history on American soil.²²⁰ Tales of early Jesuit missionaries also invoked images of a fresh, unexplored American continent that still promised danger and adventures, and Tekakwitha could further strengthen that image because she was an Indian and therefore a “child of the forest.” Indians were perhaps the most “American” symbol that could be invoked in an era of industrialization and a vanishing frontier.

²²⁰ Emma Anderson, *The Death and Afterlife of the North American Martyrs* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 138-139

Tekakwitha was, therefore, the ultimate Americanizing agent for the Catholic church.²²¹ By extension, Kolinzuten and Watzinitha were more valuable as Indians than they were as Americans.

However, Tekakwitha herself required some "Indianization" before she could be an acceptably *American* figure. This was largely accomplished by *The Life and Times of Kateri Tekakwitha* by Ellen Walworth (often referred to as Nelly), whose *Sentinel* article is largely a summary of her larger biography. Walworth was the niece of Clarence Walworth, the Catholic Priest who took perhaps the most central role in Tekakwitha's campaign. Her book took a nostalgic attitude towards Tekakwitha's story, contrasting the pristine environment of her heroine's time to the industrialized chaos of the late nineteenth century. It was also Walworth who gave Tekakwitha the first name "Kateri." Until this point writers had usually referred to her as "Catherine Tekakwitha," but the decidedly European "Catherine" would not do for Walworth's very *Indian* heroine. Walworth chose "Kateri" because it was how Mohawks tended to pronounce the word "Catherine."²²² The visual images presented with Tekakwitha also underwent careful scrutiny to make sure they were "romantic" enough to properly portray the Indian saint. The image that appeared along with Walworth's 1908 article was originally made for the full-length book on Tekakwitha's life, but Clarence Walworth rejected it because it was not "saintly" or "Indian" enough. However, Ellen Walworth thought that the piece was still "charming" enough to accompany her *Sentinel* piece, pointing out its "historically accurate costume" and Tekakwitha's "dainty and poetic" pose.²²³

²²¹ Allan Greer, "Natives and Nationalism: The Americanization of Kateri Tekakwitha," *The Catholic Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (2004), 260-262.

²²² Greer, "Natives and Nationalism," 268-271.

²²³ "Ellen Walworth to William Ketcham, June 18, 1907," BCIM Series 1, box 55, folder 9.

Tekakwitha's image—and by extension, the images of Marie Kolinzuten and Watzinitha—also hearkens back to the longstanding fascination with the Native American women in Western culture. The fierce Native "queen" was the symbol of America for early European colonists, while her daughter, the softer and more nurturing "princess," gained popularity as America moved towards independence. She was a romantic figure, often saving her white hero (or committing suicide when she failed to do so), but she was never permitted to engage in sexual acts with a white man. If she did, she was no longer the princess but the "squaw," the lusty but also primitive and repulsive Indian woman.²²⁴ *Sentinel* authors invoked the image of the "squaw" when they described the disgusting physical appearances and habits of Native Women, but Tekakwitha, Kolinzuten and Watzinitha all embodied the "princess" trope. In fact, the *Sentinel* seemed to draw a sharp divide between Saintly Indian Girls and Crude Indian Women. Because of their youth and beauty (Watzinitha in particular receives much attention for her physical appearance), as well as their oft-remarked upon gentle personalities, the three girls fit neatly into the "Indian princess" category.

All three girls also display many of the hallmarks of ideal Catholic femininity. The most obvious of these is that all took a vow of chastity, which had the dual advantage of emphasizing their Catholic purity and pushing them further away from the "squaw" category. Tekakwitha and Watzinitha's refusal of marriage vows was another example of a popular Catholic tropes. Catholic female saints were often venerated for their refusal to marry pagan suitors. Oftentimes, this resulted in a grisly and torturous death (in fact, the refusal of a marriage proposal seemed to be one of the leading causes of death for female Catholic saints.) Saints Afra, Catherine and

²²⁴ Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," *The Massachusetts Review* 16, no. 4 (1975), 702-703.

Margaret are prominent examples, but there are countless others. While Watzinitha and Tekakwitha both survived their marriage proposals they still suffered because of them. To hearken back to another story, Chilipat was killed for her refusal to marry Anacapa in “The Legend of La Najagui.” Chilipat’s story could be considered a variation on the “Romantic Catholic Indian” model introduced by Watzinitha, Kolinzuten and Tekakwitha, but her story rarely emphasizes her Catholicism. The emotional climax of her story is not her refusal of the marriage proposal, but Ino/Fernandito’s anguish over the fact that Anacapa had been aiming for him when Chilipat was killed.²²⁵ The fact that she was eloping with another suitor also negates the possibility that she intended to remain chaste. Therefore, while she has echoes of the “Tekakwitha trope,” she is more representative of traditional American depictions of Native American women, with just enough Catholicism thrown in to satisfy readers of the *Sentinel*.

The Legend of La Najagui is a far better example of the style of writing seen issues of the *Seintinel* that came out after 1910. The stories of Tekakwitha, Watzinitha, and Mary Kolinzuten were a peculiarity of the early issues. In subsequent issues it was rare to see a story that focused on a single subject, with the exception of the “Catholic Indians” sections, in which the stories were uniformly short. Perhaps *Sentinel* authors were encouraged to focus on stories that covered more aspects of the missionary experience, or perhaps the shorter story format simply didn’t allow for the page space in which to flesh out a real “Romantic Catholic Indian Girl.” However, authors still managed to fuse pop-culture images with Catholic ideals. In other words, they created new tropes that combined Indianness with Catholicism, but they used these tropes more sparingly and in shorter stories. The most prominent example is the marriage of the

²²⁵ A. S. Patterson, “The Legend of La Najagui,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 8-10

"extinctionist" theory of American anthropologists with the tradition Catholic fixation on eternal salvation.

The extinctionist or "vanishing race" theory was an extension of the pervasive belief in inherent racial differences that characterized much of the scientific thinking of the early twentieth century. Beginning shortly before 1900, America's burgeoning ethnology community claimed that Indian culture simply could not withstand the onslaught of white superiority. This meant that ethnologist had to scramble to gather significant knowledge of Indian culture before it was gone.²²⁶ Some ethnologists limited their theories to only encompass the destruction of Indian culture, but others claimed that Indians themselves were literally dying out. Ethnologist James Mooney claimed that the Native American population was decreasing rapidly and outlined his position in a series of papers from 1906 to 1910, though he remained interested in the topic for years afterwards. Like many of his contemporaries he suggested that the decline was caused by war, disease and alcohol, though he also thought that the Indians showed "low vitality due to mental depression under misfortune."²²⁷ William Henry Holmes was even clearer on the point. Like many other thinkers of the time, Holmes believed that the inherent superiority of the white race meant that "backwards races" would soon fade away from an innate ability to exist in a civilized society.²²⁸ This theory was often extended to other races, leading to the conclusion that whites would inevitably take over the world. The extinction of some races—most notably the much-maligned black population of the American south—was not seen as a cause for any great deal of sorrow. Indians, however, had come to symbolize America's past, and their passing came to be seen as tragically inevitable.

²²⁶ Dippie, *The Vanishing American*. 229-230

²²⁷ Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 236-239

²²⁸ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 122-123

In popular culture, the idea of the “vanishing race” quickly began to dominate portrayals of Native Americans. The idea that Indians were vanishing—either culturally or literally—only made them a more poignant artistic symbol. To return the portrayal of Indians in World’s Fairs, it becomes clear that by the second decade of the twentieth century the “vanishing race” motif was well-known and popular. At the San Francisco World’s Fair of 1915 the most popular Native American symbol was a sculpture of an exhausted Indian on horseback. Titled “the end of the trail,” the statue symbolized the “end” of the Indians’ grand history as they slowly rode off into oblivion.²²⁹

Photographers were quick to capitalize on this image. Edward Curtis is one of the most infamous examples of this exploitation of the tragedy of the “vanishing race.” Throughout his work on *The North American Indian* he advertised his project by claiming that he was documenting cultures that would soon disappear from the face of the earth.²³⁰ He seems to have curated his images to highlight this idea, with one example being his portrait *Navajo Woman*. The subject of the photograph stared stoically into the camera, resigned to the inevitable extinction of her people. She wore an elaborate necklace and belt—both of which belonged to Curtis as part of his set of “props.” Curtis did shoot another image featuring the same woman, but this time she wore no jewelry and smiled into the camera with her cheek resting on her hand. It’s a beautiful image, and an excellent showcase for Curtis’s technical skills, but it was never published. Its optimism had no place in the pages of *The North American Indian*.²³¹ Even Curtis’s protege, Richard Throssel, engaged in the trope despite himself being part Indian. Literary works also bore the hallmarks of the “Vanishing Race” motif. In fact, in 1925 Zane

²²⁹ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 83-113

²³⁰ Lyman, *The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions*, 47-53

²³¹ Faris, “Navajo and Photography,” 94-95

Grey published a book titled *The Vanishing American* which told of the forbidden romance between a Navajo youth and a young white woman. When the Navajo boy died at the end of the story it was clearly meant to mirror the fate of the American Indian. The novel even ended with a group of Navajo riding off into the sunset.²³² It's not surprising that the *Sentinel* also used this trope—but it did so with a distinctly Catholic twist.

The “vanishing race” image was first invoked in the opening poem of the inaugural issue of the *Sentinel*. Titled “Indian Names” it began with the lines “Ye say they all have passed away/That noble race and brave” but concluded that the “noble” Indians would endure through the names they bestowed on prominent American landmarks and American States.²³³ Father De Smet was described as toiling to “save and perpetuate the rapidly dying remnants” of the tribes of the Pacific northwest.²³⁴ An article on “The Gentle Selish” was particularly poetic, describing the Selish as “an oak that stood for ages before being struck by lightning, left a shell of its former self.” The article also invoked the “Children of the Forest” trope in the passage “Nature’s children have chosen a fitting place for the last camping ground of the gentle, tender-hearted tribe, one of the gentlest yet bravest Indian tribes of the Great Northwest.”²³⁵ The “vanishing race” trope was even applied to the massacre at Wounded Knee. In a typically wrongheaded retelling of the event, a missionary from Holy Rosary mission suggested that the event was begun when the remaining Sioux chiefs, understanding that the “end of their nation” was

²³² Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 209-210

²³³ Mrs. Lyida H. Sigourney, “Indian Names,” TIS 1902-1903, p. 2

²³⁴ “St. Ignatius, the Pioneer Indian Mission of the Northwest,” TIS 1904-1905, p. 5

²³⁵ W. Downey, “The Gentle Selish and St. Ignatius,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 31

imminent after their defeat of Custer, decided to gather their strength for one less grand stand against the white man.²³⁶

A slightly modified version of this trope appeared in Rev. Warren Charles Currier's sermon at the funeral of Chief Hollow Horn Bear, which was printed in the 1914 issue of the *Sentinel*. Currier stated that Hollow Horn Bear understood that the Indian race was doomed to be overtaken by the stronger white race, and that he believed that civilization might be the only hope for their survival. The priest went on to suggest that the Chief's hoped-for civilization was a failure, and that the white race was now responsible for saving the "remnants of the Indian race" before the civilization that they had been ill-prepared for exterminated them once and for all. Currier seemed pessimistic about their chances of success: His statement that "Long after the Indian shall be extinct his poetry, his traditions and his name will survive" seems to assume the Indian's eventual disappearance.²³⁷

Catholics had another reason to latch onto the vanishing race motif. Mass extinction requires individual death, and Catholicism is a religion very much embedded in death. One of the most important jobs of a Missionary priest was to administer the Last Rites to dying converts, and considering the high death rate on Indian Reservations, most of the missionary authors who wrote for the *Sentinel* would have encountered death with startling frequency. The ritual was not necessarily sad, because it allowed the dying individual to pass into heaven, and so depictions of it are often somber yet joyful. In essence, for a Catholic Missionary, the pious death of a converted Indian that included the timely application of the Last Rites was the ultimate success story. Converted Indians were always in danger of lapsing back into paganism while they were

²³⁶ P. F. S., S. J., "Holy Rosary Between Battlefields," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, p. 27-28

²³⁷ "Hollow Horn Bear," TIS 1914, p. 10-11

alive, but if they renounced all sin upon death they were officially safe from all Satanic influences. What this means for *The Sentinel* is that stories of deathbed sacraments—or, even more dramatically, deathbed conversions—were a common occurrence in articles. In fact, when the 1919 Spanish Influenza epidemic broke out among the Sioux, the missionaries were proud to report that not a single Catholic Sioux died without receiving the Last Rites. The catastrophic death toll (exacerbated by the lack of rations caused by the reservation's quarantine) meant that missionary priests spent this period doing little else besides attending to dying Indians.²³⁸ A missionary to St. Michael's mission in Alaska had a similar report during the epidemic. No "Eskimos" had died without the sacraments, which he compared with the "deplorable condition" of the nearby Methodist missionary.²³⁹

Such examples are interesting, but individual stories of deathbed sacraments delivered a stronger emotional impact. Authors used them frequently, often when discussing the deaths of young children. We have already seen how the deaths of Tekakwitha and Watzinitha were treated as scenes of triumph, with the saintly young women finally achieving their heavenly reward. Similar—if shorter—stories abound. An article from the 1904-1905 issue told of a young girl who begged to be taken back to the Mission school at Bernadillo, Mexico, to die. Three days later "her pure soul winged its flight above, having been strengthened by the Sacraments of the Holy Church."²⁴⁰ Sammie Elizabeth Jacoway, a Choctaw girl from Mississippi, requested her sodality medal on her deathbed. At her funeral the author was pleased to see her entire family receiving Communion.²⁴¹ The "domino effect" of a child's death persuading her parents to be

²³⁸ Placidus F. Sialm, S. J., "The Influenza among the Sioux," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 12, 21

²³⁹ "Letters from Indian Missionaries: S. Michael's, Alaska," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 14, pp. 35-36

²⁴⁰ "The Indian School of the Sisters of Loretto, Bernalillo, New Mexico," TIS 1904-1905, p. 36

²⁴¹ "Catholic Indians: Peter Rios and Family, San Xavier, Arizona," TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 5, 28-29

better Catholics (or to become Catholics in the first place) was a common trope in the *Sentinel* as well. One article described a very sick young girl convincing her father to hold on to her Sacred Heart Badge. When she died several months later, a "last touch of God's grace" convinced him to accept Catholicism.²⁴² A particularly dramatic version of this narrative appeared in the story of Lucy Badger, a young girl whose mother objected to her attendance at the local mission school. Displeased with the amount of time her daughter was kept away from home, Mrs. Badger visited the mission school and, after a lengthy confrontation, literally dragged young Lucy home by tying a belt around her waist and pulling her along the ground. In retaliation Lucy went on a hunger strike until her parents agreed to return her to the mission school. Her parent did eventually agree, and Lucy was permitted to continue her blissful life among the missionaries. When she grew older, Lucy fell in love with a boy who was not a Catholic, prompting her to demand that he convert to Catholicism and learn all the Catechisms before their marriage. The boy obliged, but Lucy died only shortly after their wedding. However, her death ultimately inspired her mother to become a good Catholic and a devout, tractable woman. Lucy was therefore responsible for the double victory of her husband's and mother's conversions.²⁴³

The real master stroke was for authors to manage to tie the "vanishing race" motif to the "deathbed baptism" trope in a way that positioned the Catholic missionaries as agents helping to transport Indians from this world to the next. In the same way that the stories of Watzinitha, Tekakwitha and Kolinzuten combined tropes of Native American femininity with Catholic symbolism to produce a new symbol for American Catholicism, these stories tied the vanishing of the Indian race—an event that held a romantic appeal for all Americans—with the narrative of

²⁴² "Holy Family Mission School," TIS 1912, p. 38

²⁴³ A. Van der Velden, S. J., "Lucy Badger," TIS 1920-1922, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 93-94

eternal salvation that appeared in virtually all Catholic thought. Again, one of the clearest examples appears in a poem. The 1916 issue featured a poem titled *At the Grave of De Smet* by James J. Daly, and it included a memorable set of lines describing De Smet going “With anxious and unthinking pace/to minister, Angel-called, beside/the death-bed of a race.”²⁴⁴ An article on the Holy Rosary mission compared Missionaries to “physicians at the bedside of a patient,” with Father Ketcham acting as the head physician.²⁴⁵ The article on the “Gentle Selish” noted that religion was the only consolation left to “these poor, disturbed children of the vanished past.”²⁴⁶

As always, the best example was one that came directly from an Indian. P. F. Hybelos presented one such instance when he reported on a sermon given by Chief Stanup of the Puyallup reservation, given to persuade his fellow Catholic Indians to rebuild their dilapidated church.

“The deer are no longer in the prairies where the newcomers hunt every day, and they are even scarce in our mountains. We can sell no more bearskins, and we can dry no more berries, because even our woods have been robbed of them. Very soon we will find nothing to live on, we will dry out like a stick that is cut off and has no sap. Our hunting and fishing grounds can no longer be our homes. We can only hope to find a home with our Father in Heaven, and, therefore, we must only think of loving Him and of serving Him better and better every day, as we get nearer our graveyard. The best thing we can do is build a new house of prayer, where we can learn all that we have to do to merit a good home in our second life, but this time it will be a home forever.”²⁴⁷

As usual, the veracity of the statement is difficult to determine. It’s likely that Hybelos was overly creative with his paraphrasing, but that’s entirely besides the point. In reporting Stanup’s speech, Hybelos managed to hit all the “high points” of both the “vanishing race” and “ministering angel” tropes. He described an idyllic past where the Indians lives peacefully, in the

²⁴⁴ James J. Daly, S. J., “At the Grave of De Smet,” TIS 1916, p. 3

²⁴⁵ Placidus F. Sialm, S. J., “Holy Rosary mission,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 29

²⁴⁶ W. Downey, “The Gentle Selish and St. Ignatius,” TIS 1916-1919, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 3

²⁴⁷ P. F. Hylebos, “St. George’s School, Puyallup Reservation, Washington,” TIS 1915, p. 7

wild setting that urban whites loved to imagine. He described this past vanishing under the onslaught of white settlers and industrialization. The Indians, inherently connected to the land on which they lived, were bound to disappear when the land was finally sapped of all its resources. Assimilation was not presented as an option. The only option available to the Puyallup was to prepare for the next life with the help of the Catholic Missionaries, who became shepherds charged with leading a doomed people to their final reward. It was a heady mixture. To an American Catholic—particularly one stuck in the smoky, noisy streets of one of America’s booming industrial centers—it must have seemed positively tragic, but also positively heroic.

Conclusion

The *Indian Sentinel* is a publication whose stated goal was to make money for the American system of Catholic Mission schools among Native Americans. It therefore documented the processes by which Catholics tried to both convert Indians to Catholicism and to civilize those Indians. The first of these goals aligned with Catholic theology and identity, while the second aligned with the wishes and requirements of the American government. The irony is that Catholics were being asked to assimilate Native Americans into American society when they themselves were grappling with the question of how much they wanted to integrate into American society. American Catholics wanted full access to the rights guaranteed to American citizens and full participation in American political life, but many hesitated to cast off the traditions of their ancestral homelands and fully transition into a new—and, many thought, sinful—way of life.

The argument that I have tried to lay out is that the Authors of the *Indian Sentinel* gave us a window into these struggles when they wrote about their work amongst Native Americans. They used the history of Catholic missionary work to prove that they deserved a place in the narrative of American history and to demonstrate that they were capable of participating in American civil discourse. They wrote of their civilization efforts—and the desperate need of such efforts on reservations—to show that they were as capable of “civilized” behavior as any other American, but they also blamed non-Catholic Americans for the sorry state of Indians. They used tropes and imagery that was in vogue throughout white America to excite their readers, but they also formed new idols that mixed Catholicism and Americana in the form of Native American women. Finally, they employed the tragic image of the “Vanishing Indian” to elicit their readers’ sympathies while also framing missionaries as the ministering angels who would lead the dying race to their final reward.

The final irony is that Native Americans were facing many of the same problems as American Catholics. They wanted greater autonomy and greater political power, but they also wanted to maintain their traditional way of life. Rather than acknowledge this parallel, the authors of the *Sentinel* painted Indians as lost souls who were helpless without the guiding hand of white Catholic missionaries. This approach strengthened the position of American Catholics by emphasizing their Christian charity, ceaseless labor and dedication to American ideals. It also denied agency to the Indians in favor of turning them into tragic symbols. By doing this, the authors of the *Sentinel* revealed just how invested in white American culture they actually were.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

BCIM: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions

TIS: The Indian Sentinel

Archival Sources

Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, Series 1-1: Correspondence. Marquette University, Department of Special Collections and University Archives.

The Indian Sentinel. Marquette University, Department of Special Collections and University Archives. <http://cdm16280.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15072coll2>

Other Primary Sources

Cooper, Ella H. "How to Educate the Indian." *Gunton's Magazine (1898-1904)* (May 1902): 452-453.

Secondary Sources

Albright, Peggy. *Crow Indian Photographer: The Work of Richard Throssel*. University of New Mexico Press, 1997.

Anderson, Emma. *The Death and Afterlife of the North American Martyrs*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Dippie, Brian W. *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U. S. Indian Policy*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991.

- Dolan, Jay P. *The Catholic American Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present*. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1985.
- Faris, James. "Navajo and Photography." In *Photography's Other Histories*, edited by Christopher Pinney and Nicholas Peterson. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Gerlach, Dominic B. "St. Joseph's Indian Normal School, 1888-1896." *Indian Magazine of History* 69, no. 1 (1963): 1-42.
- Gleason, Philip. *Speaking of Diversity: Language and Ethnicity in Twentieth-Century America*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Graber, Jennifer. *The Gods of Indian Country: Religion and the Struggle for the American West*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Green, Rayna. "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture." *The Massachusetts Review* 16, no. 4 (1975): 698-714.
- Greer, Allan. "Natives and Nationalism: The Americanization of Kateri Tekakwitha." *The Catholic Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (2004): 260-272.
- Hoxie, Frederick E. *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.
- Lyman, Christopher M. *The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions: Photographs of Indians by Edward S. Curtis*. New York: Pantheon Books, in association with the Smithsonian Institution, 1982.
- Mahoney, Irene. *Lady Blackrobes: Missionaries in the Heart of Indian Country*. Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2006.

- Markowitz, Harvey. "The Catholic Mission and the Sioux: A Crisis in the Early Paradigm." In *Sioux Indian Religion: Tradition and Innovation*, edited by Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks, 113-148. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987.
- Moloney, Deirdre M. *American Catholic Lay Groups and Transatlantic Social Reform in the Progressive Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Prucha, Francis Paul. *The Churches and the Indian Schools, 1888-1912*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.
- Ruoff, A. Lavonne Brown. Introduction to S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest*, *xiii-xliii*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.
- Warren, Louis S. *God's Red Son: The Ghost Dance Religion and the Making of Modern America*. New York: Basic Books, 2017.