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THE GERTRUDE BONNIN STORY: FROM YANKTON
DESTINY INTO AMERICAN HISTORY, 1804-1938

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SUSAN ROSE DOMINGUEZ

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of the requirements for the

Ph.D. degree in American Studies

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**THE GERTRUDE BONNIN STORY:
FROM YANKTON DESTINY INTO AMERICAN HISTORY, 1804-1938**

VOLUME I

By

Susan Rose Dominguez

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

THE GERTRUDE BONNIN STORY: FROM YANKTON DESTINY INTO AMERICAN HISTORY, 1804-1938

By

Susan Rose Dominguez

This biography expands our knowledge of the woman also known as Zitkala-Sa (Ziiⁿt-ká-la-sha). It is a synthesis of approaches set in the framework of a gallery, an exhibition site for Bonnín's life and heritage. The reader views the history of Zitkala-Sa's people and episodes of her life, from her birthplace on the Yankton Reservation to Arlington, Virginia. The gallery viewer meets Zitkala-Sa, the frightened child on the "iron horse," and the "representative Indian" in 1900. As a mature woman Bonnín gave back to her people as a "professional Indian" in the national political area. The telling of Gertrude Bonnín's life story does justice to both her complexities and commonalities as part of the first generation of educated *Thanktonwan* and as an American Indian woman. Bonnín carried a deep sense of social justice, instilled in her as a child; she lived to the best of her ability, to "render service to the Red Race."

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDA	American Indian Defense Association
BCIM	Bureau Catholic Indian Missions, Marquette University Archives
CIS	Carlisle Indian Industrial School
CCHS	Cumberland County Historical Society
GFWC	General Federation of Women's Clubs
GRBC	Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin Collection, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University (BYU)
HRM	Holy Rosary Mission Records, Marquette University Archives
IRA	Indian Rights Association
NARA	National Archives Records Administration
NA-CPR	National Archives-Central Plains Region
NMAH-SI	National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution
SAI	Society of American Indians
WHC	William Hanson Collection, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University (BYU)
WHRC	Women's History and Resource Center
WSHS	Wisconsin State Historical Society

Introduction and Gallery Preview

From little black-haired Zitkala-Sa, or Red Bird, who lived in a weather-stained canvas wigwam along the Missouri River, in South Dakota, to Mrs. Raymond T. Bonnin, of Lyon Park, Virginia, is a long story.

The Washington Post Magazine December 31, 1933

It is a presumptuous notion to think oneself capable of telling the life story of someone who lived four generations ago. This is especially true when this person is the intriguing and somewhat notorious Gertrude Bonnin, whom I first heard about over ten years ago. The same day I met Gertrude Bonnin, "Red reformer" of the 1920s, I was also introduced to the writings of Zitkala-Sa or Red Bird, the young Indian woman who penned autobiographical stories in 1900.¹ My interest was immediately stimulated by the nature of this girl from the generation of Indian children who learned to construct "word arrows" out of English rhetoric in boarding school. When she died at age sixty-two, a retired activist and enrolled member of the Yankton Sioux tribe, her body was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. A large gravestone bears her names: "Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, "Zitkala-Sa" of the Sioux, 1876-1938."²

It has taken ten years to come to terms with the complexities of this woman who, over the course of her lifetime, had as many personas as she had hairstyles and hats. It is with a touch of trepidation, much excitement,

and a slight pang of sadness, that I share the long story of her life. For now, the crafting of her biography has reached an end point and I hope I am doing her justice.

"The Gertrude Bonnin Story: From Yankton Destiny into American History" lays the historical foundation of where Gertrude came from and who her people were. It fills in many sequential gaps in our knowledge about Bonnin.

Importantly, "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" addresses what she might have chosen to speak about, had she been in a situation to tell her own life story in more than an essay or a brief interview.

The events, places, and phases of her life Gertrude spoke about in 1933 and 1936 interviews, coincide with a short autobiographical sketch she penned at this same time, perhaps in preparation for these interviews. "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" expands upon the episodes she mentions and combines that with new evidence about her life and heritage. Gertrude mentioned in a 1928 interview, that she "grew up in an atmosphere filled with war tragedies."³ This project reaches back in time to Zitkala-Sa, the little girl from Yankton who rode the iron horse to "Red Apple Country." It tells the story of "the girl who "resented being watched...by glassy blue eyes,"⁴ to the woman who spoke her mind in public with dignity and grace. It introduces

the eloquent "Miss Simmons" in Indiana and the complex Mrs. R. T. Bonnin in Utah. This story stretches beyond Gertrude Bonnin the activist all the way to "once" (ún-che) or "my grandmother" in Lyon Park, Virginia, to the woman whose life-long nickname was "Gertie."⁵

Locating Gertrude's Story

Not far from Fort Meyers Military Reservation and Arlington National Cemetery, sits a distinctive house made of granite stones, the only one of its kind in the historic neighborhood of Lyon Park, Virginia.⁶ Coinciding with the final years of Bonnin's life, it was the home of Captain Raymond T. and Gertrude Bonnin from 1926-1938.⁷ Gertrude always referred to her Virginia residence as the "Stone House."

In trying to get a sense of how and where Gertrude Bonnin lived as a mature adult, I visited every address I could find in the written documents. Pouring over local maps in the Virginia Room of the Arlington County Public Library, led me to discover that the two addresses I had for Bonnin were the same residence; the street names had been changed in 1936. And so I was able to find the Stone House and meet the current residents who had second-hand

knowledge of the "Indian lady" who lived there seventy years ago.

When I first saw this Stone House I envisioned Gertie standing at her kitchen sink, looking out at the expansive yard and gardens. I could also imagine her playing piano in the parlor, or sitting at her writing table in the study. The Stone House provides the setting for the telling of Gertrude Bonnin's life story. The rooms and spaces on the ground floor of the Stone House comprise a Gallery that is the exhibition site for her life and heritage. The Gallery is a place that accommodates the complexities and sequences of Gertrude Bonnin's life. The Gallery serves as the larger metaphor for the phases in Gertrude's life while exhibits in various rooms represent specific episodes and events.

This project expands the boundaries of traditional biography both conceptually and chronologically, as it begins three generations before Gertrude was born and ends at the close of her life. Readers are invited to use their imaginations as they visit the Stone House and tour Gertrude's Gallery as we hear and see "The Gertrude Bonnin Story."⁸

In the foyer of the Stone House the reader is introduced to Gertrude Bonnin and provided a preview of the Gallery exhibits. A photograph of the Stone House taken in

1985 and a copy of the house's floor plan allow Gallery visitors to get a visual sense of where they are (figures I.1, I.2). The Gallery tour begins with a 1936 photograph published in the Washington Evening Star captioned, "Mrs. Raymond T. Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa)." It was taken in this foyer in front of a Navajo rug, just thirteen months before Gertrude Bonnin died. In this photograph, she is carefully groomed with penciled eyebrows and lipstick adorning her sweet sixty-year old smile. Traditionally wrapped braids frame her face in the last photographic image available of Gertrude Bonnin (figure I.3).⁹ She seems happy and at ease with her life. We are fortunate to have some of Gertrude's own words transcribed by Sylvia Syfret McNight who interviewed Gertrude for a feature article that accompanied the 1936 photograph.¹⁰ This image of Gertrude is noticeably thinner than in a similar picture the Washington Post Magazine ran three years earlier.¹¹

Zitkala-Sa's stories and legends appeared in print from 1900-1950, after which time her notoriety faded during the period that coincides with Congressional Termination policy of American Indian tribes (1953-1973).¹² After 1980, "Zitkala-Sa the Dakota writer" and "Gertrude Bonnin the activist" began to appear in college classrooms across the country. Today, the second generation of scholars intrigued

by Zitkala-Sa the writer and Gertrude Bonnin the outspoken reformer, continue to be fascinated by her rhetoric and curious about her life.

Although the memories and stories are now another generation older, Gertrude reveals herself as both an extraordinary and ordinary woman. In many ways, she is exemplary of others of her generation who transitioned to English literacy at the end of the nineteenth century. Gerald Vizenor described this generation of American Indians in Manifest Manners, as those who were, "the last to hear and the first to write."¹³ Forced to give up her blanket and wear tight clothing as girl, Gertrude was objectified as an "Indian Maiden" after coming of age. Her oratorical skills and musical talents gave her status as a "Representative Indian." The fact that she was female and strikingly beautiful made her a curiosity. As a mature woman, she gave back to her people the best way she knew how, often at the price of isolating herself along the way as a "professional" Indian lobbying the Senate. Gertrude came a long way from the frightened child on "the iron horse."

"The Gertrude Bonnin Story" attempts to convey Bonnin's life-long interest in history that began as a young girl, listening to her elders tell tribal stories.

Gertrude learned world histories from the printed page and lectures at Earlham College, from which she made comparisons to American Indian histories. As a teacher at Carlisle Indian School, "Miss Simmons" prepared two classes to debate the King Philip's War (1675-1677). Framing the argument was whether or not the ultimate outcome of land loss and removal, would have been the same for Native Americans, regardless of the war. Students arguing that Indian land loss and subjugation were inevitable won the debate.¹⁴

Embedded in "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" are a myriad of themes such as assimilation, colonialism, identity and image, gender roles, language retention, nationalism, and self-determination. As a contribution to scholarship, this biography will prove a useful complement to fields of inquiry that intersect with American Indian Studies, especially literary and rhetorical studies. Using the research tools of ethnohistory and women's history, it is possible to set the record straight on many misconceptions and myths about this Yankton woman who claimed to be a granddaughter of Sitting Bull. Speaking about her birth year, Gertrude said, "Grandfather Sitting Bull was making his vain outcry against broken treaties."¹⁵

As a subject, Gertrude Bonnin's life reflects the complexity of American Indian lives and cultural experiences. It also reflects the experience of many women, Indian and non-Indian, who strive to live useful lives, both to their families and communities. It is my intent that this telling of Gertrude Bonnin's life story does justice to both her complexities as part of the first generation of educated Yanktons and her commonalities as an American woman.

Imaging and Naming Gertrude Bonnin

Many of the photographs in the Gallery reveal Gertrude's evolving physical reflections over a period of fifty years, from age ten to sixty. Gertrude was petite, although she appeared taller than 5'2", always standing or sitting in erect posture.¹⁶ She filled out over the years and as a mature woman, carried the burden of a heavy bosom. There are distinct images that corresponded with her names throughout the Gallery; images with notable hairstyles and hats, and socially appropriate dresses and accessories.

The following discussion of Gertrude's various names is designed to facilitate the reader's sense of who she was. In print, from reference works to scholarly articles, Gertrude Bonnin is often referred to as "Zitkala-Sa" or

"Gertrude Simmons Bonnin."¹⁷ It is interesting that she never penned any of her writing as Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, even though that is the name inscribed on her tombstone.¹⁸

Gertrude Bonnin talked about her birth on the Yankton Indian Reservation, near the Greenwood Agency, for the first time at age 52 to a reporter in 1928. She said, "I was born on Washington's birthday, 1876, in a blanket of snow on the Dakota plains. My mother carried me in her arms into the tepee."¹⁹ Her mother, *Tate I Yohin Win* (Ta té ii yó hin wiiⁿ, Reaches for the Wind) was also known as Ellen Simmons.²⁰ Simmons was the last name of Ellen's second husband, who died two years before Gertrude's birth. *Tate I Yohin Win* and her only living daughter, her ninth and last child, are listed on the Dakota Presbyterian Mission register as Ellen Simmons and Gertie Felker respectively.²¹ When Gertrude was sixty years old, she revealed to Blanche Syfret McNight that she was "christened Zitkala-Sa."²² This corrects the record regarding her birth name; it was not Gertrude Simmons.

All that is known about Gertrude's father is his surname, Felker, and the character reference, "worthless fellow."²³ Some biographical accounts have him and Ellen married, although no legal evidence of this third marriage has been offered and no documentation exists with the name Ellen Felker. Perhaps Felker stepped in to assume the role

of husband to a middle-aged Yankton woman with a ration card for monthly food annuities. We know Felker mistreated Ellen's young son, Gertrude's older brother David Simmons. It is easy to assume that Gertrude's mother "ousted him" from her lodge. The only time Zitkala-Sa ever referenced her father was in this context.²⁴ In any event, Felker was never a part of Gertrude's life and it is possible that this unemployed man with a German name, died before Gertrude's birth in January 1876. In Zitkala-Sa's story, "My Mother" her mother points to her "father's grave" on the hillside along side that of her dead sister.²⁵

Making her mark with an "X" *Tate I Yohin Win* (Ellen Simmons) gave permission to Quaker recruiters to take her daughter to White's Institution in Wabash, Indiana when "the girl" was eight years old. Even though Ellen Simmons was an unlettered traditional *Ihanktonwan* woman, she was aware of her daughter's need for "an education, for there will be fewer real Dakotas, and many more palefaces."²⁶ The interpreter recorded "the girl" as Gertie Simmons.²⁷ Although John Simmons had been buried for ten years, he became Gertie's father in naming.

Zitkala-Sa was the name Gertrude Simmons made public as a young adult. The earliest written record of "Zitkalasa" appears in the 1898 collection of photographs taken by

Gertrude Käsebier. "Miss Simmons" was a guest in Käsebier's New York City home in the summer of 1898 while on break from teaching duties at Carlisle Indian School.²⁸ Interestingly, she chose the Lakota spelling, "Zitkala" rather than the Yankton "Zitkana."²⁹ It may have been the way her Lakota sweetheart at the time, Thomas Marshall, whispered her name in private moments.

After marriage to Raymond Telephouse Bonnin in 1902, Gertrude used her Indian name, Zitkala-Sa, in combination with her new legal name, Gertrude Bonnin. It was her way of re-presenting both her Yankton heritage and her status as a married woman in American Society.³⁰ Gertrude Simmons Bonnin is the name found in her land transactions; she appears on the 1930 Yankton census roll as "Gertie Simmons Bonnin." Newspapers often referred to her as Mrs. R. T. Bonnin, typifying erasure of a woman's identity once she marries in American society. In personal letters dating from 1901-1935, she often signed "Zitkala" and sometimes simply "Z." As a mature woman, she sometimes closed correspondence to Lakota elders, "Zitkalasawin," the suffix "win" denoting "woman" in Lakota.

Linda Martin-Wagner discusses a deeper sense of "naming" for the biographer in Telling Women's Lives: The New Biography (1994). According to Wagner-Martin, naming is

telling who the subject is and what her motivations are for life choices. Wagner-Martin feels the biographer needs to go "inside" the subject's reasons for key decisions underneath the surface layer of one's written and spoken name. As a young woman of twenty-two years, Gertie began using her Indian name, Zitkala-Sa, under pressure to give up her Anglo surname and to create an Indian persona for herself. In a letter to Carlos Montezuma in 1901, Zitkala-Sa explains that she gladly gave up "Simmons" for it bothered her sister-in-law, Victoria Simmons, who felt Gertrude had no right to it.³¹

Wagner-Martin believes, "[t]he power to name is the real seat of control," a process the biographer must also undertake.³² For that reason and in recognition of the complexities of the subject of this biography, I make reference to Gertie, Miss Simmons, Gertrude, Zitkala-Sa, and Gertrude Bonnin, where deemed appropriate for the particular context of the discussion at hand.

Sources

A variety of source material contributes to the creation of this model of Gertrude Bonnin's life. The model presents her Yankton heritage and sequenced life in the various rooms of the Gallery, located in the Stone House.

"The Gertrude Bonnin Story" is framed in an historical format, set in a gallery filled with personal letters, business correspondence, documents, memories, stories, ethnographic reports, land claim notes, interviews, oral histories, newspapers, secondary scholarship, magazines, visual images, writings, and the memory of the woman who was Zitkala-Sa and Gertrude Bonnin.

Of particular interest are three sets of surviving letters that collectively span over three decades. The first set are those Zitkala-Sa wrote to Carlos Montezuma in 1901 and 1902.³³ The second set consists of previously undisclosed correspondence to and from Gertrude Bonnin and Father Ketcham, Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions c. 1910-1912.³⁴ The final cache of letters is from Gertrude Bonnin, as President of the National Council of American Indians, to various Indian "kinsmen" c. 1929-1934.³⁵ Gertrude also kept a thin leather journal for a couple of years in the mid-1930s. For the most part, she noted expenditures on summer road trips, such as how she pinched pennies for ice cream.³⁶ It does not have the drama or intensity of the letters she wrote over the course of her lifetime.

Gertrude Bonnin's life story begins with the first American record of Yankton Sioux Indians recorded by the

Corps of Discovery in 1804, and extends into the period known as the Indian New Deal. Much of Gertrude's "Indian memory" is really that of the elders she visited in 1901, on the Devil's Lake reservation in North Dakota, and Crow Creek, South Dakota. Everywhere she went in Sioux Country, she listened to the stories, which contributed to her collective Sioux memory.³⁷

Gallery Preview

The foyer of the Stone House is the setting for Chapter One, "Biography for Gertrude Bonnín." It chronicles the history of the genres of biography and addresses the role of a woman's biographer. This chapter introduces voices from several perspectives of scholarship, including new Indian history, ethnography, and feminist theories of biography that, coupled with Bonnín's own sequenced life, influence the theory and methodology of "Gertie's Gallery" and mold its shape.

Formerly the Bonnín's living room, the Yankton Heritage Room of the Gallery is the setting of the second chapter, "*Ihanktonwan*." Discussions in this room situate Gertrude Bonnín's tribe, the Yankton Sioux, historically and geographically in the Yankton Delta Triangle or present-day southeastern South Dakota, northeastern Nebraska, and northwestern Iowa. Her mother's family

belonged to the Cagu (Lung Band), as did the first reservation chief, Padaniapapi (Pah dá ni a pá pe, Struck by the Ree). As a newborn babe, Struck by the Ree was wrapped in an American flag by Meriwether Lewis during the first Corps of Discovery-Sioux council in 1804, and declared to be, "Yankton American." This chapter reveals glimpses of Yankton life from this first encounter through the establishment of the Yankton reservation in 1858, into the pre-allotment years during Zitkala-Sa's early childhood.

Also in Chapter Two, in the Kitchen of the Gallery, we meet Zitkala-Sa from her own memory in her first story, "My Mother." She called herself,

a wild girl of seven...loosely clad in a slip of brown buckskin...light-footed with a pair of soft moccasins on my feet, I was as free as the wind that blew my long black hair, and no less spirited than a bounding deer.³⁸

Zitkala-Sa remembered her "wild freedom and overflowing spirits" as the source of her mother's pride.³⁹ She was also the little girl from the Dakota prairie, shivering under her best blanket, hiding from the icy stares of the "palefaces."⁴⁰ It is in the kitchen that Gallery visitors also hear stories from Yankton elders that were recorded for the South Dakota Oral History Project at the University of South Dakota in the 1960s.

The "School Pictures" exhibit in Chapter Three takes place in the Parlor. It opens with a chronology noting Gertrude's various travels and residences from 1884, when she left for White's Indiana Manual Labor Training School, until she came home to Yankton and married Raymond T. Bonnin in 1902. The "School Pictures" exhibit begins with Hampton Institute, which Gertrude's brother David Simmons attended. It is followed by White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute, from which Gertrude graduated and Raymond Bonnin was enrolled during the last year of the school. The image we have of "Gertie" here is a school photograph age ten, hair bluntly cut into bangs across her forehead, hands folded delicately in her lap. The next photograph is of Haskell Institute, where Raymond went after White's closed.

The feature photographs in the "School Pictures" exhibit focus on Miss Simmons' "Earlham experience" at college in Richmond, Indiana. "Miss Simmons" was remembered for her slim frame, shiny black hair, high, sweet singing voice, and distinctive copper skin. At age twenty, Gertrude began to fulfill her purpose in life, "to speak English with a straight tongue;"⁴¹ she learned to speak out and "talk back" on behalf of women and most importantly, American Indians.

"Crossroads Home to Yankton" (Chapter Four), also takes place in the Parlor and covers the years 1897-1902. It exposes Gertrude's life as an "Indian teacher" at the Indian Industrial Institute in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, commonly referred to as "Carlisle." The two-part exhibit, "Personal Portraits and Private Memories," reveals her self-image, identity, and the choices Miss Simmons faced as a "career girl" in Boston. It was a time of significant change for Gertrude; her fiancé Thomas Marshall died of the measles while she studied with violinist Eugene Gruenberg. She toured with the Carlisle all-star band, and collected stories in the Dakotas. After rejecting her second fiancé, Dr. Carlos Montezuma, Gertie successfully navigated the crossroads from "new woman to Sioux wife," back home to Yankton where she married Raymond T. Bonnin in 1902.

Chapter Five, "Mountains, St. Mary's, and Music," is situated in the music corner of the parlor and focuses on Gertrude's life from 1902-1916. Here, we find Gertrude living in Utah, caring for her family as the spouse of an Indian Service employee and a dedicated volunteer. Gertrude played the piano whenever the opportunity presented itself. Converting to Catholicism mid-way through this sequence of her life reinforced Gertrude's purpose as a wife and mother. Gertrude's conversion also helped to reassert her

Sioux identity while collaborating with Mormon composer, William Hanson on "The Sun Dance Opera."

The Gallery tour moves to the Bonnin Study for "Personal, Political, and Professional." This space (Chapter Six) covers roughly the Bonnins' nine years in Washington D.C. from 1917-1926. It includes Gertrude's four-year involvement with the Society of American Indians (SAI) when she served as an officer and editor of the Society's journal during the World War I years. Viewers glimpse the power struggles within the Society after the war. Documented are Gertrude Bonnin's relentless attacks on peyote. Her "appeal" to white middle-class women led to their subsequent involvement in federal Indian policy and issues, including the guardianship scandals of "Oklahoma's poor rich Indians." Meanwhile, Raymond's status as a "special student" at George Washington University Law School, coupled with Gertrude's flirtation in the world of national American politics, prepared Gertrude for the next sequence in her professional Indian life.

Remaining in the Study for Chapter Seven, "In Service to the Red Race," readers find "Gertie and Ray" living as mature political life partners in Arlington, Virginia, in this unique granite house that is the setting for Gertrude Bonnin's biography. Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin were part

of group of American Indians that founded the National Council of American Indians, an organization that existed with Gertrude as President, as long as she lived in The Stone House, from 1926-1938. The Council's most significant contribution to the record is the "Petition to Congress" submitted by Council President Gertrude Bonnin in 1926. Gertrude never gave up trying to "help Indians help themselves." In the "Indian Newsletters," she translated into plain English and Dakota, congressional and legal rhetoric pertaining to American Indians and mailed it out across the country.

Gertrude balanced making homemade lemonade for her guests with speaking engagements in full "costume" while raising her grandchildren in the Stone House during the school year. Gertrude Bonnin lived, to the best of her ability, what she believed was her purpose in life, "to render service to the Red Race."⁴² She accomplished that by becoming a good interpreter for her people and speaking with a "straight tongue." She never forgot what her mother told her as a little girl; "bad interpreters with forked-tongues misled the Indians and caused much of their troubles."⁴³ Along the way she became a "representative Indian" as well. She carried a deep sense of social justice that was instilled in her as a child. It was why "her

childhood ambition was to speak English with a straight tongue."⁴⁴ And indeed she did.

¹ Pronounced Ziiⁿt-ká-la-sha; I am grateful to Joyce Ladenson and George Cornell who encouraged me to look at Zitkala-Sa and Gertrude Bonnin, respectively, on the same day in September 1994.

² Photographs of the Bonnin headstone are located in the appendix to the final chapter.

³ "Washington Observations" The Evening Star March 19, 1928 (np) The Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁴ Zitkala-Sa "The Land of Red Apples" The School Days of an Indian Girl American Indian Stories Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003 (1921) 47,48

⁵ "The Land of the Red Apples" is the first vignette in Zitkala-Sa's second published story, "The School Days of an Indian Girl" (Atlantic Monthly February 1900). Gertie's grandchildren called her "once" (únche) meaning "my grandmother." According to Yankton historian Leonard Bruguier, "Gertie" is the name Yankton reservation memory has of her.

⁶ Lyon Park, an "historic" neighborhood within Arlington, Virginia, was developed on farmland beginning in 1919. Located across Chestnut Road from the original farmhouse, the first house built was a granite house, left unfinished until Raymond Bonnin took over the project. It became the Bonnin residence in 1926. It is not possible to ascertain the exact date the house was built because Arlington county records from the 1920s were burned in a fire. Respecting the privacy of the current residents, the new house number and street name, reconfigured in 1936, remain undisclosed. Arlington street maps are housed in the Arlington County Library, Virginia Room.

⁷ The house stood empty for a number of years after Raymond died in 1942.

⁸ Depending on the nature of the exhibit or particular discussion, this document refers to the reader as viewer or visitor to the Gallery.

⁹ It appears from this photograph that Gertrude has rinsed her hair black. Thirteen months later, her autopsy report from George Washington University Hospital January 24, 1938 indicates her hair was gray; it seems unlikely the change happened in that short amount of time.

¹⁰ Sylvia Syfret McNight "Feminine Descendant of Great Sitting Bull Works for Her People: Zitkala-Sa Has Done Much to Aid Tribes by Constant Writing and Lecturing on their Behalf" Washington Evening Star December 10, 1936 (np), Bonnin file, John Collier Papers, Newberry Library

¹¹ "Virginia Couple Devotes Lives to Indians" Washington Post Magazine December 31, 1933 (np) The Bonnin Collection, BYU

¹² Her first published pieces of poetry were published at Earlham College in 1896-1898. Termination policy officially began with HCR 108 August 1, 1953 and ended when President Nixon's message in 1970 of "self-determination without termination" became a realization with the Menomonee Restoration Act of 1973; see Francis Paul Prucha ed.,

Documents of United States Indian Policy 2000 (1975, 1990) 233, 256-58, 264-266

¹³ Gerald Vizenor Manifest Manners Norman: Hanover, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994 (54-55)

¹⁴ At Carlisle, students were encouraged to present and talk about, even write about their home cultures. These were subjects "of interest"—to be studied, like an object, rather than a living subject or dynamic culture. This brief introduction to the King Philip's War serves as one example within "The Gertrude Bonnin Story," where a topic can be extended into contemporary discussion, in this instance, the 2005 Wampanoag land claim issue citing a 1661 land deed as evidence. Losing control of their land after Metacom's War, the Wampanoag land claim dates to a 1661 deed; "Federal Court Rejects Wampanoag Land Claim" Associated Press, (H-Net) 12 February, 2005.

¹⁵ "Washington Observations" The Evening Star March 19, 1928 (np) The Bonnin Collection, BYU

¹⁶ Gertrude Bonnin's autopsy report recorded Gertrude Bonnin as 62 inches tall and 135 pounds.

¹⁷ Contemporary usage of "Gertrude Simmons Bonnin" is attributed to Mary Young's 1971 entry in Notable American Women, 1607-1950, in which Bonnin's biographical sketch appears under "Social and Civic Reformers."

¹⁸ Gertrude rejected the name Simmons in 1898, Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [c. June 1901]

¹⁹ "Washington Observations" The Evening Star March 19, 1928

²⁰ Ellen's first husband was a trader named Pierre St. Pierre, with whom she had two sons.

²¹ Yankton land claim file, RG75, NARA Washington D.C.

²² McNight "Feminine Descendant of Great Sitting Bull Works for Her People" Washington Evening Star December 10, 1936 (np), Bonnin file, John Collier Papers, Newberry Library

²³ Yankton land claim file, RG75, NARA Washington D.C.

²⁴ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [June 1901]; Deborah Sue Welch "Zitkala-Sa: An American Indian Leader, 1876-1938" PhD dissertation Department of History, University of Wyoming, 1985 (4)

²⁵ Zitkala-Sa "My Mother" "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" American Indian Stories 9-10; Citations from American Indian Stories, are from the 2003 edition, with a new introduction by Susan Rose Dominguez Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003 (1921).

²⁶ Zitkala-Sa "The Land of the Red Apples" American Indian Stories 44;

²⁷ White's 1891 school roster, White's Family and Residential Services Archives

²⁸ Gertrude Käsebier began photographing Sioux Indians when William F. Cody's "Wild West Show" performed in New York City. The "Indian Maiden" series, for which Zitkala-Sa posed, is part of the Käsebier collection in the Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institution. Gertrude Simmons was an employee at Carlisle Indian School from August 1897 through December 1898.

²⁹ *Zitkanan* (Red Bird) was an *Ihanktonwan* clan leader in the mid 1800s.

³⁰ Occasionally the press referred to her as Mrs. R. T. Bonnin, Mrs. Raymond Bonnin, or Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin, wife of Captain R. T. Bonnin.

³¹ Z.S. to Carlos Montezuma c. June-July 1901, Carlos Montezuma Papers, WSHS

³² Linda Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives: The New Biography New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994 (80)

³³ Microfilm copies of Carlos Montezuma M.D. Papers are available in several libraries. I transcribed Zitkala-Sa's 1901-1902 letters and Gertrude Bonnin's letters to Montezuma dated 1913, and 1916-1919, at the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

³⁴ The Bureau of Catholic Indian Records (BCIM) are located in the Archives at the Raynor Memorial Library, Marquette University.

³⁵ The National Council of American Indian papers can be found in the Raymond and Gertrude Bonnin collection in the Tom L. Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University (BYU).

³⁶ The journal is included in the Bonnin Collection, BYU

³⁷ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma c.1901; These were the basis for Old Indian Legends published in 1901 and the collection of unpublished stories, co-collected by her husband Raymond at Lake Andes in the 1920s, edited by P. Jane Hafen and published in 2001 under the title Dreams and Thunder Stories, Poems and The Sun Dance Opera Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001.

³⁸ Zitkala-Sa "My Mother" "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" American Indian Stories 8

³⁹ Zitkala-Sa "My Mother" "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" American Indian Stories 8

⁴⁰ "The Land of Red Apples" is the first vignette in her second published story, "The School Days of an Indian Girl."

⁴¹ "Washington Observations" The Evening Star March 19, 1928 (np) the Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁴² Gertrude Bonnin to Elaine Goodale Eastman [March 1935] Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁴³ "Washington Observations" (np)

⁴⁴ "Washington Observations" (np)

Chapter One: Biography for Gertrude Bonnin

Chapter One takes place in the foyer of the Stone House. In this space the Gallery visitor is primarily a reader. This chapter reveals the influences that shape the theoretical framework of Gertrude Bonnin's biography. Often considered a murky medium that lies somewhere between history and literature, conceptions of biography vary from popular coffee table reading, to dramatic re-creations, to more dense academic portraits. Native rhetoric scholar Malea Powell considers biography to be part of the context of recovering the rhetoric of Native writers.¹ As an interdisciplinary endeavor, "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" participates in that process.

Framing the Gallery

If Gertrude Bonnin were still alive, the biographical model of choice for telling her life story would be what ethnographers call, life history. Life history is biography of a living person and involves a collaborative relationship between subject and author. Life histories can be based on extensive interviews or "oral narratives of individual lives," as recorded by Margaret Blackman for the life history of Sadie Brower Neakok, An Iñupiaq Woman (1989).² Although life history is not an option for Gertrude Bonnin's biography, it is possible to apply some attributes of the genre to "The Gertrude Bonnin Story." In 1936, Blanche Syfret McNight took notes as Gertrude Bonnin walked the journalist

through the first floor of her home, from the foyer through the various rooms, ending in the kitchen of the Stone House. Like life history, this 1936 interview allows for Gertrude's agency to be a part of the design of the Gallery; she is controlling the conversation in her home, and contemporary visitors to the Gallery in the Stone House become listeners.

In the biography entitled, I'll Go and Do More: Annie Dodge Wauneka, Navajo Leader and Chief (2001), Carolyn Niethammer was able to interview Annie Dodge Wauneka before she died. Niethammer also relied on a secondary interview of Annie conducted decades earlier. Niethammer's use of the existing interviews provided impetus to use the two interviews conducted in 1933 and 1936 of Gertrude Bonnin, to find her voice in the final sequence of her life. In combination with her own prolific writings including stories, speeches and letters, these interviews balance the written record of Gertrude Bonnin's voice.³ Blanche Syfret McNight's 1936 article, "Zitkala-Sa Has Done Much to Aid Tribes by Constant Writing and Lecturing in Their Behalf," was based on an interview conducted about fourteen months before Gertrude died.

Margaret Blackman's recordings of Florence Edenshaw Davidson in Florence's kitchen, became the first life history of an Haida woman.⁴ Margaret Blackman writes that,

life history is also an appropriate medium for the study of acculturation. In many cultures the lives of natives span periods of critical and rapid culture change; the life history affords a personalized, longitudinal view of these changes.⁵

This most definitely applies to the story of Gertrude Bonnin in all of her personas. The many genres in which Zitkala-Sa wrote and spoke convey her desire to ensure American Indian voices were heard. Two questions underlie "The Gertrude Bonnin Story," If Gertrude could have participated in a life history project, what would she have emphasized? How would she have told her story? Using an interdisciplinary approach to Gertrude Bonnin's story, borrowing methodologies from genres of historical, literary, and feminist biography is best suited for the story of this multi-faceted and multi-dimensional woman known as Gertrude Bonnin and Zitkala-Sa.

Influencing this interdisciplinary approach is Julie Thompson Klein, for whom "interdisciplinarity is neither a subject matter nor a body of content. It is a process for achieving an integrative synthesis."⁶ Her theory is based on the epistemological premise that the quest for knowledge is best served through interdisciplinary inquiry. Other tenets of her theory revolve around two conceptual frameworks. First, interdisciplinary inquiry either builds bridges between separate disciplines or restructures constituent disciplines.⁷ Second, interdisciplinarity is a corrective to the problem of overspecialization. Due to the complex nature of American Indian culture and politics, Gertrude Bonnin's life is best approached in multi-disciplinary settings with interdisciplinary inquiry.

Influencing the Biography

One of the first feminist scholars to address the genre of biography theoretically is Carolyn Heilbrun. Most, if not all subsequent scholars in this field refer to her book, Writing a Woman's Life, published in 1988. Heilbrun calls for the writing of a woman's life to revolve around all stages of life's cycles. In an essay about writing the biography of Susan B. Anthony, Kathleen Barry speaks to biography's process, "The narrative of life history must begin by garnering the facts and recreating the objective conditions of an individual's life."⁸

Feminist biography, as the story of a woman's life, is more than a sequence of chronological events, for it involves the biographer as much as the subject. Kathryn Kish Sklar believes,

one possible difference between a feminist work process and that of a non-feminist biographer might be the degree to which a feminist biographer is willing to connect her work with the vulnerabilities and struggles associated with her own life.⁹

Rachel Gutierrez tells us the biographer of a woman should be able to assess precisely how much defiance of "patriarchal ideology" their achievement expressed, "and thus understand how important to the women of today is the road paved by the women of the past."¹⁰

Beginning with Nancy Milford's Zelda in 1970, feminist biography as a genre has come into its own by changing male-dominated language and viewpoints, telling women's stories as history from a woman-centered point of view.¹¹ Milford's weave

of Zelda's letters as literature into the narrative is also applicable to Gertrude Bonnin. Concerning "woman-centered" inquiry, Gerda Lerner believes that,

We have missed women and their activities, because we have asked questions of history which are inappropriate to women. History must include an account of the female experience over time and should include the development of female consciousness as an essential aspect of women's past.¹²

Liz Stanley's "Process in Feminist Biography and Feminist Epistemology" provides the sociological frame of reference (going "inside" to find motivations) that Gerda Lerner cautioned us in 1979 not to ignore when she urged biographers to "go beyond the history of 'luminaries' to examine a broader range of women's experiences."¹³ Teresa Iles points out in her introduction to All Sides of the Subject: Women and Biography (1992), the "experience of being female, in relation to the identification as a woman, is implicitly ground in the development of feminist biography."¹⁴

These calls for interdisciplinarity echo those by Native scholars and allies in American Indian History. New Indian History has become a specialty discipline in some history departments and a way of life for its proponents and theorists. In his 1971 essay, "The Political Context of a New Indian History," Robert F. Berkhofer urged cooperation between historians and anthropologists with a "new focus."¹⁵ Twenty years later, Clara Sue Kidwell's 1992 essay "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators" tells us if we "are to discover women's intentions in their actions, then the methods of

ethnohistorians are particularly appropriate to the study of their history." Because, Kidwell continues, "Women's words are not the stuff of history."¹⁶

Donald Fixico stated in 1997, "Historians and scholars have seemingly only begun to scratch the surface in the exploring the importance of gender and women's histories as a means of understanding Indian history."¹⁷ Today, new Indian theorists lay out the protocol for researching and writing about American Indians and other indigenous peoples. In her essay, "Power of the Spoken Word: Native Oral Traditions in American History," Angela Cavender Wilson insists that historians need to let stories stand on their own, for new Indian history cannot be perceived solely by "sifting through biases of non-Indian source. Stories are the transmissions of culture upon which our survival as a people depends."¹⁸

Alexandra Harmon's recent essay, "Wanted: More Histories of Indian Identity" makes a strong suggestion to ethnohistorians to add biography to their research and writing.¹⁹

The process of Bonnin's biography takes into account revisionist history and its tenets as a discipline, along with new Indian history and the complicated intersection of feminist biography theories. The intention here is to establish a framework for a biography that incorporates all these areas. Certain chapters of Bonnin's life will emphasize one area or discipline more than another. For example, Chapter two, "*Ihanktonwan*" reads ethnohistorical and Chapter four, "*Carlisle: Crossroads Home to Yankton*" reads feminist.

The ultimate goal therefore, is to synthesize these approaches by designing a hybrid vehicle, which will successfully navigate all the roads that cross within Gertrude Bonnin's complicated life as an American Indian woman: a woman whose life bridges two centuries (1876-1938) and cultures, a life in which she lived in a myriad of roles from granddaughter to grandmother and school girl to activist.

History of Biography

Catherine N. Parke's 1996 chronology of literary biography in Biography: Writing Lives,²⁰ sheds new light on the common belief that biography, as a genre, is a Western phenomenon. Parke dates biography to the earliest commemorative inscriptions in Egypt, Babylonia, and Assyria between the sixth and third century B.C.E.. The first biographical writing in Asia occurred in the first century B.C.E. by Szuma Chen, translated as Records of the Historian. Between the first and sixth century A.D., biography remained a Greek and Roman male domain. By the ninth century, Latin versions of Saints' lives, including women, began to appear in vernacular tongues, and by the Middle Ages, biography of royalty, saints, and military heroes became firmly established as a Western genre.

Beginning in the late 1600s, Parke notes that interest in writers' lives gained momentum and eventually involved the relation between the public and private self. Wagner-Martin

dates "modern" biography to James Boswell's Life of Samuel Johnson in 1791. Literary biography as a genre began to change in the 1800s, especially the Anglo-American manifestations of modern life writing, which caused "the shift from external action to the inner spectacle of mind and feelings."²¹ The mid-1800s welcomed an occasional female biographer and female biographies, such as Lydia Marie Child's Good Wives (1833) and Elizabeth Gaskell's The Life of Charlotte Bronte (1857). Wagner-Martin notes that women's biography began to change in 1889 with Julia Ward Howe's Margaret Fuller and Ednah D. Cheney's Louisa May Alcott, Her Life, Letters and Journals. These biographies foreshadowed modern women's biography in that they,

presented vivid accounts of their subject's motivations and inner lives. Had critics noticed what women biographers wrote about their subjects even during the 19th century, the so-called revolution in biography might have come earlier.²²

In the early twentieth century, biographies of famous women (written by men) began to show subjects as human beings, flawed, lusty, and susceptible to flattery.²³ Wagner-Martin believes, "These works helped create a more welcoming climate for the reception of women's biographies."²⁴ Even though there were several biographies of recognized women written from 1920 to 1931, "the kind of biography that validated and valued women's inner lives--domestic and private--did not yet exist."²⁵ The Great Depression in the 1930s and paper shortages of the World War II years suspended the publication of many books, not to mention reducing

women's time to write. However 1930 was, according to Wagner-Martin, a turning point in women's biography. "Freed from the necessity of writing only about public figures, a few women wrote biographies that emphasized domestic lives over the historical" while at the same time, existing biographies of women such as Emily Dickinson and Margaret Fuller were being re-written.²⁶ But as Catherine Parke points out, the dominance of male biographers chronicling male lives persisted until the Modern Women's Movement took root in the 1960s.

One of the many effects of the Second Wave of the Women's Movement was re-visionist history, out of which women's history and feminist biography became interdisciplinary endeavors. It became apparent to women writers and historians that the difference in women's lives from men's deserved to be visible. Adrienne Rich wrote in 1986, "As women our relationship to the past has been problematical. We have been every culture's core obsession (and repression); we are now a majority of the species, yet in the written records we can barely find ourselves."²⁷ Women's lives needed to be contextualized because women's lives seldom developed or existed in vacuums. Wagner-Martin states that readers now wanted narratives "with one focus on the subject's interior life and another on the external values and conflicts they as women recognize."²⁸ With emphasis placed on life cycles, writers began to understand a woman's position as a child within her family, her relationships with her parents and siblings, her school experiences, her

physical prowess (or lack of it), her relationships, her motivations for marriage and divorce, and her old age.

Regarding historical approaches to Indian women, Rayna Green writes in her book, Women in American Indian Society, "When writing on the life of Indian woman, historians should seek to understand how an Indian society viewed its women." It was the value of women in Yankton culture coupled with Quaker feminist influence that allowed Gertrude Bonnin to participate in what Green refers to as "the stage for an ever-increasing presence of Indian women in the national and pantribal political movements of the 1960s."²⁹ In her essay "Commonality of Difference," Devon Mihesuah points out that historic works have ignored crucial aspects of Native women's lives, noting a lack of awareness of the feelings and emotions of Indian women, relationships among and between them, and their observations of non-Indians.³⁰ Mihesuah calls for scholars to "chronicle the accomplishments of Indian women," however, by different means of evaluation besides white society's standards. Mihesuah insists that referencing literature, poetry, oral history projects, interviews, and demographical data on women is crucial to Indian women's history.³¹ Indian history and biography have in the past, modeled their methodology after the male model and has typically been the history of Indian-White relations. Glenda Riley states in "The Historiography of Indian and Other Western Women" (1997), that "In the writing of women's biography, contemporary-era historians have continued and

intensified an existing pattern, that of assessing the deeper meanings of women's lives rather than recounting such lives in purely narrative form."³²

How to Apply Feminist Biography Theory to Gertrude Bonnin?

In answering the question asked by Rachel Gutierrez, "What is a Feminist Biography?"³³ we learn this genre goes well beyond the increased inclusion of female subjects. In her introduction to All Sides of the Subject Teresa Iles writes that the "experience of being female in relation to the identification as a woman...is implicitly grounded in the development of feminist biography."³⁴ Applying this to Gertrude Bonnin then, asks the following questions: How did her gender affect her boarding school education? Upon her return to the reservation, what had changed for girls and women as tipis were replaced with log cabins? How did her two years in a Quaker co-educational college affect her experience at the turn of the century as a "new woman" embarking on a writing career? How did her collective experiences as a woman come to bear on her decision to marry and ultimately, her life as an American Indian activist? Using Iles' approach to biography, this gallery of Gertrude's life encourages the reader to look at the "experience" of being a female.

The Role of the Biographer

It is just as important to define parameters for the feminist biographer as it is to establish the framework of a biographical project. Feminist biography, according to Teresa Iles, is a genre in which there is no neutrality. The biographer must bear in mind, according to Phyllis Rose, "there is only greater or lesser awareness of one's bias. And if you do not appreciate the force of what you are leaving out, you're not fully in command of what you're doing."³⁵ Linda Wagner-Martin adds "it must be personal."³⁶

In 1983, Elinor Langer wrote, "Biography is not taxonomy with the specimen to be reclassified according to the latest findings—it is the story of one life as seen by another, with both always growing and changing."³⁷ The biographer then, must recognize the subjective. The dynamic process of biography must be realized through a lens that sees history in a new light, constructed by both the subject and the biographer. In Telling Women's Lives Linda Wagner-Martin states that women "must be willing to create new words to embody the themes and emotions of their narrative."³⁸ It is the telling, the storying, and the naming of a woman's life in critical context that is feminist biography.

Teresa Iles cautions against the use of extensive notes in biography, which she believes can draw attention away from the process of interpretation and often suggest uncertainty rather than confidence.³⁹ However, "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" is not a traditional linear narrative, nor is Bonnin an

ordinary subject. The historical context within which Bonnin's life revolved requires notes in order to inform the reader. Iles also cautions the author to be careful not to let speculation outweigh the evidence.⁴⁰ It is easy to cross the boundary from biography to fiction when the subject has a dramatic persona, such as Gertrude Bonnin. This text offers facts, and qualifies any speculation.⁴¹

Iles offers sound advice when she says that the feminist biographer is "openly accountable to the reader." She must project herself with a clear honest purpose.⁴² Applicable to this project is Iles' discussion of crossing disciplines within feminist biography. She quotes Jennifer Uglow from the 1982 Dictionary of Women's Biography, "writing women's biography is full of double binds."⁴³ It requires research and imagination in order to explore another's life as through the inside and still respect the subject's privacy. Iles concludes that it is matters of choice and valuation that interest and challenge the feminist biographers of women. In a follow-up essay to "Reconstructing Native American History," Donald Fixico also speaks to "the use of imagination in order to consider the total picture of the history of a single Indian community or individual to attempt to conceive the historical reality of the person and his/her community."⁴⁴

In the "Introduction" to The Challenge of Feminist Biography: Writing the Lives of Modern American Women, Sara Alpren and her colleagues point out that the discipline of

history has historically held low regard for biography, especially in the 1960s and 1970s when the "new social history" emerged. By the mid-1970s, biographies of "notable women," written by the first generation of modern women's historians, called "compensatory," were pushed to the margins of the discipline. In the late 1970s, feminist historians concentrated on race, class, and gender as modes of analysis. As in the nineteenth century, "prominent women" caused consternation among scholars because their "visibility undermined the theme of oppression."⁴⁵ In her 1979 critical study, The Majority Finds its Past, Gerda Lerner issued a wake-up call to feminist scholars to research and write the complexity of women's lives, "to examine a broader range of women's experiences."⁴⁶ This cornerstone work in women's history encouraged interdisciplinary scholarship, including a summons for the inclusion of psychology and oral histories.

In the 1980s, biography was still regarded with misgivings by established historians. However, in an 1988 article written for the American Historical Association Newsletter Perspectives, Lerner called attention to the rising interest in women's biography, noting the high number of biographical dissertations written during the 1980s.⁴⁷ It is here, within the genre of biography that women's history branches out to cross disciplines. Lerner urged a more feminist approach to the study of women's lives, utilizing new feminist scholarship in psychology, literature and anthropology. As the godmother of re-visionist women's

history, Lerner is sanctioning feminist biography as a legitimate endeavor by scholars. Adding feminist approaches to biographical studies allow for issues to be explored such as, the impact of mother-daughter relationships, how familial and female friendship support networks sustained women's public activities, and of particular interest concerning Gertrude Bonnin, how women's private and public lives intersect. Lerner stated the, "biographical field within women's history remains one of the most promising and challenging for the researcher." She also notes the need for further analysis of "the mental products of women's lives," such as ideas, writings, and discourse.⁴⁸

Indeed this was already underway by literary biographers, who began in earnest to write the lives of women writers in the 1980s. As with women's historical biography, literary biography evolved to be more feminist as diaries and letters became recognized as legitimate sources of information and women's subjectivity moves to the center of the analysis. This also holds true for New Indian History, where letters become an important "place" to hear a subject's voice. Placing value on letters, as a legitimate source of information, is yet another area in which the disciplines overlap in ideology and methodology.

In his essay, "Reconstructing Native American History" Donald Fixico specifically addresses biography within the context of American Indian history. He writes, "studying leadership patterns and leaders in Native American societies

is synonymous with biographical history."⁴⁹ Fixico's concern here is that the written record is very thin or non-existent regarding Native leaders' early years. While we have Zitkala-Sa's childhood memories written as stories, the lens is filtered with the reconstruction of her memory. She becomes an eight-year old girl playing with her cornhusk dolls, feeding the drying corn she is supposed to be guarding to a friendly squirrel. As a twenty-four year old woman, Zitkala-Sa knows much more than the little girl whose mother's tears come from anger and sadness brought on by the "palefaces" coming to their land.

This project looks to ethnohistory and ethnography to learn about Zitkala-Sa's tribe, the Yankton Sioux. Fixico contends,

understanding the culture of a people may help a biographer describe the life of a youth of a tribe. First encounters, or contact histories, usually apply a comparative analysis, and have helped to lay a foundation for studying Native Americans as a people with various cultures.⁵⁰

This approach will help diminish monolithic perceptions of Indians, be they egregious stereotypes or romanticized notions. Establishing Zitkala-Sa's Yankton heritage gives the reader or viewer a reference to "home," a place occasionally mentioned throughout the Gallery. This knowledge of *Ithanktonwan*, extending back three generations before Gertrude's birth, relies on oral tradition and historical Yankton memory. It eases us into the stories of her life transitions told in the Gallery of the Stone House.

Biography Goes "Inside"

British sociologist Liz Stanley points out in 1990 that, "Biography, once a "men's club," has been radically changed by the flood of attention now paid to women's lives."⁵¹ In her call for feminism to recover its own ideology, Stanley believes that women's biography can move beyond individualism, beyond copying the "stories of dead men and women."⁵² She rejects the "spotlight approach" to a single individual; calling for biographers to go beyond the methodology of the 1970s and 1980s that served the valuable purpose of getting women's names and profiles into the public arena. From the same article entitled, "Process in Feminist Biography and Feminist Epistemology," Stanley continues to say that biography needs to deal with the complexities in the nature of the self. In other words, feminist biography needs to go inside the subject, to explore how the subject relates to her surroundings.

Going "inside" Bonnin is accomplished through her numerous letters, papers, and autobiographical writings. Although they do not cover all of her life, there exists enough "evidence" through three caches of letters, to reveal her complexities and her feelings towards many circumstances in her lifetime. Going inside the subject means looking for motivating factors affecting decisions that involved "simple" daily life choices as well as "complicated" life-cycle

decisions. One of the ways in which to do this is by "listening to women's stories." In the past, both culturally and literally, "the context of women's talk, as compared with men's talk, has been consistently diminished."⁵³ Angela Cavender Wilson's essay, "Grandmother to Granddaughter: Generations of Oral History in a Dakota Family" (1998) calls for historians to let women's stories stand on their own. Wilson tells us, stories are "transmission of culture upon which our survival as a people depends."⁵⁴

Besides going "inside" the subject, what are the methodological and conceptual tools appropriate to writing the life of a woman from a feminist perspective? If, as Kathleen Barry says, "women's biography must be a new reading of history, which demands rewriting of all history," then we must look beyond the usual historical texts on American history and Indian-White relations in order to tell Gertrude Bonnin's life story. Barry further states that women have either been hidden as wives, lovers, mothers or, as with Susan B. Anthony, their lives have been distorted."⁵⁵

One purpose of "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" is to amend distortions about Gertrude Bonnin's life and personality that are often embellished and repeated as fact, such as her alleged adversarial relationship with her mother. Bonnin's "life" sketch has been anthologized and encyclopedicized so often, that erroneous assumptions and misinformation have become, over time, myths construed as facts. Gertrude Bonnin was never a practicing Mormon, nor was she a Christian

Scientist. She balanced her duality well and I do not believe she died in despair. Gertrude did not just leap from the reservation to become a writer and then an activist; there are many stories along the way. A second purpose of this biography is to fill in the gaps and round out her life story concerning her heritage, schooling and the way she balanced her professional and family life.

Kathleen Barry cautions that women's biography cannot be concerned with "placing women in history" as if history is an already formed reality and all we need to do is make a slot in it for women. The emerging genre of women's biography must be based on a search for women's subjectivity, "where the subject becomes known to us through her actions and her history."⁵⁶ A subject's personal relationships certainly will enhance any life story. However, how the biographer approaches them is very important. Barry notes that in the past, women's biographies short-changed their subjects by assuming that the fullness of a woman's subjectivity is equated with her personal life, where intimate relationships with husbands, lovers and children often usurp the search for public interaction. Contemporary feminist biography makes connections between the private side and the subject's public life. These are things that we discover when we find the diverse and significant ways women act in their own historical circumstances. In this gallery of Gertrude's life however, the second-floor bedrooms are closed to public viewing. To speculate about Gertie and Ray's love life is not

necessary. The fact that they were life partners for thirty-six years, sixty percent of their lives, speaks for itself. The fact that they took road trips to the reservations for months at a time in hot weather in the 1920s and 1930s, and stayed married, says even more.

In the process of mapping out the subject's own "turf" it is necessary to participate in (re)periodization, a crucial component of women's history.⁵⁷ According to Barry, women need to be a part of the grand epochs and periods of history.⁵⁸ How does this apply to Bonnin? One example is the way in which the New Deal era is approached within traditional Western male-oriented history. Women's participation as reformers and activists played a significant role in formulating federal policy, including American Indian policy, commonly known as the Indian New Deal. By extending the Progressive Era, typically located between 1890-1920, and women's involvement in it, all the way to the New Deal, a natural connection can be made from national women's reform efforts to federal Indian policy. This is the focus of an exhibit in the Gallery entitled "Appeal to the Women." One such example is women's national collective efforts to block the Bursom Bill in 1922, potentially devastating legislation for thousands of Native peoples and their lands in New Mexico. (Re)periodization involves not only expanding dates, but also places American Indians among both reformers and those who "benefited" from reform efforts.

Beginning the Biography

Where does one begin the life story of a woman?

Concerning Gertrude Bonnin's life story, this question seems inextricably linked to the questions of what methodology and what tools to use. Carolyn Heilbrun, in Writing a Woman's Life, asks if the biographer should begin with birth or with the subject's mother?⁵⁹ Considering that Gertrude Bonnin was a Yankton Indian woman, it is imperative to listen to Angela Cavender Wilson in "Grandmother to Granddaughter," and ask, should Gertrude's story begin with her grandmother? Or, at the least, in her grandmother's time? How did the subject's life differ or what was similar from that of her ancestors? Wherever the biographer begins, Heilbrun insists that consideration be given to all stages of the life cycle, including mature adulthood and old age. She is saying this in response to previous emphasis by women's biographers on the "marriage plot" associated with "women as wives." That is not to say that Heilbrun dismisses discussion of marriage. In fact, she provides valuable tools, in the forms of questions, for assessing Bonnin's life. Did life-partnership hinder Bonnin's development as an individual? Heilbrun points out that there is often little evidence of the personal story as opposed to the convention behind long marriages between men and women who both have established places in the public sphere.⁶⁰ This is certainly true of Gertrude and Ray Bonnin.

Kathleen Barry's comments on marriage during Susan B. Anthony's lifetime are applicable to the discussion of

Zitkala-Sa's decision not to marry Carlos Montezuma in 1901. In 1900 (and often today as well), a woman in marriage was sometimes not able to be a woman unto herself and therefore was isolated from other women, leaving her to construct her primary identity through her husband and her family. According to Barry, "The social construction of self that refuses to be determined by natural inevitable roles provides the beginning point for exploring who women are as a class and will ultimately direct us to locate women in their valid historical context."⁶¹ Although Gertrude ended up in a life-long marriage, her refusal to become the wife of a Chicago physician symbolizes her rejection of the social dictates that accompanied, and still accompany, such a role.

Granted, Gertrude's husband, Raymond T. Bonnin, was certainly assimilated in education and outward appearance, and, like Gertrude, spent his childhood on the Yankton Sioux reservation. Ray Bonnin chose to work among Indians in the Indian Service. Montezuma, an Yavapai Apache, had already spent time working as physician for the Indian Service and was now practicing in Chicago, where he was raised. Perhaps age was also a determining factor in Gertrude's choice; Ray Bonnin was four years younger than she, whereas, Carlos Montezuma was eight years her senior. As we know, Gertrude and Raymond grew to be personal and political partners, working together for over ten years leading the National Council of American Indians. As mature adults they signed their letters to each other with love.

This kind of a discussion of marriage should be equally balanced if possible, with other milestones in a woman's life cycle. Lois Rudnick's essay "The Male-Identified Woman and Other Anxieties: the Life of Mabel Dodge Luhan" speaks to the subject's childhood world as very important to their story. It is important that the biographer get a sense of place of her subject's early life.⁶² In her preface to Sadie Brower Neokuk, an Iñupiaq Woman, Margaret Blackman stated, "fittingly [a woman's] story begins with a historical consideration of her place."⁶³ Although this text is a biography and Blackman's was distinctly different as life history, her approach reaffirmed my decision to extend the traditional beginning of a biography to well before Gertrude Bonnin's birth.

Coupled with Rudnick's comment about the sense of place, it became apparent Gertrude Bonnin's story had to begin with Yankton Sioux and Euro-American contact. The roots of Euro-American attitude and stereotypes toward Yankton Indians begin here as well. It is in the Yankton Heritage Room of the Gallery, that ethnographical records and oral tradition will take the reader back to the time of Bonnin's grandparents. As Rudick has pointed out, "the narrative of life history must begin by garnering the facts and recreating the objective conditions of an individual's life."⁶⁴ For Gertrude Bonnin, that includes learning about her Yankton ancestors. Rudnick also provides another thought: "Although we may re-create the lives of our subjects more clearly and fairly than they or

their peers were able to do, our portraits will always be unfinished.”⁶⁵

Gertrude Bonnin is a well-anthologized figure within American Indian Studies and I hope “The Gertrude Bonnin Story” will be a welcome addition to the growing body of scholarship on her. Gertie Simmons made a name for herself as Zitkala-Sa the writer and Gertrude Bonnin the activist. As a mature woman, she made lemonade, cooked *tipsin* and wild rice, and cared for her family in between delivering speeches, writing letters, and lobbying the Senate in service to her race. Readers are invited to view the Gallery and travel with Gertrude Bonnin in her life from Yankton destiny into American history.

Zitkala-Sa was fond of writing with dashes, which I have sometimes replaced with commas. I have not changed any of her syntax or verb tenses, so the reader can acquire a true sense of her voice. Basic grammatical corrections such as capitalization and punctuation have been made to citations for clarification purposes only.

¹ Malea Powell “Imagining Rhetorics of Survivance” Lecture, Michigan State University, February 2002

² Margaret Blackman Sadie Brower Neakok. An Iñupiaq Woman Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989 (xi); the Library of Congress classifies life histories as Biography. Kathleen Mullen Sands titles the life history of Theodore Rios, Telling a Good One: the Process of Native American Collaborative Biography (University of Nebraska Press, 2000), even though she honored Rios’ request for a continuous first-person narrative, making it seem more like an autobiography. When Nancy Oestreich Lurie edited Mountain Wolf Woman’s life history in 1961, she called it Mountain Wolf Woman, Sister of Crashing Thunder: The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian (University of Michigan Press).

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- ³ "Virginia Couple Devote Lives to Indians" Washington Post Magazine December 31, 1933; Blanch Syfret McNight "Feminine Descendant of Sitting Bull Works for Her People" Washington Evening Star December 10, 1936
- ⁴ Margaret Blackman During My Time: Florence Edenshaw Davidson, A Haida Woman Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992 (1982)
- ⁵ Blackman During My Time: Florence Edenshaw Davidson 4
- ⁶ Julie Thompson Klein Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, and Practice Detroit; Wayne State University Press, 1990 (188)
- ⁷ Thompson Klein Interdisciplinarity 27
- ⁸ Kathleen Barry "Towards a Theory of Women's Biography: From the Life of Susan B. Anthony" Teresa Iles ed. All Sides of the Subject: Women in Biography New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992 (26); Barry refers to her biography of Anthony, as a life history.
- ⁹ Katherine Kish Sklar "Coming to Terms with Florence Kelly" Sara Alpern et al The Challenge of Feminist Biography (32)
- ¹⁰ Rachel Gutierrez "What is Feminist Biography?" Iles ed. All Sides of the Subject 53
- ¹¹ Nancy Milford Zelda: A Biography New York: Harper and Row, 1970
- ¹² Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives 3; Wagner-Martin places the beginning of contemporary feminist biography to Zelda by Nancy Milford (1970) because its female perspective led to a reassessment of Zelda's husband, F. Scott Fitzgerald's life. Gerda Lerner The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History New York: Oxford University Press, 1979 (178)
- ¹³ Sara Alpern "Introduction" Alpern et al eds, The Challenge of Feminist Biography (14 n3)
- ¹⁴ Teresa Iles "Introduction" All Sides of the Subject: Women and Biography Teresa Iles ed., New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992 (1)
- ¹⁵ Robert F. Berkhofer "The Political Context of a New Indian History" Pacific Historical Review 40.3 (August 1971) 358, 362; the term "New Indian" is attributed to Stanley Steiner in 1968.
- ¹⁶ Clara Sue Kidwell "Indian Women as Cultural Brokers" Ethnohistory 39:2 (Spring 1992) 98
- ¹⁷ Donald L. Fixico "Reconstructing Native American History" Donald L. Fixico ed., Rethinking American Indian History Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997 (120)
- ¹⁸ Angela Cavender Wilson "Power of the Spoken Word: Native Oral Traditions in American History" Fixico ed., Rethinking American Indian History (111)
- ¹⁹ Alexandra Harmon "Wanted: More Histories of Indian Identity" Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury eds., A Companion to American Indian History Malden, MA: Blackwell 2002 (252)
- ²⁰ Catherine N. Parke Biography: Writing Lives New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996 (xxi-xxviii)
- ²¹ Parke Biography (xviii)
- ²² Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives (2)
- ²³ Lytton Strachey in England and Gamaliel Bradford in the United States
- ²⁴ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives (2)
- ²⁵ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives (3)
- ²⁶ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives (3)
- ²⁷ Adrienne Rich Of Woman Born 1986, (86) cited by Gutierrez "What is Feminist Biography?" Iles All sides of the Subject 48

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- ²⁸ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives (4)
- ²⁹ Rayna Green Women in American Indian Society Chelsea House, 1992 (17-18, 80)
- ³⁰ Devon Mihesuah "Commonality of Difference" Devon Mihesuah ed., Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, 1996 (46)
- ³¹ Mihesuah seems unaware that her non-native feminist sisters have been calling for inclusion and recognition of these sources for over twenty-five years.
- ³² Glenda Riley "The Historiography of Indian and Other Western Women" Donald L. Fixico ed., Rethinking American Indian History Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997 (52)
- ³³ Rachel Gutierrez "What is a Feminist Biography?" Teresa Iles ed., All Sides of the Subject: Women and Biography New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992 (48-58)
- ³⁴ Iles "Introduction" All Sides of the Subject 3
- ³⁵ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives (80)
- ³⁶ Linda Wagner-Martin interview September 27, 2003
- ³⁷ Elinor Langer as quoted by Kathryn Kish Sklar in her essay, "Coming to Terms with Florence Kelly" Sara Alpren et al eds., The Challenge of Feminist Biography (19)
- ³⁸ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives 84
- ³⁹ Iles "Introduction" All Sides of the Subject 6
- ⁴⁰ Iles "Introduction" All Sides of the Subject 5
- ⁴¹ for example, Doreen Rappaport's recreation of Zitkala-Sa's life for young readers, The Flight of Red Bird: the Life of Zitkala-Sa Puffin Books, (1997); unfortunately, literary scholars have been relying on this re-created life story for biographical facts. Rappaport herself calls this work a "re-creation."
- ⁴² Iles "Introduction" All Sides of the Subject 4
- ⁴³ Iles "Introduction" All Sides of the Subject 8, 9
- ⁴⁴ Donald L. Fixico, "Methodologies in Reconstructing Native American History" Rethinking American Indian History 1997 (117)
- ⁴⁵ Sara Alpren, "Introduction" Alpren et al eds., The Challenge of Feminist Biography (4)
- ⁴⁶ Lerner, quoted in Alpren et al Challenge of Feminist Biography 4
- ⁴⁷ see Deborah Welch "Zitkala-Sa: An American Indian Leader, 1876-1938" PhD dissertation in history, University of Wyoming, 1985
- ⁴⁸ Lerner, quoted in Alpren et al Challenge of Feminist Biography 5
- ⁴⁹ Fixico "Reconstructing Native American History" 122-123
- ⁵⁰ Fixico, "Reconstructing Native American History" 123
- ⁵¹ Alpren "Introduction" Challenge of Feminist Biography 5
- ⁵² Liz Stanley "Process in Feminist Biography and Feminist Epistemology" Teresa Iles ed., All Sides of the Subject 117
- ⁵³ Wagner-Martin Telling Women's Lives 86
- ⁵⁴ Angela Cavender Wilson "Grandmother to Granddaughter" Devon Mihesuah ed. Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about Native Americans Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998 (35)
- ⁵⁵ Kathleen Barry "Toward a Theory of Woman's Biography: From the Life of Susan B. Anthony" in Teresa Iles ed., All Sides of the Subject: Women and Biography Iles ed., All Sides of the Subject (33)
- ⁵⁶ Barry "Toward a Theory of Woman's Biography" 33 emphasis mine
- ⁵⁷ Gerda Lerner The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History New York: Oxford University Press, 1979 (175)

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- ⁵⁸ Barry "Toward a Theory of Woman's Biography" 33
- ⁵⁹ Carolyn Heilbrun Writing a Woman's Life New York: Norton, 1988 (27)
- ⁶⁰ Heilbrun Writing a Woman's Life (27-28)
- ⁶¹ Kathleen Barry "Towards a Theory of Women's Biography: From the Life of Susan B. Anthony" Teresa Iles ed All Sides of the Subject (28-29)
- ⁶² Lois Rudnick "The Male-Identified Woman and Other Anxieties: the Life of Mabel Dodge Luhan" Sara Alprent et al eds., The Challenge of Feminist Biography: Writing the Lives of Modern American Women Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992 (132)
- ⁶³ Blackman Sadie Brower Neokuk xv
- ⁶⁴ Rudnick "The Male-Identified Woman" (136)
- ⁶⁵ Rudnick "The Male-Identified Woman" (26)

Chapter Two *Ihanktonwan*

The Yankton Heritage Room

It is paramount to provide a sense of Yankton-American culture and tribal history for visitors to Gertrude's Gallery. The Yankton Heritage Room is a long room with points of entry off the foyer, the hallway, and a third entrance to and from the kitchen in the back of the room. The visitor will learn about *Ihanktonwan* (ee hank'tohn wahn) identity, location, and pre-allotment reservation life, as we know it from the memories of elders, who, as children, listened to their elders tell tribal stories. Ethnographic evidence and legal documents combine with recorded and transcribed narratives to present a glance of Yankton life in the Delta Triangle region of present day southeast South Dakota, after contact with non-Indian traders and missionaries. Presenting, "first encounters, or contact histories," according to Donald Fixico in his essay, "Methodologies in Reconstructing Native American History," help to lay a foundation for studying Native Americans as a people with various cultures, thereby dismissing the gross stereotype that all Indians are the same."¹

The Yankton Room is arranged thematically and its subject matter extends chronologically from approximately

1800 until the late 1880s. Occasional topics, such as language retention, extend into Gertrude Bonnin's life during the time she and her family lived in the Stone House from 1926-1938. The sacred Pipestone Quarry is an example of a place in Yankton history that has an endless narrative. Although the discussion of the quarry in this project is limited to the years leading up to 1938, the curious are directed to the current debate surrounding the Red Pipestone Quarry.²

In the middle of the Yankton Room is an exhibit of treaties, marked by headmen and delegates of the Yankton Sioux tribe with the United States. Prominent is the reservation treaty of 1858, which drastically changed the lives of Yankton people. There are also glimpses of early Yankton reservation life beginning in 1860. Information about Gertrude's tribe establishes a foundation for her personal memory, which began two decades after Yankton life became confined on the reservation. Gertrude's formative years were spent with her mother in a canvas lodge within walking distance of the Missouri River, near the agency at Greenwood, South Dakota Territory. Her Yankton childhood of eight years was spent learning cultural values and preparing for her life as a Yankton woman.

Padániápapi and the Corps of Discovery:

Making Yankton Americans

Among the Gallery portraits of Yankton warriors, leaders, and delegates to Washington D.C. are two of Padaniapapi (Pah dah´nee a´pah pee), whose name, Struck by the Ree, is prominent in Yankton narratives. The tour of the Yankton Room begins here, with this very important figure in Yankton tribal memory. On August 29, 1804 at Calumet Bluffs on the banks of Missouri river, the first of the Sioux Indians, Wachápa's Band, the Çagu Yanktons, encountered the Lewis and Clark expedition, also known as the "Corps of Discovery." Within twenty-four hours, this first official American encounter reshaped the destiny of *Ithanktonwan* people; Meriwether Lewis wrapped the headman Wachápa's newborn son in an American flag and presented the babe as an American.³ In his memoir Singing For a Spirit: A Portrait of the Dakota Sioux, Vine Deloria Jr. continues, "the Yanktons came to love and honor that flag" and Padaniapapi matured to become the "most influential chief of the Yanktons."⁴ Struck by the Ree served his people as tribal leader from 1851 until his death in 1888.

Stories from Padaniapai's (Struck by the Ree) life can be found in a variety of places dating as early as an 1888

chapbook Legends of the Pipestone Quarries.⁵ Struck by the Ree was such an important figurehead, Yankton tribal attorney Jennings Wise included him in the closing remarks of an eighty-five-page brief submitted to the United States Supreme Court in 1925, on behalf of the Yankton Sioux Tribe.⁶ Public knowledge of the leader who was destined to be a peacemaker comes from both written records and "communities of memory" which are "mediated within Indian communities."⁷ Contemporary sources validating oral historical narratives of Padaniapapi include the official Yankton Sioux Tribe's website (2003) and conversations with Yankton elder and tribal scholar, Leonard Bruguier.⁸

The journals of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark are the first "official" American ethnographic records of the Ihanktonwan people. Captain Lewis received instructions from President Jefferson to record information pertaining to "language, traditions...food, clothing, and domestic accommodations...moral and physical circumstances that distinguish them from the tribes we know...peculiarities in their laws, customs and dispositions."⁹ Shortly after their migration into the Yankton Delta region, the Ihanktonwan acquired a new political and economic identity. They also received a written form of their name, Yancton or Yankton, which gave permanence to the American mispronunciation.

Wachapa's (The Striker's) Band welcomed the Corps of Discovery as their guests when three teenage scouts first noticed the expedition on August 29, 1804. The Ihanktonwan received tobacco, a few coats, trinkets, and whiskey, while the guns and ammunition carried by the Corps did not go unnoticed. Wachapa asked for them through the Corps' interpreter, Pierre Dorian, but Lewis would not part with any of the Corps' firearms or ammunition.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, there was no cloth or other gifts for their Yankton hostesses.

In addition to the United States flag wrapped around his infant son, Wachapa was presented with a certificate, affixed with wax seals and attached ribbons. Lewis and Clark carried with them several of these pre-printed documents that they distributed to select headmen along their route to the Pacific Ocean. Certain spaces were left blank so that Lewis could fill in appropriate names and dates (indicated by italics). The document reads as follows:

THOMAS JEFFERSON,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF America

From the powers vested in us by the above authority: To all who shall see these presents, Greeting: KNOW YE, that from the special confidence reposed by us in the sincere and unalterable attachment of *War char pa the Sticker a Warrior* of the Soues Nation to the UNITED STATES; as also from the abundant proofs given by

him of his amicable disposition to cultivate peace, harmony, and good neighbourhood with the said States, and the citizens of the same; we do by the authority vested in us, require and charge, all citizens of the United States, all Indian Nations, in treaty with the same, and all other persons whomsoever, to receive acknowledge, and treat the said *War char pa the Sticker* in the most friendly manner, declaring him to be the friend and ally of the said States: the government of which will at all times be extended to his protection, so long as he dos acknowledge the authority of the same. Having signed with our hands and affixed our seals this *Thirty-first day of August 180 four*.

M. LEWIS Capt.
1st. U.S. Regt. Inftry.

WM. CLARK Captn. on
an Expdn. for N.W. Descy.¹¹

Following his father's destiny, the baby wrapped in the flag and declared by Captain Lewis to be an American, grew up to be a "friend and ally" of the United States.¹² Padaniapapi, recorded as Struck by the Ree, was the first headman to make his mark with an "X" on the Treaty of Washington in 1858. The Treaty of 1858 forced Yanktons to cede over eleven million acres of their lands, to live within designated reservation boundaries of less than 400,000 acres, and live by policies so outlined.¹³ The treaty delegation interpreter for the United States government, Zephier Roncontre, pronounced and translated the "chief's" name as "Pa-lá-ne-á-pa-pe, the man that was struck by the Ree."¹⁴ Translations of "Strike the Ree" and

"Struck by the Ree" are both found in written records.¹⁵ As an elder, Padaniapapi became known as "Old Strike" or "Struck," the two names most often heard today.¹⁶

Yankton scholars translate Padaniapapi as Struck by the Ree; Ree being short for the Arikara Indians. The Arikara, who refer to themselves as Sahnish people, lived for centuries in earth-lodge dwellings in semi-sedentary horticultural communities. Early small pox epidemics decimated all but three of twelve bands that migrated up the Missouri River to the present-day Dakotas in the 1790s. About the same time, Yankton Sioux were moving into the Missouri River region south of the Ree from present day Minnesota.¹⁷ In 1804, Clark aptly described Arikara farmers as the "gardners for the Soues."¹⁸ The Ree are also remembered as historic enemies of Yanktons in the early 1800s.¹⁹ Thomas Schmidt points out that "this complex and fluid political situation was just one of several among Plains peoples that would undermine Lewis and Clark's efforts to establish a comprehensive peace" and profitable trade relationship.²⁰

Ree relations with the Sioux in general centered around trade. Successful horticulturists, Arikara women grew sweet corn, beans, and squash, which was traded to the Sioux, including Yanktons, for buffalo products and Euro-

American trade items. Fur trader Edwin Thompson Denig, who lived in Sioux country for over twenty years along the Missouri River from 1833 to 1854, wrote that the Arikara, during the period 1795 to 1804, felt compelled to engage in this trade through fear of the more powerful Dakota.²¹ The Arikara were on especially friendly terms with the Yanktons' western cousins the Oglala, who traded firearms and ammunition that they had procured from Yanktons.²² According to Denig, the market for Arikara corn and produce were the Sioux bands with whom the Ree were currently at peace. Regarding this relationship, Denig wrote:

Frequently some of these bands of Sioux pass the winter within a few miles of the Arikaras village and a running trade is kept up [however] when the Sioux have failed in their hunt, and are not well provided for provisions--and at the same time the Rees have a good crop of corn...at such times, disturbances happen.²³

These "disturbances" between the Arikara and Yanktons consisted mainly of stealing horses and insulting women; typical warfare patterns serving economic and social functions, like that of many American Indian bands and tribes.²⁴

Several stories about how Struck by the Ree got his name involve another element of this kind of Indian warfare, counting coup on one's enemy. According to Tom Holm, "aboriginal North American warfare was also seen as

an outlet for youthful male aggression."²⁵ Young men gained status in the "elaborate game" with strict guidelines for the practice of counting coups or blows. Coups were war honors that emphasized bravery, cunning, and stealth over the actual killing of an enemy. Having one's spirit stolen on the receiving end of a coup, often meant shame and self-reproach.²⁶

One version of Padaniapapi's naming relates that, as a young warrior he accompanied his uncles on a war party and took part in a skirmish with some Ree. "During the attack, a Padani (singular Ree) warrior nearly scalped the young Yankton leaving a wound on his forehead that extended back into his scalp. He survived the assault and was thereafter known as Struck by the Ree."²⁷ To cover the scar on his forehead, he wore his long hair over to one side. Later in life, Old Strike always wore a scarf or a fur hat down over his forehead (figure 2.1-2.2).²⁸

Historic Yankton

The next exhibit in the Yankton Heritage Room begins with Yankton Sioux Band migrations out of the Leech Lake and greater Mille Lacs regions in present-day Minnesota, into the Missouri River region of present-day South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska, which scholars date in the late 1790s.

Maps of the migration and Yankton delta areas help Gallery visitors to visualize a sense of place for Gertrude's people (figures 2.3-2.4).²⁹ Yankton Delta or Yankton Triangle are the names used beginning in the 1850s to identify the eleven million acre region inhabited by the Yankton Sioux from about 1800 until the majority of this land was ceded in 1858. Located between the Big Sioux River on the east and the Missouri River on the south, this triangle of land was part of "Royce Area 410." This area in present day Southeast South Dakota was designated "Area 410" in 1899 by Charles Royce in his mapping of North and South Dakota Indian land cessions for the Bureau of American Ethnology.³⁰ Yankton seasonal camps covered about eleven million acres of prairie and riverine habitat, which bordered on the eastern plains.

Ithanktonwan means village at the end, referring to the Yanktons' proximity (northwest) to the other *Oceti" Sakowi"* (Seven Council Fires) in their woodland home, near Leech Lake in the Mille Lacs region. The "Seven Council Fires" was the self-designated identity of the major divisions of the Oceti Sakowin ("Seven Fires") prior to 1800, before migrating south and west. The Santee Sioux (eastern division) maintained four of the fires: the Mdewakanton, "the Spirit Lake People" at Mille Lacs Minnesota; the

Wahpekute, "Shooters Among the Leaves;" the Wahpeton, "Dwellers among the Leaves;" and the Sisitonwan (Sisseton) "People of the Boggy Ground" or "Fish Scale" village. The Wiciyela (middle) division consisted of two tribes, the Ihanktonwan (Yankton) "Dwellers at the End" at Leech Lake, and Ihanktonwana (Yanktonai), "Little Dwellers at the End." The Titowan "Dwellers on the Prairies" (Teton or western division), made up of seven Bands (Brule, Oglala, Two Kettle, Minneconjou, Sans Arc, Hunkpapa, and Blackfoot), were collectively one camp in the Seven Council Fires.³¹ Simon Antelope recalled Yankton oral tradition about *Oceti*ⁿ *Sakowi*ⁿ for Ella Cora Deloria in the 1930s. He said,

It was a long time ago that all Dakota remained together; but there came a time when they fell away, for hunting purposes mostly; and they never did go back together in a grand reunion...I do not know how long ago these seven were together, but [in] an old Teton winter count, way back somewhere there was a year called *Wicab.decaha*ⁿ-*Omaka*, "They break apart Year."³²

After migration from the Leech Lake region into the prairies and riverbeds of present day Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota, the Yankton no longer held their position as "village at the end."³³ Renée Flood points out, that Yankton seasonal movement before and after this migration caused confusion among French explorers. Yankton excursions took them north to hunt big game animals, from which women made

antlers into hide scrapers and moose horns into spoons. Yanktons "spread out to make the best use of the resources available to them," traveling to Ute country for salt and south to the Gulf of Mexico for other trade items.³⁴

James Howard writes in his "Notes on the Ethnogeography of the Yankton Dakota," that near the present town of Lake Andes, South Dakota, is a valley which Yankton call the "Gateway of the Buffalo."³⁵ Eighty-year old Paul Picotte told Joseph Cash in 1968, about the gate situated in a valley about a mile and a half west of Greenwood, South Dakota.

In the late fall, November and December, all these potholes out across here, they were just full of buffalo. When those things'd freeze up and there wasn't any water, they, they'd get together by the thousands and come down in through here because right down in there was springs in that Missouri River. They'd stampede down in there and many of them got drowned down in there.³⁶

When the river ice broke up at the end of winter, these frozen buffalo fed many people. Fur trader Pierre Antoine Tabeau witnessed and told about the salvage by some Arikara of a dead buffalo adrift in the Missouri river in the early spring 1804.³⁷ Born in 1880, Paul Picotte's memory reflects not only his own childhood and life on Yankton land, but also the memory of his grandmother, White Talon. In 1880,

Gertrude was a little girl of four years and her first memories were forming.

After a few decades of contact with traders, the Yanktons were adapting to lifestyle changes that replaced buffalo products in their daily lives, adjusting to less meat and seasonal fruits in their diets. Their game herds were drastically reduced, and became dismally thin by 1855.³⁸ G. K. Warren noted in 1855, three years before Yankton leaders signed the reservation treaty, "contact with the whites had considerably degenerated the *Ihanktonwan*, and their distance from the present buffalo ranges render them comparatively poor" in relation to their Lakota cousins.³⁹

Although women integrated white flour, sugar, and other Euro-American processed foods into their families' diets, they managed to maintain contact with their seasonal gardens. This was easier for women, like Gertrude's mother and aunt, who lived close to the riverbeds. In the episode, "The Ground Squirrel" from Zitkala-Sa's first autobiographical story, "Impressions of an Indian Childhood," she recalls, "the busy autumn days when my cousin Warcaziwin's (Sunflower) mother came to our wigwam to help my mother preserve foods for our winter use. From a field in the fertile river bottom my mother and aunt

gathered an abundant supply of corn."⁴⁰ The corn was dried on canvas spread out on the grass. It was Zitkala-Sa's job to watch the corn, "that nothing should disturb it."⁴¹ At an early age, she participated in preparing food for the family. While the corn was drying, Zitkala-Sa's mother,

sliced great pumpkins into thin rings; and these she doubled and linked together into long chains. She hung them on a pole that stretched between two forked posts...The sun and wind dried the chains, she packed them away in a case of thick and stiff buckskin. She also dried many wild fruits, cherries, berries, and plums.⁴²

Language⁴³

The commonly associated "middle position" of the Yankton Sioux is also a linguistic classification. Coincidentally, it has been applied to designate Yankton geographic location or physical position in between the Teton and the Santee after migrating into the Yankton Delta region. The Santee (eastern Sioux) and Yankton-Yanktonnai called themselves Dakota (dah'ko ta) while the Teton (western Sioux) used the word Lakota (lah'ko ta). To clarify further, the form Nakota (nah'ko ta) is properly the self-designation of the Assiniboine and Stoney, who were close relatives to the Yankton Sioux, but politically and ethnically separate from them since before 1700, if not prehistorically.⁴⁴ DeMallie writes:

The Santee, Yankton-Yanktonai, and Teton spoke three distinct dialects and therefore constituted three distinct social groups. Nonetheless, intermarriage and close associations blurred precise dialect boundaries, and individuals' speech reflected family history and life experiences.⁴⁵

It is possible that as a child, Gertrude may have heard some elders speaking in the Nakota dialect. However, after 1869 children learned written Dakota from the Presbyterians.⁴⁶ Gertrude would have understood the Lakota dialect as well. At White's Indiana Manual Labor Training Institute, the "Sioux" children were recruited from the Pine Ridge and Yankton reservations. When Gertie first arrived at White's in 1884, the only comfort she found was in her language. In the story "Land of the Red Apples," Zitkala-Sa wrote she was "tucked into bed with one of the tall girls because she talked to me in my mother tongue and seemed to soothe me."⁴⁷

Contributing to both Gertrude's and Raymond's identities as Yankton Indians is the fact that they retained their childhood language. Like children in boarding schools who whispered their native tongue in the night, Gertie and Ray used Dakota words to express terms of endearment all their lives. Gertrude's letters indicate retention of her mother tongue. Zitkala-Sa wrote to Carlos Montezuma in the summer of 1901, while teaching and

collecting stories on the Devil's Lake Sioux Reservation in North Dakota, "I have a good time talking Sioux to the old folks."⁴⁸

Raymond Bonnin recorded written stories from elders in Dakota in 1926 while he was helping his son Ohiya, daughter-in-law Elsie, and grandsons Jo Jo and Raymie get settled at Lake Andes, South Dakota.⁴⁹ Ray and his grandsons wrote letters to "once" (uⁿ-ché) which means grandma, during Ray's stay with them in Lake Andes. In 1925, Raymond was elected interpreter for the Yankton delegation to Washington D. C. on official business between the United States government and the Yankton Sioux Tribe of South Dakota.⁵⁰ A few other letters and papers, located in the Bonnin Collection at Brigham Young University, are written in Dakota by both Gertrude and Raymond, who spoke "the Sioux language in the privacy of their home."⁵¹

Yankton Treaties

Yankton leaders signed various treaties beginning with Prairie du Chien in 1825. Part of the plan by the federal government to control trade on the Missouri River, this treaty designated boundaries between several Sioux tribes. Headman Wachapi (Struck by the Pawnee), whose camp hosted the Corps of Discovery in 1804, made his "X" mark for the

"Yankton tribe of the Sioux or Dacotah Indians."⁵² Here in 1825, the Ihnaktonwan became officially the "Yankton Sioux."

The most devastating land cession occurred with the Treaty of 1858. Yankton lands were reduced to less than 400,000 acres, after cession of close to eleven million acres of land. The Treaty of Washington in 1858 opened much of this land to non-Indian settlers.⁵³ Yankton leaders chose as their interpreter, mixed-blood Charles Picotte, of Smutty Bear's Igmu Band. Picotte accompanied the Yankton delegation to Washington D. C. and signed the treaty with them in 1859. By 1860, almost all Yanktons were forced onto reservation lands. Today, the 1858 "Treaty with the Yankton Sioux" plays an integral part in Yankton memory. It has been reprinted in its entirety in Remember Your Relatives: Yankton Sioux Images, 1851-1904, a 1985 publication of the Marty Indian School.⁵⁴

Ihanktonwan Bands

Seven bands comprised the Yankton tribal camp circle at the time of the Treaty of Washington in 1858. Several sources concur regarding the seven major bands in the Yankton delta area between 1800 and 1859. Derived from information Henaka Mani (Walking Elk) told to Renee Flood,

the Yankton Band Circle locates the seven Yankton bands in the 1859 camp circle (figure 2.5).⁵⁵ Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin identified themselves as belonging to the Tcaxu (cha goó) and the Igmu (eeg moó) Bands, respectively. Tcaxu (or Çagu) translates as Lungs People and Igmu means Panther or Wildcat People.⁵⁶ The five other bands identified at this time were Iha Ishdaye (Mouth Greasers), Wagmuha Oin (Pumpkin Rind Earrings), Waceunpa (Roasters or the Ones that Cook), Cankute (Shooters at Trees), and Oyate Sica (Bad Nation).⁵⁷

An eighth band led by Saswe (François des Lauriers, later known as Frank Deloria) became officially recognized in the Treaty of 1858. One of sixteen headmen and delegates, Saswe signed the Yankton treaty as Ehawecasa (e ha we cha'sha) Owl Man. The Yanktons called Saswe's band the "Half-Breed" or *Wasiçu* Band. Speaking of his ancestors, Vine Deloria Jr. tells us "they gathered several times a year with the other bands, but as a rule were completely independent of the rest of the tribe."⁵⁸

By the time of the Treaty of 1858, women of the Igmu Band had intermarried with non-Indians and headman Smutty Bear was influenced by his band's mixed-blood off-spring. The Igmu Band was influential in tribal affairs and supported the signing of the treaty. Also favoring the 1858

treaty was the Tçaxu Band led by Padaniapapi (Struck by the Ree). Both leaders accompanied the Yankton delegation to Washington in 1859 to see President James Buchanan and sign the treaty. Oral tradition from the family of Henry Hare Sr., recorded by Renée Samson-Flood in Lessons From Choteau Creek: Yankton Memories of Dakota Territorial Intrigue, tells us it took four months in Washington for government officials to coerce consent from all "the delegation, which was kept drunk most of the time, insisting that its members would fall ill or die if they drank the local water."⁵⁹

After the Yankton reservation was established in 1859, and Struck by the Ree was designated head chief, the tribe found itself at the center of many disputes. In fulfillment of the promise to live in peace, Yanktons did not collectively take up arms against the United States and encroaching miners, ranchers, and settlers. According to Vine Deloria Jr.,

It took real statesmanship to remain neutral while their cousins to the east fought a hopeless war against the whites in 1862 [in Minnesota] and their kin to the west were...fighting at various locations in Colorado, Wyoming, the Dakotas, and Montana. The Yanktons were people with an elevated sense of honor, and they felt themselves obligated to remain at peace with the United States.⁶⁰

Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin's heritage from two bands in dominant tribal leadership positions supports their

determination to live up to their destiny to serve their people. As young adults they saw themselves as educated children, guiding their parents through the quagmire of written and political rhetoric of the dominant culture. In the tradition of Yankton leaders, the Bonnins worked within the political system to ensure the best for their people.

Yankton Scouts

The Santee Sioux uprising of 1862, typically associated with Minnesota Sioux history, is also connected to Yankton tribal heritage and identity. Although the Yanktons did not collectively fight in the Sioux War of 1862, Padaniapapi's band harbored refugees from the war.⁶¹ In the Yankton Room is a small section devoted to the Yankton Scouts. This regiment of Yankton men served the United States government for nine months in 1864. Similar to an "occupation" unit in modern warfare, these warriors joined men from other tribes and patrolled the frontier of what are now the borders of five states following the Minnesota Santee War in 1862.⁶² On the list of fifty-one Yankton men who served as Scouts included in Remember Your Relatives, "Zitkanan (the Bird)" is listed as one of the leaders.⁶³

The story of the Yankton Scouts and how they were cheated out of their financial compensation is an all too familiar one for Yankton people. It belongs to the myriad of deceptions, broken treaty conditions, and breach of contract obligations on the part of the federal government. Each scout, riding his own horse, was to receive \$300.00 for patrolling the Yankton triangle between the Missouri and Big Sioux Rivers, an area bordered by Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota, for a period of nine months; bringing the total payroll to \$15,300. The first steam ship carrying the payroll and supplies designated for the Yankton Agency sank. Samson-Flood writes in Remember Your Relatives, "Unknown to Yanktons, Congress approved three separate scout payments, reduced to \$10,000 in 1869, and each time the money disappeared before it reached the reservation."⁶⁴

Doolittle Commission

On March 3, 1865, Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing a special committee, chaired by Senator James Doolittle of Wisconsin, to investigate and report the conditions of Indian tribes.⁶⁵ The "Doolittle Commission" spent time at the Yankton Indian Agency investigating allegations of graft, corruption, and theft on the part of agents, which resulted in miserable living conditions in

the Dakota Territory. The reservation chief of seven years, Padaniapapi (Struck by the Ree) was the Yankton spokesman.⁶⁶ He addressed the Commission on many subjects relating to the "grandfather's failure to fulfill his end of the treaty."⁶⁷

In a speech read before the House of Representatives June 6, 1866, Struck by the Ree conveyed his frustration, disappointment, and regret over his decision to support the federal government and the Treaty of 1858. He stated, "If I had understood from what my grandfather told me, that I was to be treated as I have been, I would never have done as I have done; I never would have signed the treaty. The Great Spirit knows that I have spoken the truth; knows what I say."⁶⁸

The Commission's report, entitled "The Condition of Indian Tribes" was released in 1867. It discussed reasons for the decrease in Indian population and made recommendations for ameliorating the conditions that included disease, war, encroachment on Native lands, and loss of wild game. The Commission took a controversial stand on the debate regarding the retention of the Indian Bureau by the Department of the Interior as opposed to reassigning Indian affairs to the War Department, which maintained control from the years 1824 to 1849. The report

avored control of Indian affairs by the War Department. It stated:

It is better for the War department to have entire control, both in peace and war. Annuity goods and clothing, paid to Indians under treaty stipulations, will be more faithfully and honestly made by officers of the regular army than when made by the agents and superintendents appointed under the Interior Department.⁶⁹

Struck by the Ree commented about the second agent Walter Burleigh, who repeatedly stole Yankton annuities:

I think the way the white men treated us is worse than wolves do. We have a way in the winter of putting our dead up on scaffolds up from the ground, but the soldiers cut down the scaffolds and cut the hair off the dead, and if they had good teeth they pulled them out, and some of them cut off the heads of the dead and carried them away.⁷⁰

Struck by the Ree continued to speak up about General Sully running cattle through Yankton cornfields, setting fire to the prairie, burning lodges and all contents as a result. He recalled while the men were out on a hunt,

The soldiers are very drunken and come to our place. They run after our women and fire [guns] into our houses and lodges. Before the soldiers came along we had good health, and the squaws being hungry will sleep with them, and will get a bad disease and to their husbands, give them the bad disease. I think all is wrong.⁷¹

Struck by the Ree also held a controversial position regarding the Presbyterian minister, John P. Williamson, who wanted to be the first permanent Christian missionary in 1869, on the Yankton reservation.⁷² The Yankton tribal

council listened to headmen speak against the white missionary. Feather Necklace told the council that their traditions and their way of religion would eventually be eroded if Williamson were allowed to stay. Struck by the Ree spoke in favor of letting Williamson stay, but the council decided the Presbyterian must be asked to leave. The fact that Williamson did not leave Yankton has everything to do with Struck by the Ree's secret visit to Williamson after the council, offering protection from harm, should he decide to stay.⁷³

Pipestone Quarry

This exhibit in the Yankton Room of the Gallery begins with the "Red Pipestone Quarry" (Southwestern Minnesota), painted by American artist George Catlin in the 1830s. Coupled with his travelogue, this painting, "Sioux Worshipping at the Red Boulders" was American society's introduction to the beautiful dark pink stone (figure 2.8).⁷⁴ Catlin's writings and exhibitions of his paintings brought much attention to the Pipestone region of Southwest Minnesota Territory, with its unique deposits of pink Sioux Quartzite and the red limestone-clay. The soft red stone, from which sacred pipe bowls are carved, became known as "Catlinite" to Americans and Europeans.

When two of the traditional tribal guardians of the Pipestone Quarry, the Wahpeton and Sisseton Sioux, ceded lands in the Territory of Minnesota to the United States in 1851, they were induced, according to Jennings Wise, to include the Red Pipestone Quarry.⁷⁵ Treaty makers were influenced by evangelical missionaries in the area, who were well aware of the, "power exercised over the red race by the Shamans of Red Pipestone Quarry." It was the first legal success at "breaking up the Dakota religious organization."⁷⁶ At the time, a seventeen year-old warrior named Four Horns was being groomed to take his father's place among the ranks of Sioux sub-chief leadership.

Four Horns was renamed Sitting Bull in 1857 at age twenty-three. Wise relates Yankton oral tradition in The Red Man and the New World Drama. He writes that Sitting Bull was in position to influence the fifty-three year old chief, Struck by the Ree, before the Yankton tribe went into treaty negotiations in 1858. When some of the Yankton treaty delegates visiting Washington were being bribed to betray the rest of the tribe, Struck by the Ree stepped in. He could sense that the delegation was caving in to government demands for the Quarry. Wise continues to say that Struck by the Ree, "unquestionably at Sitting Bull's instance, drove a shrewd deal with the government."⁷⁷ The

Yankton headmen signed away over eleven million acres of land, keeping only about 340,00 acres in South Dakota in exchange for retention of their status as guardians of the "Quarter section embracing the precincts of Quarry"⁷⁸ in the extreme southwest corner of present-day Minnesota, and that the Quarry "Be protected forever by the government against trespass."⁷⁹ Article eight of the Treaty of 1858 states:

The said Yankton Indians shall be secured in the free and unrestricted use of the red pipe-stone quarry or so much thereof as they have been accustomed to frequent and use for the purpose of procuring stone for pipes; and the United States hereby stipulate and agree to cause to be surveyed and marked so much thereof as shall be necessary and proper for that purpose, and retain the same and keep it open and free to the Indians to visit and procure stone for pipes so long as they shall desire.⁸⁰

Seven years after signing the treaty, Struck by the Ree lamented about being "tricked" about the Pipestone Quarry when he spoke before the Doolittle Commission in 1865. He said, "I think I gave my land to my grandfather. When I signed the treaty I told them I never would sign for the pipestone quarry. I wanted to keep it myself; but I understand white men are going there and getting and breaking up the stone."⁸¹ A few years later in 1871, the same year federal treaty making with Indian Tribes ceased by law, the situation escalated when the local Land Office allowed an individual to "settle" within the sacred area.

This violation of the 1858 Yankton treaty enraged the entire Sioux nation, which in turn prompted the federal government to quickly survey the area promised to the Yanktons in the 1858 treaty. But, as Wise pointed out, "another trick had been perpetuated. The three great boulders created by glaciers, known as the "Three Maidens" were left out of the land tract in 1872 as a conciliatory gesture to local missionaries."⁸² Analogous to other religions with sacred places and shrines, the Red Pipestone Quarry was a sacred place for many Indian people.

Yankton oral tradition tells us that after a great and bloody battle among red nations, the Great Spirit impregnated three maidens so that the race could continue.⁸³ Several variations of the origin of the red clay-stone exist, and they all designate the pipes carved from this quarry stone as sacred.⁸⁴ Lame Deer told his Santee grandmother's version to Richard Erdoes in 1969, which has been reprinted in American Indian Myths and Legends edited by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz. The following retelling is derived from this 1984 version:

A long time ago, a really long time when the earth was freshly made, Unktehi the water monster fought the people and caused a great flood. Everything was flooded except the hill next to the place where the sacred red pipestone quarry lies today. People were smashed by the waves into the rocks and pinnacles...everyone was killed and all the blood jelled, making one big pool. The

blood turned to pipestone and created the quarry,
the graves of the ancient ones."

D. Inan Downs transcribed Struck by the Ree's telling of the red stone's origin and rewrote it in verse.⁸⁶ "And now I tell it as 'twas told to me by the brave old Yankton chief named Strike the Ree." Downs titled his verse "Chon-oopa-sa;" it is one of four legends included in the chapbook Legends of the Pipestone Quarries, published by a Minnesota real estate company in 1888, the year Old Strike died.⁸⁷ One of the other selections in this little book are the verses about "the Peace Pipe" from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem, "The Song of Hiawatha." Wise notes that "The Song of Hiawatha" was also influenced by legends about the Red Stone Quarry as told to Longfellow by Elaine Goodale Eastman.⁸⁸ A 1911 photograph from the Pipestone museum's collection, depicts a man mining pipestone by hand (figure 2.9).

The Yankton tribal petition for financial compensation of the Pipestone Quarry was filed in 1924 with the Indian Court of Claims, and was denied the following year. Yankton tribal lawyers immediately filed a brief with the United States Supreme Court, which heard the case, *Yankton Sioux Tribe v. United States*. The 1928 settlement called for \$100,000 to be paid to the Yankton Sioux Tribe. The decision also included affirmation rights for American

Indians to mine the stone in the quarry. *Yankton Sioux Tribe v. United States* is an excellent case study within the context of the national legal and political atmosphere for American Indians seeking redress for stolen lands prior to the creation of the Indian Claims Commission in 1946. In the case of the Pipestone Quarry, a communal place, the legal argument had to be quite sophisticated. Jennings Wise, who wrote the brief, relied on Yankton oral history. The 1925 brief included the legend of the Three Maidens, a discussion of the sacred pipe religion, and previously recorded statements from Struck by the Ree.⁸⁹

As a claimant for the Yankton Sioux Tribe, Captain Raymond T. Bonnin made a deposition on April 18, 1927. His bilingual literacy, knowledge of the law, and enrolled Yankton status made him a desirable witness. When asked about the relationship to the Pipestone Quarry by the old men at the time of the Treaty of 1858, Bonnin made this reply:

They feel that it was a part of the consideration. The contention of the old people, who had been parties to the agreement or signed the treaty of 1858, is that they came to Washington at the invitation of the Government and the government asked them to cede certain tracts of land and diminish their reservation. The Indians refused to do that and continued to refuse and were kept here in Washington several months and they were homesick. Finally, Struck-by-the Ree agreed to sign that treaty on the condition that they would return to them this

pipestone reservation which had apparently been sold by some other Indians by mistake; so the Sioux people came in possession after the Government returned this to them after agreeing to sign the treaty. So it was a very important consideration.⁹⁰

During President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration, the quarry became part of the 283 acre Pipestone National Monument, established in 1937. Today, federally recognized tribes and American Indians retain access to about six acres of the pipestone, still desirable for pipe bowls.⁹¹

Old Indian Legends

Gertrude was born into pre-allotment reservation life. According to Gerald Vizenor in Manifest Manners, Gertrude's generation, like that of her Sioux cousins Luther Standing Bear and Charles Eastman, "was the last to hear the oral stories of their tribal families before the stories were translated, and they were the first to learn how to write about their remembrance experiences."⁹² That not only includes Gertrude's personal memory of her familial experiences, but also Yankton tribal memory as well, encompassing the larger collective memory of her Sioux cousins, as told through the stories of the grandmothers and grandfathers.

Zitkala-Sa's first book, Old Indian Legends (1901), retells fourteen of the stories she often heard from elders as a young child and as a twenty-five year old woman. She wrote, "Under an open sky, nestling close to the earth, the old Dakota story-tellers have told me these legends. In both Dakotas, North and South, I have often listened to the same story told over again by a new storyteller."⁹³

Gertrude's Boston friend, Winnebago art student Angel DeCora, drew one sketch for each of the stories (figure 2.10). DeCora is also responsible for the cover design; deep hues of red with dark green ink fill in the embossed title and spider web design.⁹⁴ Gertrude was pleased with this collection she titled, Old Indian Legends and very proud to have her first book part of the Brooklyn, New York Teacher's College curriculum for decades. Gertrude mentioned it whenever she was asked about her life.⁹⁵ She wrote, "I have tried to transplant the native spirit of these tales, root and all, into the English language, since America in the last few centuries has acquired a second tongue."⁹⁶

Kitchen Stories

The visitor to Gertie's Gallery does not learn all about Yankton culture and heritage in just one room. A

generously sized doorway in the rear of the Yankton Room leads into the kitchen, where the pulse of *Ihanktonwan* culture can be found, usually in a story. The Bonnin kitchen has wonderful morning light coming through the large window that looks out into the backyard, just shy of an acre in size. Like most women, Gertrude spent a fair amount of time in the kitchen of her Stone House. Leslie Marmon Silko describes her Aunt Susie Rayos Marmon in a way that easily parallels Gertrude Bonnin.

From the time that I can remember her
she worked on her kitchen table with
her books and papers spread over the oil cloth.
she wrote beautiful long hand script...

she had come very much to believe in books
and in schooling.
She was of a generation...
that passed down an entire culture
by word of mouth
an entire history
an entire vision of the world
which depended upon memory
and retelling by subsequent generations.⁹⁷

As did Silko's Aunt Susie, Gertrude made the leap in her lifetime from oral tradition to English literacy, managing to find a way to maintain being the transmitter of culture in both mediums.

In the early reservation days, daily life still revolved around seasonal activities. "From the eight villages, families moved about on the reservation to other

wild fruit, vegetables, migratory birds' eggs, and other natural bounty."⁹⁸ But Walter Hare Sr. remembers,

The east border of the reservation is Choteau Creek. Our women got pretty mad because they couldn't go down there to get the salt from those salt springs. The women boiled the water from the white springs and what was left over, was dried...to salt the food with.⁹⁹

Paul Picotte remembered the last living buffalo was killed on Yankton land in 1869, ten years after the reservation boundaries were drawn.¹⁰⁰

Twice a month was Issue Day at Greenwood agency, visiting and political councils were held and people gathered in "massive tipi camps that blanketed the hillside and breaks about Greenwood. It was the way Yanktons were used to doing things, especially the give-aways."¹⁰¹ When there was not enough food on the reservation, hunting parties crossed the Missouri to look for buffalo and the agents sent wagons out to haul in the meat, which was prepared by the women.¹⁰² Often times, the Yankton people were hungry. Renée Flood recounts Floyd Spohn talking about his family remembrances. He said that they,

never had enough to eat. The women's milk dried up and whenever a young one got sick, it almost always died. Our women went to digging around in that garbage...that dumping place at Fort Randall. They'd bring home what they found for the soup. We didn't like our women digging around...like dogs. Our men got mad, lots of resentment.¹⁰³

Gallery visitors also learn more about Gertrude's mother, Tatéiyóhinwin (Woman Reaching for the Wind) in the kitchen of the Stone House. Tatéiyóhinwin is listed in official records as Ellen Simmons, the name appearing on her allotment and ration-issue cards.¹⁰⁴ She was already sixty years old when the allotment process started on Yankton lands in 1892. Gertrude introduces readers to her mother in her first autobiographical story published under the name Zitkala-Sa. "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" comprised of seven titled vignettes, appeared in the January 1900 issue of Atlantic Monthly.¹⁰⁵ Of the seven vignettes that comprise this story, the first four begin with Zitkala-Sa's mother. The impressions entitled "My Mother," are the first memories she chooses to tell as Zitkala-Sa. She wrote, "morning, noon, and evening, my mother came to draw water from the muddy stream for our household use. Always, when my mother started for the river, I stopped my play to run along with her."¹⁰⁶ Zitkala-Sa's proximity to her mother opens the next three little stories, "The Legends," "The Beadwork," and "The Coffee-Making." Her mother is also very much a part of the last three stories, "The Dead Man's Plum Bush," "The Ground Squirrel," and "The Big Red Apples."¹⁰⁷

Tatéiyóhinwin was born around 1830. Zitkala-Sa describes her as being of medium height with black eyes.¹⁰⁸ Her first marriage to French-Canadian fur trader Pierre St. Pierre produced two sons, Henry and Peter. They lived in a quasi-settlement of fur traders and their Yankton wives where the Missouri River meets the Big Sioux River. When St. Pierre died in 1853, there was no one to hunt for the family and four year-old Henry was taken from his mother and placed with white settlers who raised him. According to *Ithanktonwan* custom, the young widow and her baby Peter came under her brother's care until she remarried five years later.

Shortly after Yankton leaders signed the reservation treaty in 1858, Tatéiyóhinwin married John Simmons and became Ellen Simmons. Prone to drink, Simmons was a "common laborer" who made his living digging ditches and chopping wood.¹⁰⁹ When Simmons died in 1874, Gertrude's mother had already lost five babies and was left with two small children, eight year-old David and an unnamed daughter. Widowed for a second time, Ellen Simmons had no choice but to return to her brother's camp. No longer a young man, he could not adequately support his sister and two small children in addition to his own family. Ellen Simmons, her son David and small daughter accompanied her brother and

his family on the four-day walk into the agency at Greenwood to apply for rations in 1874. Gertrude would never know her sister, for she became ill and died shortly after coming to the Agency. Remembering her uncle, Zitkala-Sa wrote,

My uncle, whose death my mother ever lamented, was one of our nation's bravest warriors. His name was on the lips of old men when talking of the proud feats of valor; and was mentioned by younger men, too, in connection with deeds of gallantry. Old women praised him for his kindness toward them; young women held him up as an ideal to their sweethearts. Everyone loved him, and my mother worshiped his memory.¹¹⁰

Yankton elders tell a story from 1874, the same year Ellen Simmons' brother brought his family in to the agency. In a show of force, General George Armstrong Custer led the Seventh Cavalry through the agency town of Greenwood and "ordered his men to shoot every dog. Bullets shot past frightened women and children as they attempted to flee toward the hills."¹¹¹

Already in mid-life, Ellen Simmons soon married a third time. All that is known about her third husband "Felker" is that he was a "worthless fellow" who died before Gertrude's birth.¹¹² Gertrude Felker, the last of Ellen's ten children, was born into the second decade of Yankton reservation life while the Great Sioux Wars were being fought not far to the West.¹¹³ As a little girl, Gertie

remembered her mother as often "sad and silent, at which times her full arched lips were compressed into hard and bitter lines, and shadows fell under her black eyes."¹¹⁴

In one of Zitkala-Sa's stories, her mother points to the hill where Gertrude's uncle and only sister lay buried and said, "Since then your father too has been buried in a hill nearer the rising sun."¹¹⁵ Out of respect for the dead, Zitkala-Sa does not name her deceased relatives. I suggest that Gertrude's mother erased Felker's brief presence from her life and that of her little daughter. Ellen replaced it with the memory of her second husband of sixteen years, John Simmons. Even though Gertie Simmons grew up without a father physically present in her life, there was much love and caring from her extended family. There were daily lessons from her mother, aunt, and older cousin Waca-Ziwin. Cherished by Gertie were the stories told by the grandfathers and grandmothers and the secrets that stimulated her imagination. In "The Legends" Zitkala-Sa wrote:

After the warrior's story was finished, I asked the old woman the meaning of the blue lines on her chin, looking all the while out of the corners of my eyes at the warrior with the star on his forehead. I was a little afraid that he would rebuke me for my boldness. Here the old woman, whose magic power lay hidden behind the marks upon her face, began: "Why, my grandchild, they are signs,--secret signs I dare not tell you. I shall however, tell you a wonderful story

about a woman who had a cross tattoo upon each of her cheeks."¹¹⁶

The story of Zitkala-Sa's first attempt at making coffee as a young girl for Wiyaka Napbina (Feather Necklace)¹¹⁷ is heard in the kitchen. "The Coffee Making," is one of the seven episodes that make up Zitkala-Sa's "Impressions of an Indian Childhood."¹¹⁸ Gallery visitors may recall Feather Necklace as the headman who opposed the presence of Presbyterian minister John Williamson in 1869. Zitkala-Sa describes him,

I feared [the] tall, broad shouldered crazy man, some forty years old who walked loose among the hills. Wiyaka Napbina (Wearer of a Feather Necklace) was harmless, and whenever he came into a wigwam he was driven there by extreme hunger. He went nude except for the half of a red blanket he girdled around his waist.¹¹⁹

Feather Necklace carried a bunch of wild sunflowers gathered in his aimless wanderings. Zitkala-Sa's mother told her to "pity the man...I knew him when he was brave and handsome youth."¹²⁰ Feather Necklace never forgave himself for being out on a hunt when Yankton headmen agreed to the reservation treaty in 1858, and he went crazy anguishing over his absence, as if the outcome would have been different.

In "The Snow Episode," the third of seven vignettes comprising "The School Days of an Indian Girl," the reader

observes the humor in Zitkala-Sa's resistance. "As soon as I comprehended what was said [in English], a mischievous spirit of revenge possessed me."¹²¹ Ordered to mash the daily turnips, Zitkala-Sa remembers, "I renewed my energy; and as I sent my masher to the bottom of the jar, I felt a satisfying sensation...A paleface woman shoved my hands roughly aside...then she gave one lift [and] lo! The pulpy contents fell through the crumbled bottom to the floor!" Triumphant in her revenge, the Yankton schoolgirl "whooped in her heart for having asserted the rebellion in me."¹²² The irony in the mashed turnips story is that wild prairie turnips, called *tipsin*, were once a favorite staple in the *Ihanktonwan* diet. In an episode entitled, "The Beadwork," from her "Impressions" story, Zitkala-Sa writes, "We delighted in impersonating our mothers. We each carried a light sharpened rod about four feet long, with which we pried up certain sweet roots."¹²³

During a 1936 interview and tour of the Stone House, Gertrude told Blanche Syfret McNight that "tipsina" was one of her favorite dishes. Gertrude mentioned when she returns home from visiting Yankton, "I bring sun-dried beef, pumpkin rings, and a string of tipsina." McNight noted that her hostess Zitkala-Sa,

laughed as she displayed her scanty supply of tipsina, which had been depleted by frequent

raids on her exhibit stock, which is braided in long strings for display. [Gertrude] uses this tuber, which has been soaking over night, to give a piquant flavor to stews made of dried pumpkin rings, sun-dried beef and wild rice.¹²⁴

The Stone House Gardens

Off the Stone House kitchen is the back porch with steps leading down into an expansive yard with big shade trees and gardens. Although generous gardens exist in the backyard of the Stone House today, there is no direct evidence that Gertrude had a garden during the years of the Bonnin home. However, "kitchen gardens" were very popular in urban homes during the 1920s and 1930s.¹²⁵

In discussing the seasonal patterns of the Yankton, ethnogeographer James Howard tells us the Yankton, like the Arikara, Mandan, Ponca, and other riverine tribes along the Missouri, planted their crops in the floodplains of the Missouri, James, Vermillion Rivers, and other smaller creeks. Possessing only digging sticks and hoes with which to work the soil, Yankton were limited to the floodplain, because they were unable to cut through the grass roots of the uplands.¹²⁶ These crops were low maintenance after being hoed once or twice. When the corn was about knee-high, the village groups would pack up their tipis and set out on the summer bison hunt. Women harvested wild plums, cherries, and onions.

Remaining on the hunt until about mid-late August, they would return and harvest part of their corn crop. After the other crops of squashes and pumpkins were harvested in the late fall, the camp prepared to leave on its winter bison hunt. Howard explains,

this time the prime hides of the bison were sought for robes and tipi covers. The winter hunt might last until mid-February or March, at which time the bands might return to their permanent villages near the water sources until spring planting inaugurated another seasonal round.¹²⁷

Recalling a conversation with a visitor to Greenwood in the early 1960s, who inquired about the place visible from town, known as Monument Hill, Paul Picotte relates the following story as told to him by Old Grandma White Talon:

In the early days, that was known as a lookout for, for buffalo game, for the Indian people. They had a regular program. No one private Indian could go out and kill a buffalo unless they went together. And I said (to the visitor) this old chief had his, his various lieutenants, and he would send them out to locate these buffaloes from these various lookout points. And wherever they located these buffalo, why then they'd have a meeting there. He'd come back and make his report. They'd have a meeting there. Then they'd go out as a unit, and try and surround those buffaloes and get all of 'em. And then they'd camp. They'd move their camp up there on the ground and then they would set up some forked poles and then put some across that way. The women cut up all this meat in pieces about that thick [gesture] and hang 'em over those poles and let 'em dry. Let that meat dry. There was no flies. There was no potato bugs during my time in the early days.¹²⁸

Gallery visitors are now directed to the Parlor, in the front of the Stone House, across from the Yankton Room.

¹ Donald L. Fixico "Methodologies in Reconstructing Native American History," Rethinking American Indian History Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997 (117)

² see Hal K. Rothman and Daniel J. Holder Managing the Sacred and the Secular: An Administrative History of Pipestone National Monument Omaha: National Park Service, 1992; "Keepers of the Sacred Tradition of Pipemakers" Pipekeepers.org on the world wide web 10 July 2002; Jim Adams, "National Museum of the American Indian Drawn into Sioux Theological Debate" Indian Country Today August 18, 2004

³ Jennings C. Wise The Red Man in the New World Drama: A Politico-Legal Study with a Pageantry of American Indian History Edited, revised with an introduction by Vine Deloria Jr. New York: Macmillan Company, 1971 (1931) 342; Winifred W. Barton John P. Williamson: A Brother to the Sioux New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1919 (126, 169-173)

⁴ Vine Deloria Jr. Singing for a Spirit: A Portrait of the Dakota Sioux Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers, 2000 (42)

⁵ D. Inan Downs "Chon-oopa-sa" Legends of the Pipestone Quarries Pipestone, MN: Close Bros. & Co., c. 1888

⁶ Jennings C. Wise on the Brief *Yankton Sioux Tribe of Indians v United States* No. 836 October Term 1925, Box 14 001 Publications, Indian Office, General Decimal correspondence (1926-1933) Rosebud/Yankton Agency, NA-CPR, Kansas City

⁷ L. G. Moses "Performative Traditions in Indian History" Philip J. Deloria and Neal Salisbury eds., A Companion to American Indian History Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., (2002) 206, 196

⁸ yanktonsiouxtribe.org on the world wide web; Leonard Bruguier PhD, is the former Director of the Institute for American Indian Studies and the Oral History Center at the University of South Dakota. A direct descendant of Struck by the Ree, Dr. Bruguier generously shared tribal memories with me at the First Consortium of Institutional Cooperation-American Indian Studies (CIC-AIS) National Research Conference held at the Newberry Library, Chicago in January 2002

⁹ President Thomas Jefferson to Captain Meriwether Lewis [20 June 1803] Donald Jackson ed., Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related documents, 1783-1854 Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978 (62); Prior to 1804, Yanktons appear in the written records of French-Canadian and British fur traders; see John L. Champe's "Yankton Chronology" included in Alan R. Woolworth's Ethnohistorical Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area No.410 New York: Garland Pub, 1974 (249-274).

¹⁰ Dorian spoke the Yankton dialect and joined the Corps as potential Sioux interpreter in June 1804. A French-Canadian fur trapper, he lived with his unnamed Yankton wife and sons at the southern tip of the Yankton triangle. Dorian stayed with Wachapa's band, convincing them to send a delegation to Washington. See James P. Rhonda Lewis and Clark Among the Indians Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984 (16, 23-26263 n35); William Clark's Journal 12 June 1804, quoted by Stephen E.

Ambrose Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson and the Opening of the West New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996 (146-147).

¹¹ Copy of certificate in John Edwin Blakeless, Lewis and Clark, Partners in Discovery New York: W. Morrow, 1947; "Parole to War Char Pa" Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, with Related Documents, 1783-1854, Volume 1, Donald Dean Jackson, ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978, Document 131, 209-210. This is the same headman, Wachapi, who signed the Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1825. There is no mention of "Ihanktonwan" or "Yancton" in this document.

¹² "Parole to War Char Pa" Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, with Related Documents, 1783-1854, Volume 1, Donald Dean Jackson, ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978, (210)

¹³ The Treaty with the Yankton Sioux (April 19, 1858; 11 Stat. 743; Ratified Feb. 16, 1859) will be discussed later in the Gallery tour.

¹⁴ Treaty with the Yankton Sioux, April 19, 1858; 11 Stat. 743; Ratified Feb. 16, 1859; Proclaimed Feb. 26, 1859; Roncontre, who spoke the Lakota dialect, made his X mark on the treaty.

¹⁵ Language recovery scholar Mindy Morgan indicates that without a greater context, Padaniapapi's name could be interpreted in one of two ways: as subject who strikes the Ree (plural) or as object who is struck by the Ree (singular). The last syllable "pi" can mark an object as plural and it can also objectify a subject; 4 April 2005

¹⁶ There are several spellings of Padaniapapi's name in historical documents and treaties, owing I believe, to various dialects and levels of language proficiency on the part of the translators. For clarity purposes, this document follows the spelling of names and bands used in Remember Your Relatives: Yankton Sioux Images, 1851-1904 written by Renee S. Flood and Shirley A. Bernie and edited by Leonard Bruguier, Marty, SD: Marty Indian School, 1985.

¹⁷ Padani is the Yankton word for Sahnish or people known as Arikaras or Ree.

¹⁸ James P. Ronda Lewis and Clark Among the Indians Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984 (48)

¹⁹ Conversation with Leonard Bruguier, Newberry Library, 26 January 2003

²⁰ Schimdt, Thomas The Lewis and Clark Trail forward by Stephen Ambrose Washington D.C.: National Geographic, 2002 (1998) 47

²¹ Edwin Thompson Denig, Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri, edited with an introduction by John C. Ewers, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961 48n12

²² The Yanktons were in a position for a couple of decades to be the "middle" men in trade relations between their Lakota cousins and government traders. For further reading about women in the fur trade era, see Sylvia Van Kirk "Many Tender Ties": Women in the Fur Trade Society, 1670-1870 Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980; Lucy Eldersveld Murphy "Autonomy and the Economic Roles of Indian Women of the Fox-Wisconsin Riverway Region, 1763-1832" Nancy Shoemaker ed., Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women New York: Routledge, 1995; and Susan Sleeper-Smith Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

²³ Denig, Upper Missouri 47

²⁴ Denig, Upper Missouri 47; Tom Holm "Warriors and Warfare" Frederick E. Hoxie ed., Encyclopedia of North American Indians: Native American History, Culture, and Life from Paleo-Indians to the Present Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996 (667)

²⁵ "Warriors and Warfare" 667

- ²⁶ "Warriors and Warfare" 667; Holm also elaborates on other elements of North American indigenous warfare such as adoption, ceremonies and revenge. See Holm's chapter "American Indian Warfare: The Cycles of Conflict and the Militarization of Native North America" in Deloria and Salisbury eds., A Companion to American Indian History Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2002
- ²⁷ Renée S. Flood and Shirley A. Bernie Remember Your Relatives: Yankton Sioux Images, 1851-1904 Leonard Bruguier ed., Marty, SD: Marty Indian School, 1985 (4)
- ²⁸ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 4
- ²⁹ Maps are reproduced from The Yankton Sioux by Herbert T. Hoover in collaboration with Leonard R. Bruguier New York: Chelsea House, 1988 (frontispiece, 40)
- ³⁰ Alan R. Woolworth, Ethnohistorical Report on the Indian Occupancy of Royce Area No. 410 Before the Indian Claims Commission, Docket 332-A, Yankton Sioux Indians v. United States St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1967 (13)
- ³¹ Howard, James H. The Dakota or Sioux Indians: A Study in Human Ecology Vermillion, SD: Dakota Museum, University of South Dakota, 1966 (3); Woolworth, Ethnohistorical Report 7-8
- ³² James Howard ed., "The Yankton or Middle Dakota" Museum News 27.7-8 (July-August, 1966) Vermillion: W.H. Over Dakota Museum, University of South Dakota; previously unpublished notes on the Yankton Sioux as told to Ella Cora Deloria by Simon Antelope, age 86, c. 1936
- ³³ Howard Dakota or Sioux Indians (11). For a solid synthesis of Sioux history with a very comprehensive bibliography see, Guy Gibbon The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations Malden MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2003
- ³⁴ Renée Sansom Flood Lessons from Choteau Creek: Yankton Memories of Dakota Territorial Intrigue Sioux Falls, SD: Center for Western Studies, 1986 (16)
- ³⁵ "Paul Picotte" To Be An Indian: An Oral History Select transcripts form the American Indian Research Project, 1967-1970, South Dakota Oral History Center, University of South Dakota, New York, Holt, Rinehardt and Winston, 1971 (81); James Howard "Notes on the Ethnogeography of the Yankton Dakota" Plains Anthropologist: Journal of the Plains Conference 17:58.1 (November 1972) 295
- ³⁶ Paul Picotte, "We Didn't Have Flies Until the White Man Came: A Yankton Sioux Remembers Life on the Plains in the late Nineteenth Century" interview with Joseph Cash, 1968, South Dakota Oral History Center, University of South Dakota, transcribed 2000 (1575a-picotte, 2)
- ³⁷ Denig, Upper Missouri, 49
- ³⁸ Denig, Upper Missouri 36
- ³⁹ Denig, Upper Missouri 37n42
- ⁴⁰ Zitkala-Sa, "The Ground Squirrel" American Indian Stories 35
- ⁴¹ Zitkala-Sa, "The Ground Squirrel" American Indian Stories 36
- ⁴² Zitkala-Sa, "The Ground Squirrel" American Indian Stories 36-37
- ⁴³ This brief discussion of language as a Yankton identity signifier is condensed from the Handbook of American Indians published by the Smithsonian Institution in 2001. In addition to editing the two volumes on Plains Indians; Raymond DeMallie discusses language in the section, "Sioux until 1850."
- ⁴⁴ Raymond J. DeMallie "Sioux Until 1850" in Raymond J. DeMallie ed, Handbook of American Indians, Plains Vol. 13 pt. 1 & 2, Smithsonian Institution, 2001 (718)
- ⁴⁵ DeMallie, Handbook of American Indians, Plains 718

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- ⁴⁶ Susan Rose Dominguez "Zitkala-Sa: The Representative Indian" introduction to Zitkala-Sa American Indian Stories Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003 (1921) xxiii
- ⁴⁷ Zitkala-Sa "The Land of the Red Apples" as cited in Dominguez "The Representative Indian" x
- ⁴⁸ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [4 June 1901] Papers of Carlos Montezuma M.D. Wisconsin State Historical Society (WSHS); Gertrude Simmons lived at Ft. Totten during the summer of 1901, after leaving Boston.
- ⁴⁹ Raymond Bonnin, Lake Andes, South Dakota to Gertrude Bonnin, Arlington, Virginia c. June 1926; The Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin Collection, Brigham Young University Archives (BYU). Hereafter cited as Bonnin Papers, BYU. These stories were published as Zitkala-Sa's in Dreams and Thunder, a collection of previously unpublished stories edited by P. Jane Hafen, University of Nebraska Press, 2001.
- ⁵⁰ Tribal Charters 1304; Yankton Agency Charter Correspondence 1912-1939; Rosebud Indian Agency; Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75; National Archives Records Administration-Central Plains Region (Kansas City), hereafter cited as RG 75; NARA-CPR. When the Yankton Agency was abolished in 1933, it became a sub-agency of the Rosebud Agency. Yankton Agency records (1892-1965) are located within the Rosebud Agency records in Kansas City, MO.
- ⁵¹ Blanche Syfret McKnight "Zitkala-Sa has Done Much to Aid Tribes by Constant Writing and Lecturing in Their Behalf" Washington Evening Star December 10, 1936 np (copy in Collier Papers, Bonnin file)
- ⁵² Charles J. Kappler ed., Indian Treaties, 1778-1883 with a new forward by Brantley Blue New York: Interland Publishing, 1972 (1904)
- ⁵³ The Yankton Sioux Herbert T. Hoover in collaboration with Leonard R. Bruguier, Chelsea House, New York, 1988 (107)
- ⁵⁴ "Treaty with the Yankton Sioux, 1858" Renée Samson-Flood and Shirley A. Bernie, Leonard R. Bruguier ed., introduction by Herbert T. Hoover Remember Your Relatives; Yankton Sioux Images, 1851-1904 Marty, SD: Marty Indian School 1985 (47-52); reprinted from Charles J. Kappler Indian Affairs, Laws, and Treaties Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903
- ⁵⁵ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 43
- ⁵⁶ Bonnin Papers BYU; Spellings of the bands vary. This document uses those found in James Howard's "Notes on the Ethnogeography of the Yankton Dakota" Plains Anthropologist Journal of the Plains Conference 17:58.1 (November 1972) 8
- ⁵⁷ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 43
- ⁵⁸ Deloria Jr. Singing for a Spirit 9, 109; The major portion of the Deloria family ended up on Standing Rock Reservation, South Dakota.
- ⁵⁹ Renée Samson-Flood Lessons From Choteau Creek: Yankton Memories of Dakota Territorial Intrigue Sioux Falls, SD: Center for Western Studies, 1986 (31-32)
- ⁶⁰ Deloria Jr. Singing for a Spirit 41
- ⁶¹ Flood Lessons From Choteau Creek 61; Flood notes the Minnesota Sioux War officially involved at least four Dakota tribes: Mdewankantowan, Wahpekute, Isanti, and Sissetonwan (93n6)
- ⁶² Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota
- ⁶³ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 28
- ⁶⁴ NARA Adj-Gen, Main Series, United States Army, (1861-1870) Papers relating to the Yankton Scouts Claim; Flood, Remember Your Relatives 25; to date, the scouts have never been paid, nor has any further investigation been conducted.

⁶⁵ Named after Senator J. R. Doolittle, chairman of the Joint Special Congressional Committee on Indian Affairs, the Commission was authorized during the 39th Congress, 2nd Session, 1865. The report was published in 1867.

⁶⁶ Report on the Conditions of the Indian Tribes 39th Congress, 2nd session

⁶⁷ All references by Padaniapapi to "the treaty" are to the Treaty of 1858. Padaniapapi's speech was recorded by hand August 25 and 26, 1865 and included in the appendix of the Report 366-369.

⁶⁸ Congressional Globe, 1866: cited in Flood, Remember Your Relatives 5

⁶⁹ Report on the Conditions of the Indian Tribes Senate Report 156; 39th Congress, 2nd session as quoted in Francis Paul Prucha ed., Documents of United States Indian Policy Third Edition; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000 (1990, 1974) 103

⁷⁰ Report on the Conditions of the Indian Tribes Senate Report 156; 39th Congress, 2nd session Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1867 (appendix 370)

⁷¹ Conditions of the Indian Tribes 371

⁷² Padaniapapi had been baptized Catholic by Father DeSmet in 1844 while traveling through Yankton country, but there was no Catholic mission at Yankton until 1913.

⁷³ Winifred W. Barton John P. Williamson A Brother to the Sioux New York: Fleming H. Revell Co. 1919 (126); Flood, Remember Your Relatives 16

⁷⁴ The Catlin originals are held in the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

⁷⁵ Jennings Wise became legal counsel for the Yankton Sioux Tribe in 1924 to work on the Pipestone Quarry case. He was given an Indian name and made an honorary chieftan through adoption. Vine Deloria Jr. wrote in his introduction to Wise's 1931 book, The Red Man in the New World Drama, "[Wise] viewed the history of American Indians to be part of a world drama of conflicting religions" (ix).

⁷⁶ Wise, Red Man in the New World Drama 262

⁷⁷ Wise, Red Man in the New World Drama 263

⁷⁸ Wise, Red Man in the New World Drama 263

⁷⁹ Wise, Red Man in the New World Drama 263

⁸⁰ Article 8, Articles of agreement and convention made and concluded at the city of Washington, 19 April 1858; 11 Statute, 743; ratified 16 February, 1859

⁸¹ Report on the Conditions of Indian Tribes, 1865 (367)

⁸² Wise, Red Man in the New World Drama 271-272

⁸³ Wise, Red Man in the New World Drama 49

⁸⁴ Spotted Eagle Land of the Spotted Eagle (1933) and Lame Deer to Richard Erdoes (1969) are two examples of Pipestone origin stories.

⁸⁵ Lame Deer "How the Sioux Came to Be" American Indian Myths and Legends Selected and edited by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz New York: Pantheon Books, 1984 (93-94)

⁸⁶ D. Inan Downs "Chon-oopa-sa" Legends of the Pipestone Quarries Pipestone, MN: Close Bros. & Co., c. 1888 (1-8)

⁸⁷ "Chon-oopa-sa" Legends of the Pipestone Quarries 1888 (3); "Chon-oopa-sa" is a variation of the Dakota word Lame Deer used for pipe, *chanunpa*.

⁸⁸ Wise, The Red Man in the New World Drama 49; Teacher Elaine Goodale married Charles Eastman in 1891, Santee Sioux medical doctor, writer, and American Indian intellectual, and later, friend of Gertrude Bonnin. Elaine Goodale Eastman (1863-1953) also became a reformer and author of Richard Henry Pratt's biography, Red Man's Moses. Her memoirs from the

years 1885-1891, Sister to the Sioux, were published posthumously in 1978.

⁸⁹ Jennings C. Wise on the Brief Yankton Sioux Tribe of Indians, Petitioners vs the U. S., Respondent, Brief for the Petitioners October Term 1925 No. 836, General Decimal Correspondence (1926-1933) Box 14, folder 001, Publications Indian Office, Rosebud/Yankton Agency, Yankton, SD, NA-CPR, Kansas City

⁹⁰ U.S. Supreme Court Brief No. 836 Yankton Sioux Tribe of Indians, Petitioners vs. the U.S., Respondent Jennings C. Wise on the Brief (Box 14-001 Publications, Indian Office; General Decimal Correspondence (1926-1933) Rosebud/Yankton Agency, NA-CPR, Kansas City, MO; For further discussion of the contemporary situation regarding the rights to mine pipestone see, Managing the Sacred and the Secular: An Administrative History of Pipestone National Monument Omaha: National Park Service, 1992.

⁹¹ See note no.2 for sources on contemporary discussion of the Pipestone Quarry.

⁹² Gerald Vizenor Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1994 (54-55)

⁹³ Zitkala-Sa "Preface" Old Indian Legends illustrations by Angel DeCora (Hinook Mahiwi Kilinaka) foreword by Agnes Picotte, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1985 (1901) v

⁹⁴ A copy of the first edition of Zitkala-Sa's Old Indian Legends, published by Ginn & Co, 1901 can be found in the Library of Congress. Subsequent editions used the same cover design in yellow ink on deep blue background. DeCora joined the Carlisle faculty in 1906. See Linda Waggoner's Wahopoeekaw's Daughter: The Biography of Winnebago Artist Angel DeCora forthcoming from the University of Oklahoma Press.

⁹⁵ A modest royalty payment receipt (for \$15.00) dated 1942 was among the papers in the Bonnin Collection at BYU. Ginn & Co kept Old Indian Legends in print until 1950. The book was reprinted in 1985 with a foreword by Agnes Picotte and again in 2004 under a new title, Iktomi and the Ducks with an introduction by P. Jane Hafen.

⁹⁶ Zitkala-Sa "Preface" Old Indian Legends vi

⁹⁷ Leslie Marmon Silko Storyteller New York; Arcade Publishing, 1981 (4-5); Silko's Aunt Susie Rayos Marmon attended Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania from 1896-1906. For other examples of kitchen stories see, Keith Cunningham's book of conversations, American Indians' Kitchen-table Stories Little Rock: August House Publishers, Inc., 1992.

⁹⁸ Hoover, Yankton Sioux 35

⁹⁹ Flood Choteau Creek 22

¹⁰⁰ "Paul Picotte" To Be An Indian: An Oral History (80); Picotte also recalls the last burial scaffold At Yankton was taken down in 1888 when he was eight years old (26).

¹⁰¹ Hoover, Yankton Sioux 36

¹⁰² Hoover, Yankton Sioux 36; "Squaw" is obviously the word choice of the translator.

¹⁰³ Flood Choteau Creek 23

¹⁰⁴ Individual Indian Money Accounts; Yankton Agency; Rosebud Agency Records; Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; RG 75; NARA-CPR

¹⁰⁵ Zitkala-Sa is used when referring to stories published under her Indian name or when referring to letters she signed using Zitkala-Sa.

¹⁰⁶ Zitkala-Sa, "My Mother" American Indian Stories 7 (pagination from the 2003 edition of Zitkala-Sa's American Indian Stories is used throughout this document because it is the most accessible.

¹⁰⁷ Zitkala-Sa's other autobiographical stories in the Atlantic Monthly include, "The School Days of an Indian Girl," also with seven titled sections (February 1900) and "An Indian Teacher among Indians" comprised of four vignettes (March 1900). These stories and others also appear in Zitkala-Sa's second book, American Indian Stories, initially published in 1921.

¹⁰⁸ Zitkala-Sa, "My Mother" American Indian Stories 7

¹⁰⁹ Information on Tatéiyóhinwin, also known as Ellen St. Pierre and Ellen Simmons, is derived from affidavits made in 1910 by Lucy Omaha and Charles H. Morgan. Derogatory reference to Simmons was found in the joint affidavit of Harriet Aungie and Matilda Lyman, Yankton Central Classified Files [1907-1935] 101622-09 RG 75, NARA, Washington D.C.

¹¹⁰ Zitkala-Sa, "The Legends" American Indian Stories 12-13

¹¹¹ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 22

¹¹² Affidavit of Lucy Omaha, Patent application file for Ellen St. Pierre (Ellen Simmons) 1910, Record No. 101622-09 Yankton Central Classified Files [1907-1935] RG 75, NARA Washington D.C.; According to Ellen Simmons' translated testimony 21 March 1910, she had birthed ten children, four of whom were living in 1910; Record No. 101622-09 Yankton Central Classified Files [1907-1935] RG 75, NARA Washington D.C.

¹¹³ "Gertie Felker" is listed on the Yankton Presbyterian Mission rolls. Yankton Land Claim files, NARA RG 75.

¹¹⁴ Zitkala-Sa, "My Mother" American Indian Stories 7

¹¹⁵ Zitkala-Sa, "My Mother" American Indian Stories 9-10

¹¹⁶ Zitkala-Sa, "The Legends" American Indian Stories 16

¹¹⁷ Wiyaka Napbina's name was incorrectly recorded in the census of 1859 as "Wiyaka Napin, Feather in His Ear." Flood, Remember Your Relatives 25. This is the same man who opposed the Presbyterian minister's presence on Yankton in 1869.

¹¹⁸ Zitkala-Sa, "The Coffee Making" American Indian Stories 25-29

¹¹⁹ Zitkala-Sa, "The Coffee Making" American Indian Stories 25

¹²⁰ Zitkala-Sa, "The Coffee Making" American Indian Stories 26-27

¹²¹ Zitkala-Sa, "The Snow Episode" American Indian Stories 59

¹²² Zitkala-Sa, "The Snow Episode" American Indian Stories 60-61

¹²³ Zitkala-Sa, "The Beadwork" American Indian Stories 21

¹²⁴ Washington Evening Star December 10, 1936 (np); copy found in Collier Papers.

¹²⁵ Typically kitchen gardens include herbs, tomatoes, peppers, beans, greens, melons, squashes, cucumbers, and other personal favorites.

¹²⁶ James H. Howard "Notes on the Ethnogeography of the Yankton Dakota" Plains Anthropologist 17:58.1 (November 1972) 291

¹²⁷ Howard, "Ethnogeography" 291

¹²⁸ "We Didn't Have Flies Until the White Man Came: A Yankton Sioux Remembers Life on the Plains in the Late Nineteenth Century" Paul Picotte interviewed by Joseph Cash, American Indian Research Center, South Dakota Oral History Center, University of South Dakota, 2000 (1968) 2-3. For clarity purposes, I have removed some of Picotte's repetitive speech, but not all, for it serves to give the reader a sense of the characteristic rhythm and patterns of his speech.

Chapter Three: Pictures in the Parlor

The Gallery Parlor has a large picture window overlooking the front porch allowing natural light into the space that served as the music room and reading room of the Bonnin home. The Parlor represents the civility, domesticity, and literacy that accompanied the assimilation process begun in boarding school. Like the Bonnin home, the Parlor signifies the middle class life Gertrude and Raymond eventually lived.

There are several exhibits within the Gallery Parlor. The first space, chapter three, is a group of photographs of the educational institutions attended by members of Gertrude and Raymond's family. Some are briefly captioned while others are complimented with stories. Across the room from the "School Pictures" exhibit is the music corner. Visitors are encouraged to use their imaginations to envision Gertrude's sheet music on the piano and the cedar flute Ray made for his bride, displayed nearby. The Gallery tour will return to the music area later, for discussion of "The Sun Dance" Opera; both Gertrude and Raymond collaborated with William Hanson on this project in 1913. An arrangement of photographs entitled, "Personal Portraits and Private Memories," it is one of the main exhibits in the Parlor. It features the platinum prints of "Zitkala-Sa"

taken by Gertrude Käsebier and Joseph Keiley in 1898, while "Miss Simmons" was associated with the Carlisle Indian School. These portraits and the stories behind them are pivotal to understanding how and why the "Indian" in Gertrude Simmons (re)emerged as Zitkala-Sa in 1898.

Guide to the Gallery Parlor 1884-1917

A chronology of Gertrude Bonnin's travels and locations from 1884 to 1917 allows visitors to move about the Gallery Parlor and still keep track of Gertrude's many locations and travels. The guide uses whichever one of her names is appropriate for a particular time and place.

February 23, 1884 to February 28, 1887

Gertie Felker enrolled in White's Institution, Wabash, Indiana as Gertie Simmons.

March 1887 to December 1890

Gertie returns home to Yankton Indian Reservation, South Dakota.

December 18, 1890 to June 1895

Gertie reenters White's Institution for a second term; Miss Simmons recruits for White's on South Dakota Indian Reservations during summers of 1893 and 1894; graduates June 1895.

Summer 1895

Gertrude Simmons lives in Wabash, Indiana teaching piano.

August 1895 to June 1897

Miss Simmons enters Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana in the Class of 1899. Spends the summer of 1896 in Wabash teaching music and giving lectures.

July 1897 to Dec 1898

Miss Simmons employed at the Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania; makes recruitment trip to Yankton Indian Reservation in August 1897. Gertrude spends August 1898 in New York City and begins using her Indian name, Zitkala-Sa.

January 1899 to May 1901

Gertrude resides in Boston on and off, returning to Carlisle in March 1900 for the Carlisle Band's East Coast tour; solos as "Zitkala-Sa." Spends the summer of 1900 on the Yankton Reservation teaching.

Summer 1901

Gertrude Simmons lives at Fort Totten on the Devil's Lake Sioux Reservation (now named Spirit Lake), North Dakota; signs personal letters to Carlos Montezuma as Zitkala-Sa.

August 1901

Gertie returns to Yankton to write; resides at Yankton Agency in Greenwood, South Dakota. Spends time riding with Ray Bonnin.

October 1901

Gertrude Simmons teaches at the Crow Creek Agency School, Andrews, South Dakota.

January 1902

Gertrude Simmons' residence verified as Greenwood Agency, Yankton Indian Reservation, South Dakota.

May 1902

Gertrude marries Raymond T. Bonnin and becomes Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa).

August 1902 to August 1917

The Bonnins reside in Whiterocks and Ft. Duschene, Utah with exception of six months (1908-1909) at Fort Yates, Standing Rock Reservation, North Dakota. A chronology of the Utah period appears in chapter five, when Gallery visitors tour the music area.

August 1917

The Bonnins relocate to Washington D.C.

School Pictures
The Indian Experiment at Hampton Institute

The first piece in the Gallery's School Pictures Exhibit is a pen and ink drawing of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute from across the Hampton River (figure 3.1). Among the buildings identified are the Winnona Lodge, housing forty-four Indian girls and the Wigwam, housing eighty-seven Indian boys.¹ Located near Hampton, Virginia, Hampton Institute opened in 1868 as a school for African American freedmen. Ten years later, founder and principal General Samuel Chapman Armstrong accepted a group of Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne prisoners of war at the request of Captain Richard Henry Pratt, their guardian at Fort Marion prison in St. Augustine, Florida. The successful "Indian Experiment" quickly led to the enrollment of an Indian class from western reservations and to Congressional appropriation of funds for Pratt to start an all-Indian institution at the abandoned army barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879. Hampton continued to educate American Indians until 1923.²

Gertrude's brother, David Simmons, entered Hampton Institute when he was twelve years old for a three-year term in 1878.³ Gertrude first mentions her brother in her story "The Big Red Apples."⁴ Recalling the time when the

"paleface missionaries...from that class of white men who wore big hats and carried large hearts" came to her village during winter, Zitkala-Sa writes, "Within the last two seasons my big brother Dawée had returned from a three years' education in the East."⁵ David Simmons secured employment with the Indian Office at the Yankton Agency as an assistant clerk upon his return to the reservation. He later married, raised a family and became active in Yankton tribal politics as an adult, often acting as interpreter for official Yankton tribal business.⁶

General Allotment Act (Dawes Act)

One of the unique features of Hampton's Indian department was "Indian Citizenship Day," a special holiday created by General Armstrong. Later called "Franchise Day" in some Indian schools, it commemorated the passage of the General Allotment Act on February 8, 1887. Commonly referred to as the Dawes Act, after the sponsor of the bill Senator Henry Dawes of Massachusetts, the General Allotment Act was, "an act to provide for the allotment of lands in severalty to Indians on the various reservations, and to extend the protection of the laws of the United States and the Territories over the Indians and for other purposes."⁷ According to Francis Paul Prucha,

The demand of reformers that Indian reservations be allotted in severalty to individual Indians and that tribal relations be broken up was fulfilled by the Dawes Act of 1887. The law...authorized the president of the United States to proceed with allotment and declared Indians who received allotments to be citizens of the United States.⁸

This law contained eleven sections and remained in effect as federal-Indian policy until 1934. The overall effect on the Indian land base was devastating, with land loss of over ninety million acres, and its immediate effect on American Indians was demoralizing and demeaning.⁹

Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford Lytle sketch a brief history of attempts to allot Indian lands in American Indians, American Justice. They mention, "allotments of land were not a new idea in the history of Indian policy."¹⁰ Allotment of Indian lands begins with the "Pilgrim Fathers" in Massachusetts, who insisted the praying Indians each take a plot of land and learn to become farmers, the hallmark lifestyle of Christianity in America. Deloria and Lytle continue with examples from the Removal era, in which a few treaties contained provisions for individual Indians to remain in their homeland, provided they accepted allotments and state citizenship. It was in 1881, when Gertrude Felker was five years old, that the inevitability of a national allotment policy became apparent. President Chester A. Arthur, in his inaugural address suggested, that

the solution to the Indian problem was "to introduce among the Indians the customs and pursuits of civilized life and gradually absorb them into the mass of our citizens."¹¹

Deloria and Lytle continue to explain that part of the "nagging" Indian problem was "that the Indians owned too much land and that holding land in tracts of millions of acres unnecessarily impeded the orderly settlement of the western states."¹²

Some of the major provisions of the General Allotment Act are as follows:

1. That the president of the United States be authorized to assign allotments of one-quarter section (160 acres) to each head of a family
2. Single adults and orphaned children each received one-eighth section
3. Children living at the time of the reservation rolls were taken, received one-sixteenth section, or forty acres of land
4. "Surplus" lands, sold off by the federal government, created a checkerboard effect on reservations.¹³

David Wilkins, in American Indian Politics and the American Political System, explains that it was expected that being surrounded by non-Indian settlements "would expedite acquisition of white attitudes and behavior."¹⁴ The government was to hold title to the land for twenty-five years, upon which time it was expected that Indian landowners would have learned proper business and farming methods.

With a free and clear title the Indian became a citizen and came under the jurisdiction of the state in which he or she resided. Through this simple formula and rather naïve expectation federal officials believed they could solve the "problems" of the Indians in one generation.¹⁵

Subsequent amendments to the Dawes Act gave the Secretary of the Interior authority to sell and lease allotted lands.

"Not only did the Allotment Act breach numerous treaty provisions but also Indian agents, under orders from Washington, refused to issue rations and other annuities to Indians unwilling to work their allotments."¹⁶

It was necessary to instill upon the children of allottees, the importance of becoming American yeoman farmers and adopting "thrifty" habits that would lead to a "civilized" life. Indian school pageants, like those at Hampton Institute emphasizing private property and citizenship, became official policy of the Indian Office in 1889. According to David Adams, Indian Citizenship Day activities were designed to "impress upon Indian youth the enlarged scope and opportunity given them by this law and the new obligations which it imposes."¹⁷ Hampton's newspaper, The Southern Workman printed a few words written by Gertrude's brother and former Hampton student David Simmons regarding "Indian Citizenship Day." He wrote, "As with the Negro, so with the Redman. For the former,

enslavement or extinction, for the latter, extermination has been said to be the only destiny, But General Armstrong [proved] self-help could be a better solution."¹⁸ When David Simmons wrote these words in 1894, the Yankton Sioux Reservation was in the process of being allotted and the destructive effects had not yet become a reality.

White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute

The school picture chosen for this exhibit is the 1886 photograph of the Indian class at White's Institute. Ten year-old Gertie Simmons sits in the front row with the smaller children (figure 3.2). As a child in the late 1870s and 1880s, Gertrude grew up in a generation of Indian children being educated in mission-run day and boarding schools subsidized by the federal government. Fred Hoxie, in American Nations: Encounters in Indian Country writes, "The goal was to take control of these youngsters, secure them in a safe place, and then inculcate in them the values of Anglo-American society."¹⁹ Many miles from Yankton, in Wabash, Indiana, Josiah White's Institute, founded in 1862, was a Quaker-run farm orphanage for local white and "destitute" Miami Indian children. It was converted to a government boarding school in 1883.²⁰ Amidst a national recession, White's went into the Indian business and became

a Manual Labor Training school for Indian students in 1883. The federal government subsidized White's Indiana Manual Labor Training School at a rate of \$167 per year for each of its Indian students.²¹

As a little girl of eight years, Gertie cried, "Oh Mother, it is not that I wish to leave you," as she begged her mother to go East on the "iron horse."²² She later wrote, "it was not yet for an ambition for Letters that was stirring me...When I heard of the [apple] orchards, I was eager to roam among them."²³

Although she was an unlettered woman, Gertie's mother, Tateiyohinwin (Reaches for the Wind Woman) knew she could not reverse the transformations happening around her. Zitkala-Sa wrote that her mother had already begun taking steps away, "from her Native way of living. First, it was a change from the buffalo skin to the white man's canvas that covered our wigwam."²⁴ Years before, Tateiyohinwin acquired a new name when she married her second husband, David's father, John Simmons. Making her mark with an "X," Ellen Simmons gave permission to the Indiana Quaker recruiters to take her youngest child and only living daughter, to White's Institution in Wabash in 1884. Zitkala-Sa recounts her mother's words to the interpreter that day:

This tearing her away, so young, from her mother is necessary, if I would have her an educated

woman. The palefaces, who owe us a large debt for stolen lands, have begun to pay a tardy justice in offering some education to our children. But I know my daughter must suffer keenly in this experiment...tell them they may take my little daughter, and the Great Spirit shall not fail to reward them accordingly to their hearts.²⁵

White's Indiana Manual Labor Training School records indicate trachoma was a serious problem in the early years. Commonly known as "pink eye," the highly contagious conjunctivitis, if left untreated, caused blindness. Regular hand washing with hot, soapy water would have kept this bacterial infection at bay. Despite living on a farm many children became seriously ill due to poor hygiene and inadequately balanced diets. The Indiana Friends Yearly Report for 1886 noted the deaths of two little girls in Gertrude's class.²⁶ Zitkala-Sa wrote in "The Iron Routine,"

Once I lost a dear classmate. I remember well how she used to mope along at my side, until one morning she could not raise her head from the pillow...I grew bitter, and censured the cruel neglect of our physical ills. I despised the...one teaspoon which dealt out, from a large bottle, healing to a row of variously ailing Indian children, [for a] dull headache or the painful cough of a slow consumption.²⁷

Typical of manual labor training school pupils, Gertie Simmons returned to Yankton after a three-year course. She writes about being home in the story "Four Strange Summers," "Since my return from school I had thrown away my

shoes, and wore again the soft moccasins."²⁸ At White's she learned numbers and English letters but while at home for three years, Gertie learned Dakota literacy at the bilingual Presbyterian-run agency school.²⁹ Coming of age on the reservation, Gertrude had not yet become comfortable with her duality. "I was neither a wee girl nor a tall one; neither a wild Indian nor a tame one."³⁰ At age fourteen, Gertrude was not old enough to attend the social gatherings at the agency "dance hall" with her older brother David and his friends. Gertrude was aware that her own self-pity was causing her mother to grieve, and so she returned to Wabash, Indiana in December 1890, for another term at White's Institute.³¹ In the story "Four Strange Summers" Zitkala-Sa wrote, "I realized my unrestrained tears had betrayed my suffering to her and she was grieving for me...A few more moons of such a turmoil drove me away to the eastern school."³²

By 1893, White's Institute grew from twenty-three Indian students in 1883, to an average of sixty students, with the majority still coming from the Yankton and Pine Ridge Reservations. White's Institute became "the most important and interesting enterprise in Wabash County."³³ On White's rolls was Gertrude's future husband Raymond Talesfase Bonnin, Yankton Sioux, who entered in 1894 at age

fourteen. Gertrude may have convinced him to come to White's during her second recruitment trip west for the school. She and Miss Goulette "acquitted themselves well in procuring twenty-nine new students from South Dakota," including five teens from Yankton.³⁴ Bonnin was four years younger than Gertrude, and by this time in their lives, Raymond had caught up to Gertrude in size.³⁵ But it would be six years before Gertrude became romantically involved with Raymond Bonnin. She had many suitors and two fiancés before marrying Raymond in 1902.

Gertrude's first sweetheart that we know of, was Thomas Marshall of the Pine Ridge Sioux Reservation who entered White's in 1891 at age fifteen. During the last year as an Indian School (1894-1895), White's experienced serious financial difficulties and released much of its staff. Support from the federal government kept White's Institute financially sound until 1895, at which time the trustees voted to "abandon government help" because it did not offset accumulating debts.³⁶ That same year, Gertrude Simmons and Thomas Marshall took over many staff duties including care and teaching of younger children and bookkeeping.³⁷ Separated from their student peers by their new positions, the nineteen year-olds found themselves with much in common. Contemporary Francis LaFlesche, wrote about

boarding school relationships in his book The Middle Five, "the teachers never knew that there were lovers among the pupils and that little romances were going on right under their eyes."³⁸

In addition to added responsibilities at White's during its final months Gertrude was also busy preparing her Graduation Address. Gertrude Simmons' first documented public oratory was during Commencement and Closing Exercises of White's Indian School in June 1895. Her speech, "The Progress of Women" decried the inequality of women. Reporting on the event, the Wabash Plain Dealer quotes from Miss Simmons' speech, "half of humanity cannot rise while the other half is in subjugation." Gertrude's life-long feminism stemmed from a culture that did not devalue females, as did the dominant Euro-American society. The article called her speech a "masterpiece, never surpassed in eloquence or literary perfection by any girl in the country."³⁹ While her first public essay was indeed feminist, hereafter, the vast majority of Gertrude's rhetoric would prioritize racial equality in essay, speech, story, and legend.

After commencement in June 1895, White's Institute closed its Indian department.⁴⁰ Gertrude remained in Wabash, Indiana for the summer before entering Earlham

College. Raymond Bonnin went back to Yankton for a year before entering Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas. Thomas Marshall enrolled in Dickinson College, located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Marshall did not, however, live on campus with his student peers; Marshall earned his room and board at Carlisle Indian Institute, where he worked as a supervisor in the boys' quarters and walked into town for classes.⁴¹ Two years later, Gertrude would meet up with Marshall again, when she became an employee of Carlisle. As college-educated Sioux Indians, Miss Simmons and Mr. Marshall had even more in common than they did at White's Indiana Industrial Institute; within about a year, Marshall and Miss Simmons became engaged.

Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kansas

This exhibit features a panoramic photograph in sepia tones with view of Haskell Institute from the Haskell farmlands. Circa 1903, it is the earliest known existing photograph of the campus (figure 3.3). The original hangs in Navarre Hall, outside of Haskell University's President's office along with a few photographs of students from the late 1880s.

Raymond Bonnin enrolled in Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas for two years beginning in the fall of 1896. His student file indicates he was sixteen years old at the time, although no birth date is recorded. He is listed as a three-quarter blood Sioux. His father, Joseph B. Bonnin, gave Greenwood, South Dakota as his address. With 600 students from thirty-six states and territories, campus life at Haskell was very different from what Raymond knew at the Yankton Agency School and White's Institute.⁴²

Known today as Haskell Indian Nations University, Haskell was founded in 1884, as the United States Industrial Training School for American Indian children, with fifteen students in the first class. With assimilation as the primary goal, students underwent agricultural training and elementary curricula for grades one through five. The school's name was changed to Haskell Institute in 1887 when a semi-military system, including marching to class and wool uniforms for boys, was adopted. In 1894, Haskell expanded its academics to include a "normal school" curriculum.⁴³

Haskell now bore more similarity to Carlisle Indian Institute, the first off-reservation government boarding school for American Indian children founded in 1879 by Captain Richard Henry Pratt.⁴⁴ Besides Carlisle and

Haskell, only one other federal off-reservation boarding school, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, offered normal and commercial courses of study beyond the basic grammar school program.⁴⁵ Often teachers trained at Carlisle were sent to Haskell as part of the close-knit network of Indian educators. Carlisle's newspaper, The Indian Helper, frequently ran news accounts of activities at Haskell.⁴⁶

In addition to farming, Haskell students labored in the daily operations of the school in the kitchen, laundry, and tailor shop.

In the paint department are numerous paintings of landscapes [and] animals, which are certainly good considering they are done by the boys who have no instruction except what they get in the paint shop about mixing and blending colors. They do this at odd times when there is not regular work for them.⁴⁷

Eventually, a printing shop, reading room, gymnasium, and musical instruction were added. Haskell's monthly newspaper, The Indian Leader began its publication in 1898 during Raymond's second year at Haskell. It often featured news from Carlisle, written by teachers and students. By 1901, the printing shop was producing commencement programs and eventually yearbooks and other book-length publications.

After World War I, a noticeable shift began to occur as former Haskell alumni returned to teach and work at the

Institute. Haskell mounted several pageants under the direction of Ella C. Deloria, who taught at the school from 1924-26.⁴⁸ The legacy of theater at Haskell continues today with its nationally recognized drama troupe, The Thunderbird Theater. Haskell also lays claim to the first lighted athletic stadium in the Midwest, dedicated in 1926, to honor Haskell alumni World War One veterans.⁴⁹

It is likely that Raymond Bonnin signed up for a two-year course at Haskell, which, according to Barbara Larsen of the National Archives-Central Plains Region, was a common occurrence for the older students. Typically younger children did a four-year course of labor and study.⁵⁰ There was no mention of Raymond Bonnin in the Commencement articles in The Indian Leader in the spring edition 1898, and it is safe to assume that he did not graduate.⁵¹ The paper noted Raymond Bonnin in the February and March 1898 issues as being assigned to the tailor shop and as "assistant" in the storeroom. He was not listed as a member of the band, or the football and basketball teams in 1898.⁵²

Working in the tailor shop entailed making the wool, military-style uniforms worn by male students. Tailoring requires dexterity, precision, and attention to detail. The daily military routine was well suited to Ray's organized personality. Raymond Bonnin's position as assistant in the

Haskell storeroom is also worth further mention. It hints at his like for detailed record keeping and his affinity for numbers. The storeroom assistant position at Haskell also speaks to Bonnin's trustworthiness. Ray used the office skills he acquired at Haskell in his position as property clerk with the Indian Office, a job he held at the agencies in Greenwood, South Dakota and Whiterocks, Utah.⁵³ With his Haskell education and training, Raymond Bonnin was later able to provide for his wife Gertrude and sons. No doubt these skills served him well when he enlisted in the U. S. Army in 1917. In a survey of Indian WWI Veterans solicited by photographer Joseph Dixon, Captain Raymond T. Bonnin indicated he served in the provisions department of the Quarter Master Corps in Washington D.C. from 1918-1919.⁵⁴

The Earlham Experience

The next photograph in the School Pictures Exhibit is the Earlham College campus, Richmond, Indiana, circa 1890 (figure 3.4).⁵⁵ After finishing a second three-year course at White's Institute, Gertrude stayed on in Wabash, Indiana for the summer and supported herself teaching piano and basic music lessons. She lived with Susan and Joseph Unthank, Quakers who became her Indiana family during her

later years at White's. It is possible that "Aunt Sue" had much to do with Gertrude's decision to attend Earlham College in the autumn of 1895.⁵⁶ Aunt Sue is most likely the "friend" with whom she stayed during Christmas vacations and the summer before her sophomore year.⁵⁷ Ruth Spack reveals the "auntie-niece" relationship in America's Second Tongue.⁵⁸

Earlham College is rooted in the Great Migration of Quakers from the Eastern United States and North Carolina. Idealism, practicality, and uneasiness with slaveholding drew them to the Northwest Territory. The Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends, created in 1821, was centered in Richmond, Indiana. Earlham was founded in Richmond in 1832 as a boarding school with a collegiate division added in 1859, becoming the second Quaker college in the world and the first to be co-educational.⁵⁹ Chalmers Hadley wrote in his sketch of Earlham that, "Gradually, Quaker plain dress and the plain language disappeared [and] by 1890s, art and music, originally forbidden by Quaker beliefs, had been added to the curriculum." Intercollegiate athletics also became a part of campus life.⁶⁰ During the late 1890s, the majority of the students were from Quaker families hailing from Massachusetts and California with a few Canadian, Japanese, and American Indians. According to Hadley, Quaker

thought believed there was, "a tradition [of] friendliness between American Indians and the Quakers from William Penn's day."⁶¹

The written record indicates the Society of Friends resolved benevolence towards American Indians with the formation of an Indian Committee in 1795. The Friends appealed to President James Monroe in 1838, on behalf of the Six Nations' struggle to save their remaining lands and to not remove.⁶² The Friends' appeal bought the Six Nations a few months time while the debate was heard in Senate sub-committee hearings. However, President Monroe's words reflect the country's ideology of the early American period.

My Red Children.

I am very glad to learn...that you no longer live in that miserable and destitute state which you once did. You have become sober and industrious...By cultivating the ground and raising cattle you have plenty to eat.

My Red Children.

You cannot become civilized till you divide your land among families, in lots. Your good friends the Quakers would, no doubt, enable you to make a just and equitable division.⁶³

There is a certain irony knowing that the Quakers, who advanced the assimilation process, also provided the environment in which Gertrude Simmons entered the national arena as an American Indian activist.

Earlham College became an institution that proudly practiced co-education with academic and social equality. It was here, in this community of learning, that "Miss Simmons" further enhanced the foundation of writing, music, and public speaking skills she had acquired over the years at White's Institution. Although White's was a Quaker-run federal boarding school, the student body was American Indian and in order to receive funding, certain curricula criteria had to be met. With rare exceptions, such as Gertie Simmons and Thomas Marshall, students were trained to be farmers and housewives.

Upon entering Earlham College, Gertrude went from being bookkeeper, caregiver, and piano teacher to younger children, to college student, where her job was now to learn. At Earlham, more so than White's, Quaker philosophy permeated daily life and thought. In her essay "Women of Light," Mary Maples Dunn tells us, "Quaker theology altered in significant ways the traditional view of women to which most Protestants adhered, and opened to its female adherents opportunities that most women did not have."⁶⁴ Quaker elders did not require other "Friends" to worship in a church with a steeple. Their concept of the "Inner Light" was personal, allowing them to live with ambiguities, "since they did not require members to subscribe to a

creed.”⁶⁵ Consistent with belief in the equality of the sexes, Quaker philosophy of educating young men and women was salutary for both. The relations between students at Earlham, in the classroom and elsewhere, were formal and strictly regulated; students addressed each other as Miss or Mister.⁶⁶

Chalmers Hadley, class of 1896, remembered “Miss Simmons” well. She was the major contributor to Anpao, a chapbook of poetry, which Hadley edited in the spring term of 1896.⁶⁷ Hadley was also assigned to the same dining table as “gegenüber” (opposite) to Miss Simmons. With less than 500 students and no Greek system of fraternities and sororities, the gegenüber, or male-female opposite seating at meals, was the unique social component of Earlham’s co-educational system.⁶⁸ Hadley recalls there was always “considerable excitement” when new seating assignments were posted at the beginning of each term. The gegenüber arrangement discouraged cliques and made for a wider acquaintance among upper and lower classmen and between men and women.⁶⁹ Opal Thornburg described the social arrangement in Earlham: the Story of the College. A bachelor professor or male senior student headed the table and carved the meat. At the other end sat a woman instructor or class officer who presided over the tea and coffee. Younger

classmates managed the pitchers of milk "which seemed unlimited in quantity, the butter and the college-baked bread" (figure 3.5).⁷⁰ This type of setting differed significantly from the mealtimes she knew as a child with her mother ten years ago on the reservation.

In addition to the dining room, campus life was decidedly middle class in comparison with what Gertrude experienced at White's as well as at home. Not only was the food better, but living conditions and personal comforts were much improved as well. Earlham students lived in modest but private rooms. It was Gertrude's first educational experience with the privilege of privacy and indoor plumbing, a significant change from her years at White's.⁷¹ Unusual for its time, from 1890-1906, Earlham Hall housed both male and female students.⁷²

Earlham's co-educational academic curriculum had real parity, unlike some campuses, which limited female students to domestic science and teaching courses. Gertrude's course of study was considered Classical: English, Elocution, History, Biology, Civics, Music, Geography, and Latin.⁷³ In fulfillment of degree requirements, Gertrude collected some of the legends and stories she heard as a child and translated them into Latin. Since English was Gertrude's second tongue, these tales may have gone directly from

Dakota thought to written Latin.⁷⁴ This project, which was to have been her graduation thesis, eventually turned into her first book, Old Indian Legends, published in 1901.

Of the seventeen examination records covering six terms in her student file, Gertrude received twelve As, two Bs, and two Cs. It appears that springtime was difficult for Gertrude as there were few recorded grades for either of her spring terms in 1896 and 1897.⁷⁵ Hadley recalled, "we heard she could not study in her room on spring and autumn nights since she sat in the darkness to protect the moths, which fluttered through the open windows, from burning their wings in the lighted gas jet."⁷⁶

Besides not lighting her lamp to study, Gertrude appeared to be successfully transitioning into college academic and recreational life. It is here she learned to play tennis, a game she enjoyed. But on the inside, she must have been very lonely at Earlham. Unlike at White's Institute, at Earlham College there was no one with whom to whisper in her native language. Reflecting on the beginning of her college years, Gertrude wrote,

Thus, homeless and heavy-hearted, I began anew my life among strangers. As I hid myself in my little room in the college dormitory, away from the curious eyes of the students, I pined for sympathy. Often I wept in secret, wishing I had gone West, to be nourished by my mother's love.⁷⁷

Gertrude maintained her connection to Yankton culture and language silently at Earlham through the first set of legends and tales she was writing in Latin as her senior thesis project.

Because Gertrude did not have the same financial resources as the majority of the student body, perhaps the college, or a benefactor, covered her expenses. Thomas Hamm noted that she was on an expense account, but no other financial records have been located.⁷⁸ The Earlhamite reported in December 1895, that Miss Simmons, accompanied by one of the teachers, traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio for treatment of her eyes.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, details of her condition at this time are not known.

One of the most obvious factors distinguishing Gertrude from her peers was her physicality; even in contemporary clothing she simply did not look like the other co-eds. Remembered as a "brilliant speaker" and a "talented musician," Miss Simmons was also the slender little Indian girl with black hair and copper skin, whose "face showed in delicate but firm lines the cut of an Indian face."⁸⁰ Her dark eyes reflected a sensitivity and thoughtfulness; "she walked alone about campus intent on avoiding the fluffy dandelion heads which she did not wish to injure."⁸¹

Despite her difference, Miss Simmons definitely left her mark at Earlham College.⁸² Two pieces of her poetry were published in the school newspaper, The Earlhamite and she participated in musical programs during her two years in college.⁸³ At the close of her first term, she performed "Rondeau Brillant" on piano.⁸⁴ This level of proficiency indicates Gertrude came to Earlham with musical training beyond the typical federal boarding school curriculum. Someone in the Quaker community connected to White's, quite possibly Susan Unthank, took notice of Gertrude's musical ability and gave her the opportunity to develop her natural talent, which continued to flourish at Earlham.

In addition to playing piano accompaniment during her sophomore year, Gertrude also sang both solo and duo vocal recitals. She impressed the Earlham community with her "high, sweet voice."⁸⁵ Although her musical talent was impressive, Gertrude's most memorable performances at Earlham were elocutionary. Soft-spoken, her "natural ease and pathos were given ample opportunity to display themselves" in her recitation of Delano's "An Easter with Parepa."⁸⁶ Years later, Gertrude was very proud of having been an Earlham College student, for she mentioned it in letters, autobiographical sketches, and interviews.⁸⁷

Gertrude Simmons Talks Back⁸⁸

What began as an oratorical essay on women's suffrage, "Side by Side" won the Earlham freshman class competition in January 1896.⁸⁹ Advancing to the next level, Miss Simmons competed against two favored senior men, delivered a "brilliant performance," and placed first in the college competition. Receiving the top college honors thrust Miss Simmons into the campus spotlight, for she would be representing all of Earlham College in the State Oratorical Contest held in Indianapolis the following month. W. C. Dennis recalls, "to have this little Indian girl beat our best was quite a surprise to us; [we] supported her loyally when she went on to the State Contest."⁹⁰ For the second year in a row, a female student represented Earlham College. Gertrude Simmons followed Senior Eleanor Wood, who placed first in the State Contest in 1895.⁹¹

A much larger audience awaited Gertrude in Indianapolis with six colleges represented in the contest and two adjudicators each from Harvard, Yale, and Vanderbilt Universities. The judging was based on three categories: Thought, Composition, and Delivery. The only freshman, the only woman, and the only American Indian in the competition, Gertrude realized an opportunity and deliberately took a huge gamble. Keeping the title, "Side

by Side," Gertrude "re-wrote her entire oration because she wished to talk on the Indian question at the State Contest."⁹² With her deliverance of the new version of "Side by Side", Gertrude Simmons made her debut as an American Indian activist, a role she proudly lived for the next forty years.

A copy of Gertrude's award winning essay was reprinted in the student newspaper, The Earlhamite.⁹³ While the fanfare surrounding Gertrude's oral delivery of "Side By Side" is frequently mentioned in the context of her early writing, the content is rarely discussed.⁹⁴ Laced with the optimism and naiveté of a twenty year-old student eager to display her knowledge, this essay exhibits many characteristics and predictability of a college-sophomore essay. However, Gertrude also displayed significant command of the English language. Steeped in Victorian rhetoric, "Side by Side" signified Miss Simmons' assimilation through the literacy of her second tongue. It also expressed Gertrude's understanding of the history and horrors of global colonization and her ability to speak from the heart.⁹⁵

She told her audience after two centuries of contact, American Indians were a "race of blighted promise."⁹⁶ Gertrude continued, "Unfortunately, civilization is not an

unmixed blessing. Vices creep into his life and deepen the Red Man's degradation," such as his craving for the "European liquid fire."⁹⁷ Gertrude spoke of broken treaties and continued aggressions.

The white man's bullets decimate his tribes and drives him from his home...What if he fought? His forests were felled; his game frightened away; his streams of finny shoals usurped. He loved his family and would defend them. He loved the fair land of which he was rightful owner. He loved the inheritance of his fathers, their traditions, their graves; he held them a priceless legacy to be sacredly kept. He loved his native land. Do you wonder still that in his breast he should brood revenge, when ruthlessly driven from the temples where he worshipped? Is patriotism only a virtue in Saxon hearts?⁹⁸

Miss Simmons was last to speak in the State Oratorical Contest. She followed a speaker who succeeded only in causing the audience to be very restless and bored. But at the first sentence spoken by Gertrude, the audience was all attention. The Indianapolis News reported, "Her voice clear and sweet. Her language was that of a cultivated young woman, and her pronunciation was without trace of a tongue unfamiliar with English."⁹⁹ Her power as an orator on behalf of the Indian held the attention of "the audience [who] forgot it was an oratorical contest, and remembered only that an Indian girl was speaking for her race."¹⁰⁰ Gertrude was so genuine in the passion of her speech; Judge Wood was seen dabbing his eyes with his handkerchief on

several occasions. A moment of silence followed Miss Simmons' speech, after which Wood remarked, "When it comes to oratory, I place the Indian girl far above the college boys every time."¹⁰¹

The only low mark she received was a last place in the Thought category. "This low grading, which was hardly deserved, is credited to the fact that Professor Barkerville [of Vanderbilt] is a southern man and Miss Simmons made reference to slavery as one of the blots on modern civilization."¹⁰² The remark in question is one of the many instances where Gertrude displayed her knowledge of world history in comparison with American Indians. She wrote:

Let it be remembered, before condemnation is passed upon the Red Man, that, while he burned and tortured frontiersmen, Puritan Boston burned witches and hanged Quakers, and the Southern aristocrat beat his slaves and set blood hounds on the track of him who dares to aspire to freedom.¹⁰³

Upon returning to campus after the contest, the roses and receptions in her honor did not fill the void in Gertrude's heart. Having made "Side by Side" work as an appeal for American Indian equality, Gertrude realized she needed to speak in English, not write in Latin. She prepared to move on to Carlisle Indian School, where the potential existed to influence other young American Indians

and help them achieve high levels of literacy. Gertrude attained command of the English language and learned to frame arguments at Earlham College. She was ready to teach the art of elocution and the craft of writing, to make "wordarrows" as she had done.¹⁰⁴

¹ Circa late 1880s, the frontispiece of Ten Years' Work for Indians by Helen Ludlow published by the school in 1888.

² For an historical account of Hampton Institute see Helen W. Ludlow Ten Years' Work for Indians at Hampton Institute, Virginia, 1878-1888 Hampton, VA: Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, 1888. For a contemporary study see Donal F. Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923 Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995.

³ Written information on David Simmons is derived from Senate Executive Document No. 31 52nd Congress, 1st Session, Twenty-two Years Work of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute at Hampton, Virginia: Records of Negro and Indian Graduates Hampton, Normal School; Press 1893; series 2892, US Serial Set (microfiche).

⁴ "The Big Red Apples" is one of the vignettes of Zitkala-Sa's often anthologized, "Impressions of an Indian Childhood;" the first of her autobiographical stories published in Atlantic Monthly, January 1900 and reprinted in American Indian Stories in 1921; for accessibility, this document refers to pagination in the 2003 edition of Zitkala-Sa's American Indian Stories with a new introduction by Susan Rose Dominguez Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 2003 (1921).

⁵ Zitkala-Sa "The Big Red Apples" American Indian Stories 39, 40; David Simmons' exact date of birth is not known; he was eight to ten years older than Gertrude. Information from Ellen Simmons' 1910 affidavit, states that he was twelve when he went to Hampton, Yankton Land Claims, Simmons file, Yankton Central Classified Files, BIA-RG 75 NARA. David Simmons, Yankton Sioux, has been verified by the University Archives as an enrolled student at Hampton. As of January 2000, American Indian student files at Hampton are no longer open to researchers without notarized permission from the Chief and Tribal Council of the student's tribe.

⁶ Charter business files, Yankton Agency; Rosebud Agency files, RG 75, NARA-CPR, Kansas City

⁷ Francis Paul Prucha ed., Documents of United States Indian Policy third edition, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000 (1990, 1975) 170

⁸ Prucha Documents 170

⁹ With the advent of legally sanctioned self-determination, today some tribes are now in position to "buy back" some of their land and individuals are exercising their rights to due process.

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- ¹⁰ Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle American Indians, American Justice Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983 (8)
- ¹¹ Deloria and Lytle American Indians, American Justice 8
- ¹² Deloria and Lytle American Indians, American Justice 9
- ¹³ Colin G. Calloway First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999 (356); The Yankton reservation rolls were taken in 1892 and allotment was concluded by 1894.
- ¹⁴ David E. Wilkins American Indian Politics and the American Political System Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002 (111)
- ¹⁵ Deloria and Lytle American Indians, American Justice 9
- ¹⁶ Deloria and Lytle American Indians, American Justice 10
- ¹⁷ "Indian Citizenship Day" David Wallace Adams, Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928 Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995 (196-201)
- ¹⁸ The Southern Workman 23 (March 1894)
- ¹⁹ "Introduction" to Chapter Eight, Fred Hoxie, Peter Mancall and James Merrell eds., American Nations: Encounters in Indian Country, 1850 to the Present New York: Routledge, 2001 (156)
- ²⁰ Federal off-reservation boarding schools began in 1879 with the founding of The Indian Institute in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, by Captain Richard Henry Pratt. J. Penelope Kelsey points out the irony of White's location in the heart of Miami lands (unpublished manuscript, author's possession).
- ²¹ Children were recruited from the Pine Ridge and Yankton Sioux Reservations; there were also Seneca, Potawatomi, Sac and Fox, Modoc, Wyandotte, Wichita, and Peoria children at White's; Thirty-eighth Annual Report, White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute, Indiana Friends Yearly Meeting, 1890 (81). Thank you to Penelope Kelsey for sharing her research on White's Institute.
- ²² Zitkala-Sa "The Big Red Apples" American Indian Stories 41
- ²³ Zitkala-Sa "The Big Red Apples" American Indian Stories 43
- ²⁴ Zitkala-Sa "The Big Red Apples" American Indian Stories 40
- ²⁵ Zitkala-Sa "The Big Red Apples" American Indian Stories 44; See also Carol Devens "'If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race': Missionary Education of Native American Girls" in Fred Hoxie et al eds., American Nations: Encounters in Indian Country, 1850 to the Present New York: Routledge, 2001 (157-171), originally printed in Journal of World History 3:2 (1992) 219-237
- ²⁶ cause of death was not recorded for either child; Indiana Friends Yearly Meeting Report, 1886
- ²⁷ Zitkala-Sa "The Iron Routine" "School Days" American Indian Stories 66,67
- ²⁸ Zitkala-Sa "Four Strange Summers" American Indian Stories 73
- ²⁹ After the establishment of the Presbyterian Mission on the Yankton Reservation in 1869, the Nakota dialect was replaced with Dakota spellings. As a child, "Gertie" would have heard both dialects. Leonard Bruguier recalls *Ihanktonwan* oral tradition when he spoke about the time Head Chief Struck by the Ree wrote to President Abraham Lincoln that the *wasicun* (white people) were stealing his language (personal conversation, Newberry Library January 25, 2003).
- ³⁰ Zitkala-Sa "Four Strange Summers" American Indian Stories 69
- ³¹ Close inspection of enrollment information for White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute show Gertie Simmons' location in between terms at White's have been previously misread. It was the student listed above

Gertie Simmons who attended Santee School in Nebraska in between terms while Gertie returned home to the Yankton Agency School.

³² Zitkala-Sa "Four Strange summers" 'School Days" American Indian Stories 74

³³ Wabash Plain Dealer June 26, 1885

³⁴ Parker Josiah White's Institute 61

³⁵ School records indicate Raymond was five feet tall at age fourteen and in good physical and sound mental health. Both his parents were living at the time and his father's name was Joseph.

³⁶ Treasurer's report, November 26, 1895; Minutes of the Indiana Yearly Meeting (14-15)

³⁷ Forty-first Annual Report of White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute (12)

³⁸ LaFlesche The Middle Five 49

³⁹ Wabash Plain Dealer June 28, 1895

⁴⁰ White's Residential and Family Services continues to serve troubled and needy children, running 100 foster homes and residence for teens ages eleven to eighteen (www.whiteskids.org).

⁴¹ CIS files, CCHS

⁴² Haskell Institute student files (RG 75) National Archives Records Administration-Central Plains Region (NA-CPR), Kansas City, MO.; Haskell Cultural Center and Museum brochures.

⁴³ Normal school curriculum is equivalent to high school.

⁴⁴ Carlisle Indian School (CIS) is discussed in more depth within the section on Gertrude's employment at the school.

⁴⁵ (Santa Fe, New Mexico) David Wallace Adams Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928 Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995 (63)

⁴⁶ Miss Stanton "A Cheery Letter from Haskell" Indian Helper July 3, 1891

⁴⁷ Indian Helper July 3, 1891 (1)

⁴⁸ "Honoring Our Children through Seasons of Sacrifice, Survival, Change and Celebration" Exhibit mounted at the Haskell Cultural Center and Museum, Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, KS (September 2002-September 2004)

⁴⁹ Haskell Institute walking tour brochure and conversations with Haskell employees. It is not known if Raymond Bonnin is mentioned in any of the alumni files. At the time of my visit to the Haskell Cultural Center & Museum in June 2004, they were not available.

⁵⁰ Conversation with archivist Barbara Larsen, NA-CPR, February 25, 2004

⁵¹ Barbara Larsen, February 25, 2004. Raymond Bonnin's student file indicates he "dropped June 1898" Haskell Institute files, RG 75, NARA-CPR.

⁵² "What the Boys are Doing" The Indian Leader V I no.13, February 1898 and "In the Boys Quarters" The Indian Leader V II no. 1, March 1898; For further scholarship on Haskell Institute see Brenda Child's Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940 (1998); Child includes a variety of Haskell photographs. To date, the only comprehensive study of Haskell is Myriam Vuckovic's PhD thesis titled, "Onward Ever, Backward Never: Student Life and Students' Lives at Haskell Institute, 1884-1920s" University of Kansas, 2001. It is possible Raymond could have played sports his first year.

⁵³ Raymond Bonnin was a clerk at the Yankton agency when he married Gertrude Simmons. He held a similar position in Utah at the Uintah-Ourray Reservation Agency from 1902-1908 and 1910-1917.

⁵⁴ He entered the Army as a private in 1917, and was quickly promoted through the ranks to Captain by 1919. Survey located in the Dixon

Papers, Mathers Museum, Indiana University. Thanks to Susan Applegate Krouse for sharing this information on Dixon's survey.

⁵⁵ The original hangs in the foyer of Lily Library, Earlham College.

⁵⁶ Correspondence between Gertrude Simmons and Susan Unthank can be found in the Susan B. Unthank Collection, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis. Susan's husband, J. T. Unthank was listed as a financial contributor to White's in the Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Trustees to White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute, 1888 (14).

⁵⁷ The Earlhamite December 2, 1895; June 15, 1896

⁵⁸ Ruth Spack America's Second Tongue: American Indian Education and the Ownership of English Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002 (197 n32)

⁵⁹ Thomas Hamm "A Brief History of Earlham College" (unpublished essay) 1998 (1)

⁶⁰ Hamm "A Brief History of Earlham College" (1)

⁶¹ Chalmers Hadley "Earlham" The Earlhamite July 1943 (14)

⁶² Report of the Committee for the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Natives Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Philadelphia: 1838 (18)

⁶³ Report of the Committee for the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Natives Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Philadelphia: 1838 (21)

⁶⁴ Mary Maples Dunn "Women of Light" in Women of America: A History Carol Ruth Berkin and Mary Beth Norton eds., Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979

⁶⁵ Margaret Hope Bacon Mothers of Feminism: the Story of Quaker Women in America San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986 (91); Bacon elaborates on the way in which the Society of Friends balanced the long struggle for gender equity in society at large (3).

⁶⁶ Hadley "Earlham" 14

⁶⁷ According to Earlham archivist Thomas Hamm, there are no copies of Anpao in existence.

⁶⁸ Earlham also had literary, debate, and musical societies in addition to competitive athletic teams.

⁶⁹ Hadley "Earlham" 14

⁷⁰ Hadley "Earlham" 14; Opal Thornburg Earlham: the Story of the College, 1847-1962 Richmond, IN: Earlham College Press, 1963, (126); The students in the dining room photograph are unidentified.

⁷¹ The Supervisor of Indian Education from the Department of Interior, after inspection of White's in 1892, reported the outhouses built in 1881 "hardly up to standard." Parker, Josiah White's Institute 60

⁷² Thornburg, Earlham: the Story of the College photo caption of Earlham Hall

⁷³ Other programs of study were the Scientific Course and Teacher Preparation Course.

⁷⁴ For further reading on the notion of Indian children and English as a second language, see Ruth Spack America's Second Tongue: American Indian Education and the Ownership of English, 1860-1900 Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002.

⁷⁵ Gertrude Simmons file, Lily Library Archives, Earlham College

⁷⁶ Hadley "Earlham" 14

⁷⁷ Zitkala-Sa "Incurring My Mother's Displeasure" American Indian Stories 76

⁷⁸ conversation with Earlham archivist Thomas Hamm June 12, 2004

⁷⁹ The Earlhamite December 2, 1895; Gertrude Simmons worked at White's her last year and during winter and summer breaks from Earlham taught

music and lived with the Unthanks. No doubt she saved money for her education. Efforts to verify how she paid for college are ongoing.

⁸⁰ The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (187); W. C. Dennis to Cora Marsland February 9, 1938 (Gertrude Simmons file)

⁸¹ Hadley "Earlham" 14

⁸² Archivist Tom Hamm reports more requests for Simmons' file than any other Earlham alum (June 17, 2004).

⁸³ "A Ballad" The Earlhamite January 9, 1897; "Iris of Life" The Earlhamite November 1, 1898

⁸⁴ The Earlhamite January 1, 1896; "Rondeau Brillant Opus 65" by Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) was written as a piano solo.

⁸⁵ Professor Ell, The Earlhamite February 15, 1896

⁸⁶ Commencement Program, The Earlhamite June 14, 1897. I believe this piece is from the opera Puchinello.

⁸⁷ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham April 27, 1911 BCIM; sketch c.1930, Bonnin Papers; The Washington Post December 31, 1933

⁸⁸ This phrase comes from the title of Fred Hoxie's edited volume of Native Voices. It includes Zitkala-Sa's "Why I am Pagan" (1902) and a 1919 editorial piece signed Gertrude Bonnin. See Talking Back: Indian Voices from the Progressive Era Boston: Bedford/ST. Martin's, 2001

⁸⁹ The version of "Side by Side" Gertrude Simmons delivered in the school contest, may have been a variation of the commencement address on Women's Suffrage Gertrude delivered at White's Institute the year before; efforts to locate this essay were unsuccessful to date.

⁹⁰ Dennis to Marsland, February 9, 1938 (1) Gertrude Simmons file

⁹¹ Thornburg Earlham: The Story of the College 215

⁹² Dennis to Marsland, February 9, 1938 (1) Gertrude Simmons file, Earlham Archives

⁹³ Gertrude Simmons "Side by Side" The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (177-179)

⁹⁴ Introduced as a "public debate" and without discussion of the content, "Side by Side" was reprinted in Zitkala-Sa: American Indian Stories, Legends, and Other Writings edited by Cathy N. Davidson and Ada Norris New York: Penguin Books, 2003 (222-226).

⁹⁵ "Side by Side" is a basic argumentative essay of about 2500 words.

⁹⁶ Simmons "Side by Side" The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (179)

⁹⁷ Simmons "Side by Side" The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (179)

⁹⁸ Simmons "Side by Side" The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (179)

⁹⁹ "Cheers for the Indian Maiden" Indianapolis News, reprinted in The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (187)

¹⁰⁰ "Cheers for the Indian Maiden" Indianapolis News, reprinted in The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (187)

¹⁰¹ Judge Woods quoted in "Cheers for the Indian Maiden" Indianapolis News, reprinted in The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (187)

¹⁰² Indianapolis Journal quoted in The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (185)

¹⁰³ Simmons "Side by Side" The Earlhamite March 16, 1896 (179)

¹⁰⁴ "Wordarrows" is a word coined by Gerald Vizenor in describing the written English rhetoric of American Indians transitioning to a second tongue. See Gerald Vizenor Wordarrows: Native States of Literary Sovereignty Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003 (originally printed as Wordarrows: Indians and the Fur Trade Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978)

Chapter Four: Carlisle: Crossroads Home to Yankton

In the parlor of the Gallery, is a small section devoted to the Indian Industrial School at Carlisle, commonly known as Carlisle Indian School (CIS). As an adult, Gertrude never failed to mention her association with "Carlisle," where she secured her first paid position in the fall of 1897. Located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the first off-reservation federal boarding school for Indian Children was founded by Captain Richard Henry Pratt (figure 4.1), who is associated with his infamous saying, "kill the Indian to save the man."¹ Francis Paul Prucha wrote in Americanizing the American Indians: Writings of the "Friends of the Indian" 1880-1900, that Pratt, "as superintendent of the school from 1879 to 1904, promoted an uncompromising program of immersing Indians in white civilization in the hope that it could destroy what he called, 'this whole segregating reservating process.'"² The sense of fairness and work ethic Pratt sought to instill in his students are visible in the present day generation of living descendents of Carlisle students.³

The second photograph in the Gallery Parlor was taken in 1878 at Fort Marion prison, St. Augustine, Florida (figure 4.2).⁴ This unusual group photograph depicts Richard Pratt and his wife, Anna Laura Pratt with ten of the

"prisoners of war" inside the prison, before heading to Hampton Institute in Virginia. The most telling aspect of this photograph is the fact that two of the Pratt children, seven year-old Marion Cora, and four year-old Nana Laura, are situated in between their parents and two of the prisoners. Identified as Buzzard and Bear Shield, the men have their arms around the little girls and Marion even has her arm and hand resting on Bear Shield's knee.⁵ Coupled with this photo is a copy of an 1878 sketch that ran in Harper's Weekly. Captioned, "Indian Prisoners Teaching Archery Lessons," it speaks to the Indian prisoners' gentility as they interact with stylish Victorians; a group that includes a gentleman, three women of varying ages, and two small children (figure 4.3).⁶

In the center of the Carlisle exhibit is an 1895 school publication entitled United States Indian School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. This unusual 7"x 5" sixty-four page glossy picture book contains a short paragraph on the history of the Carlisle barracks from 1755, originally built as an outpost against Indians. It contains fifty photographs of Carlisle student life circa 1890s. This book, published at the school, was how Carlisle presented itself to the public when Gertrude Simmons joined the staff in 1897.⁷ The book states,

The aim of the school has been to lead the Indians into the national life through associating them with that life, and teaching them English and giving a primary education and a knowledge of some common and practical industry and means of self-support among civilized people.⁸

This "association" was accomplished in part by participating in Carlisle's "outing" system. Generally, older boys and girls received room and board with farm families and the privilege of attending public school in exchange for their labor. Students also earned money and learned to budget personal finances. Occasionally, female students were sent to private schools run by "Friends," with their Quaker host families paying tuition.⁹

Photographs of earlier Carlisle students had been made into postcards and sold as a fundraising effort. Some of them were chosen for the "Standing Offer" that appeared in the school newspaper; "For five new subscribers to the Indian Helper, we will give...a photographic group of the thirteen Carlisle "Indian Printer Boys," on a (4 x 6) card, worth twenty cents when sold by itself. Name and tribe of each boy given."¹⁰ Carlisle typically acknowledged the names of most students' tribes. However, for many Lakota and Dakota young people at Carlisle, including Chauncey Yellow Robe and later Gertrude Simmons, they were simply "Sioux." The same monolithic identification was applied to various Ojibway and Pueblo tribes as well. Drawing the viewer's

attention to the photograph of the Printers in United States Indian School, there are three female student printers and over twenty young men. The caption reads, "Students must be fairly advanced in their school work before they enter the printing office."¹¹ It was a prestigious place to be assigned.

The cover of this little picture book is especially worth attention (figure 4.4). The visual duality expressed here is typical of American Indian intellectuals near the turn of the twentieth century. Printed in red, white and blue, the artwork and layout creatively juxtaposes before and after photographs of Carlisle student, Chauncey Yellow Robe, who came to Carlisle from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. His "before and after" pictures are paired with appropriate home scenes, a tipi and a farmhouse. On the right side of the cover, an American flag connects the two circles of American husbandry, while a bow and quiver of arrows overlaps the two circles of Indian life. In the Indian scene, a smaller tipi symbolizes the *tiyospaye*, an extended family arrangement. The female figure in the background could be returning from the nearest stream with water or picking berries or gathering kindling at the edge of the forest. In comparison, the three-story citizen's

house has a barn in the backyard, while a couple dressed in Victorian fashion stand in front of the house.

Like Gertrude Bonnin and many others of their generation, Chauncey Yellow Robe may have adopted a Euro-American middle class lifestyle but he never forgot his Indian heritage. He proudly spoke for justice and respect for Indian people. According to Frederick Hoxie, Yellow Robe's public statement at the Fifth Annual Society of American Indians (SAI) meeting in 1914 was one of the few Native American commentaries ever published on Wild West Shows. "Yellow Robe attacked both the message of the shows and the public's apparently bottomless appetite for lurid views of Indian life."¹² Yellow Robe made his life career as the disciplinarian at the Rapid City Indian Boarding School.¹³

"Indian Teacher"

The primary photograph in the Carlisle exhibit is a group photo of the faculty and staff taken in December 1898 (figure 4.5). Gertrude Simmons is seated in the front row, third from the left. Tinted red and framed in holly leaves, the Red Man and Helper captioned the photo with "Merry Christmas."¹⁴ This photograph provides the lens through which the gallery visitor sees Gertrude at Carlisle, as a

teacher. Gertrude Simmons reported to Carlisle Indian School in July 1897. Assigned to do temporary office work, she immediately became the pianist for chapel services. Carlisle's non-denominational religious services were variations of the dominant Protestant Christian theme conducted by local guest ministers. After only a month at Carlisle, Miss Simmons was sent on a recruitment trip to the Yankton reservation.¹⁵ She had not been home in several years since the beginning of her second term at White's Institute. Although Gertrude was not totally cognizant of the fact, this trip home to Yankton marked the beginning of renewal for Gertrude, her *Ithanktonwan* heritage and her Indian self.

Upon her return, all of Carlisle was anxious to hear "Miss Simmons" speak, for her reputation preceded her. When she met Superintendent Pratt upon her arrival at the school he remarked, "Ah ha! So you are the little Indian girl who created the excitement among the college orators!"¹⁶ Gertrude wasted no time proving herself at Carlisle in both verbal elocution and musical prowess; "Miss Simmons" spoke on "The Achievements of the Red and White Races Compared." This talk was a version of the award-winning essay, "Side by Side" she delivered at the Indiana State Oratorical Contest the year before.¹⁷ Accompanied by piano and

clarinet, "Miss Simmons sang in excellent soprano voice "The Dove" by Arditi," at Carlisle's opening exercises in October 1897. Two weeks later, Miss Simmons was chosen as leader of the girls' Minnehaha Glee Club.¹⁸

By the start of the New Year, Miss Simmons became "teacher" in a level six classroom. It is with this class that she prepared her students to debate whether or not the Pilgrims' treatment of the Indians caused the King Philip's War in 1675. The conflict was over land with the colonies of Rhode Island, Plymouth, and Massachusetts Bay. Metacom (King Philip, 1640-1676) organized and led a coalition of Wampanoag, Narragansettes, Nipmucks, Mohegans, and Podunks in war.¹⁹ The judges decided in favor of those students arguing the inevitability of the war and no-fault on the part of the New England settlers. The winning students must have exhibited sharper verbal skills than those taking the Indian coalition's side, or perhaps the judges still reflected the dominant post-war ideology as explained by Bay Colony minister, Edmund Browne in 1677.

First, that the "enemy" be diminished in number; second, that Indians be assigned to places "convenient" for them and the English; third, that they be confined to these places, "Beyond which without an English guard not to passe upon peril of life"; and fourth, that all their European weapons be taken from them.²⁰

Jenny Hale Pulsipher notes that Browne made his case for a policy of distrust toward all Indians, who were, he argued, "dishonest as well as dangerous, apt to be not only cut purses, but cut throats."²¹ Those who held this point of view would find no offense in Metacom's head being exhibited in the fort at Plymouth, Massachusetts for twenty-five years after the Indian coalition was defeated. A popular nineteenth century engraving (c. 1836) depicts the killing of Metacom (King Philip) in 1676, shot by a Mohawk Indian allied with the colonials (figure 4.6).²² Metacom's wife and son were sold into slavery with other captives and shipped to the West Indies. Disease and hunger during the three-year rebellion caused the alliance to splinter and weaken. While many Indian communities survived, Metacom's death marked the end of Native independence in the New England region. The story of Carlisle's debate over King Philip's War is an example of how "The Gertrude Bonnin Story" can lead to further discussion of important historic events in American Indian history not directly connected to Bonnin or her Yankton heritage.

Within a short time after her arrival at Carlisle, Miss Simmons also became the faculty advisor to the Susan Longstreth Literary Society. The societies at Carlisle

"emulate[d] each other in furnishing the School most pleasing entertainments."²³ The society's group photograph was printed in the United States Indian School picture book (figure 4.7). The caption reads,

This society bearing the name of one of the first and most honored friends of the School has existed for more than ten years. Including, as it does, the best character and talent from some 300 girls, with a comfortable and tastefully decorated room for its meetings, it is an influence for good, mentality and morally, which cannot well be measured.²⁴

Personal Portraits and Private Memories, Part I

Gertrude remained at Carlisle during the summer of 1898 and pursued her musical interests in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a short distance from Carlisle. Studying the violin under Leipzig Conservatory graduate Professor Taube, Gertrude spent hours each day practicing.²⁵ In August Gertrude traveled to New York City and posed for photographers Joseph Keiley and Gertrude Käsebier who frequently shared subjects.²⁶

The first portrait in this exhibit is a gravure portrait of "Zitkala-Sa" taken by Joseph Keiley in 1898 (figure 4.9). Keiley's prints of the lovely "Indian Maiden" sold for a thousand dollars in 1900.²⁷ Only one Keiley portrait of Zitkala-Sa remains in the public domain.²⁸ Printed in sepia tones, framed in an antiqued wooden frame,

it is a most striking image.²⁹ This glycerin print of Zitkala-Sa also adorns the cover of the 2003 edition of her American Indian Stories, originally published as a book in 1921.³⁰ Keiley's photographs of Zitkala-Sa were also published in Photographic Times (1900) and Camera Notes (1901).³¹ A lawyer by training, Keiley (1869-1914) began his career as a photographer by using Indians as subjects. One of his portraits of Gertrude was entitled "Asia." Keiley dressed his Indian maiden subject to entice the public's desire for the exotic.

Gertrude Käsebier and Her Indian Friends

This space in the Gallery Parlor consists of several platinum print photographs of "Zitkalasa" and two "Indian Portraits" taken by Gertrude Käsebier in 1898. The extensive Gertrude Käsebier collection housed in the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution contains all of her "Indian" photographs, including nine of Zitkala-Sa.³²

Käsebier's biographer Barbara Michaels tells us that as a married woman with three grown children, Gertrude Stanton Käsebier (1852-1934) entered the Pratt Institute of Art in Brooklyn, New York to pursue her interest in the new medium of photography. Within ten years Käsebier

established herself as the first successful female photographer in New York City. She was the first woman invited to join the "photoscessionist" circle called the "Linked Ring" of Alfred Steiglitz, of which Joseph Keiley was also a member. Famous for her photographic portraiture, predominantly of mothers and children, Käsebier was the "instigator in photographing Buffalo Bill's Indians in 1898."³³ Unlike others, including Joseph Keiley, who photographed American Indians, Käsebier did not show or publish her "Indian Portraits" until 1900; nor did she ever sell them.³⁴

There is no written evidence of exactly how and where Gertrude Simmons and Gertrude Käsebier met each other. It is possible that Käsebier met Gertrude Simmons in Philadelphia. Käsebier had her first public showing there and the Carlisle staff often made day trips by train to the city.³⁵ Barbara Michaels presumes that Gertrude Simmons met Käsebier when a group from Carlisle came to New York City to see Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Michaels tells us,

Of the thousands of people throughout the United States and Europe who watched Buffalo Bill's Indians, it seems that, at least among photographers, only Käsebier had the imagination to see behind the feathers and the fake war dances to offer them hospitality and a chance to be known as the proud, displaced individuals that they were.³⁶

Gertrude Käsebier's granddaughter recalls, "Granny loved the Indians. She felt they were the only truly honest people she knew."³⁷

Regardless of how they met, Käsebier invited Gertrude Simmons to be a guest in her home and their relationship quickly developed into friendship. Gertrude became the photographer's favorite subject at the time. As an artistic professional woman with a distinct identity beyond wife and mother, Käsebier would have also been an incredible role model for twenty-two year old Gertrude, offering hospitality, companionship, and mentoring.

Perhaps owing to her childhood in the west with Indian playmates and her Quaker grandmother, Käsebier possessed a unique sensitivity among Victorian Protestants.³⁸ Visitors to the Gallery can view five of the 1898 Käsebier portraits of Zitkala-Sa. All three of the "Zitkala-Sa with Violin" series and "Zitkala-Sa with Book," share the same setting of flowered wallpaper (figures 4.9-4.12). Zitkala-Sa is dressed in what Rayna Green calls, a Victorian white "good girl" dress. The lace trim on at her wrists and the white linen handkerchief identify Zitkala-Sa as a lady. They are what Susan Bernardin calls, "marks of middle-class Euro-American identity" in her essay, "The Lessons of a Sentimental Education: Zitkala-Sa's Autobiographical

Narratives."³⁹ The open book in Zitkala-Sa's lap, signify her assimilation to the world of literacy. Her long heavy hair resisting the satin ribbon adds to the air of melancholy around her face. She sits proudly, even though, her body's shape is revealed by the corset she wears underneath her dress. Clearly, Zitkala-Sa had resolved her initial embarrassment over "closely clinging dresses."⁴⁰ In "The Cutting of My Long Hair" she wrote,

I felt like sinking to the floor, for my blanket had been stripped from my shoulders. I looked hard at the Indian girls, who seemed not to care that they were even more immodestly dressed than I, in their tightly fitting clothes.⁴¹

The final Käsebier portrait included in the Personal Portraits exhibit is titled, "Sioux Girl Shading Her Eyes," (figure 4.13). Here, Zitkala-Sa is posed in a floral beaded bandolier, wearing many strands of beads, shading her eyes as she looks into an imaginary horizon. In the essay, "Gertrude Käsebier's 'Indian' Photographs: More Than Meets the Eye" Green refers to Zitkala-Sa in this portrait as "the Native Drama Queen."⁴²

The atmosphere in Käsebier's home and studio allowed the Indian inside her young friend to emerge. "Käsebier's portraits of Zitkala-Sa, like the portraits she took of other talented women, were governed by knowledge of her subject's abilities, personality and background."⁴³ After

all, it was on the back of one of the Käsebier prints that "Zitkalasa" appears in script, as a signature for the first time in 1898. When Gertie went to college, sister-in-law Victoria Simmons accused her of deserting home and suggested she also give up her brother's name "Simmons." And so she chose to use her Indian name, Zitkala-Sa, which means Red Bird, the name of one of the runners from the *Ihanktonwan* Fox and Bird Band.⁴⁴ A few years later she wrote, "I chose to make a name for myself and I guess I have made 'Zitkala-Sa' known."⁴⁵

Käsebier wrote down Zitkala-Sa's telling of two Sioux tales, "How the Indians Came on Earth" and "Why the Indians Have Red Stripes on Their Faces When Going to War."⁴⁶ The latter tale may have been an explanation of Joseph Black Fox's face, a member of the "much-loved Dakota boys" in "Buffalo Bill" Cody's "Wild West Show" who also posed for Käsebier. Rayna Green tells the story behind the photographs Käsebier took of Buffalo Bill's Indian troupe in the summer of 1898. Black Fox was among those Indians who came and went from Käsebier's studio and home as friends. They played poker, ate hot dogs, drank tea, and had a comfortable place to relax in between shows whenever they were in the area.⁴⁷ Black Fox signed several drawings he made for his hostess Gertrude Käsebier as "Jos. Black

Fox.”⁴⁸ The original portraits of Black Fox are housed in The National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution The Museum of Modern Art (figures 4.14-4.15).

Although the 1898 photographs of Zitkala-Sa by Gertrude Käsebier and Joseph Keiley have been a matter of public record since they were included in various magazines and galleries in the early 1900s, the platinum prints for which Zitkala-Sa modeled were not a part of Gertrude’s life. There is no indication that copies of any of these photographs were ever in Gertrude’s possession. She wrote three years later, “I have no picture of myself!”⁴⁹ These portraits connect Zitkala-Sa to the memories of Carlisle, New York, and Boston during the four years she lived on the East coast after college. After her summer vacation at Käsebier’s, Gertrude returned to Carlisle for one more semester of teaching before moving to Boston in January 1899 to pursue her musical studies.

Personal Portraits and Private Memories, Part II

During the years 1897-1901, Gertrude Simmons had several male suitors and two known marriage proposals.⁵⁰ In 1898, Käsebier’s son Frederick corresponded with Gertrude Simmons for a while after her stay in his mother’s home and traveled from New York City to Carlisle to call on her.⁵¹

Carlisle's newspaper, The Indian Helper noted "Mr. F. W. Käsebier, 201st Regiment, N. Y. was Miss Simmons' guest on Thursday evening. Mr. Käsebier's mother is the artist at whose lovely home in New York City, Miss Simmons was a guest for a few weeks this summer."⁵² It seems as if Thomas Marshall had some competition.

It is not known exactly when Zitkala-Sa and Thomas Marshall became engaged (figure 4.16).⁵³ The window of possibility lies during her last four months at Carlisle, after Zitkala-Sa returned from New York City. The Indian Helper tells us that in April 1899, Miss Simmons' fiancé, Thomas Marshall, Dakota, died of the measles. From Boston, Zitkala-Sa sent a wreath of white roses to Marshall's funeral at Carlisle, and her friends and colleagues from Carlisle sent private and public condolences to her in Boston.⁵⁴

Zitkala-Sa in Boston, 1899-1901

Barbara Michaels' use of the correspondence between Käsebier and members of East coast artistic and literary circles illuminates the record of Zitkala-Sa's time in Boston as a student and a writer. In January 1899, influenced by both her status at Carlisle and encouragement

from Käsebier to do more than teach, Zitkala-Sa relocated to Boston.

During 1899 and 1900, Gertrude studied violin with Austrian virtuoso, Eugene Gruenberg of the New England Conservatory in Boston.⁵⁵ She must have shown promise, and much natural talent, for she certainly did not have the type of training consistent with other music conservatory students. Already twenty-three, she was years behind her Euro-American musical peers, but for an Indian and a woman, she became Carlisle's most heralded musician; receiving outstanding reviews for her virtuosity.

As with the famous football team, which typically had "special students" on the squad, Pratt authorized Oneida Bandleader Dennison Wheelock to assemble the best Indian band in the country.⁵⁶ Zitkala-Sa appeared as a violin soloist with the Carlisle Indian Band on an American tour in 1900. Publicity about the band's scheduled appearance at the Paris Exposition featured Zitkala-Sa. The following review clearly reflects the dominant society's savage/salvation paradigm held since the earliest days of European contact.

The fact of an Indian girl being able to play so marvelously well on so difficult an instrument is regarded as showing clearly the possibilities of not only lifting the Indian race completely out of the slough of despond...but elevating them to

the same plane as that which the advanced man occupies.⁵⁷

The confusion often found in biographical sketches of Zitkala-Sa over the 1900 Paris Exposition stems from the fact that at the 1890 Paris Expo, Carlisle Indian School sent a variety of Indian student hand-crafts and examples of their newly acquired husbandry skills, such as leather saddle and harness, furniture, Victorian gowns and petticoats. The main feature of Carlisle's exhibit was a large curio made by the students in the wood shop. It highlighted the Indian students' literacy through the student printed newspaper and magazine, The Indian Helper and The Red Man, for which the Carlisle received a "diploma commoratif." ⁵⁸

While music held a passionate place in Gertrude's life from her time at White's Institute, her dream of being a professional violinist was hampered by several obstacles. Zitkala-Sa never did reach the level of proficiency she had hoped to obtain. Her music reading skills, ear training, and ability to transcribe music were underdeveloped.⁵⁹ The fact that she was ever accepted into Gruenberg's studio speaks to a combination of natural talent and connections. No doubt her striking beauty, intelligence, and air of eroticism as an "Indian maiden" facilitated her acceptance as a private student by Gruenberg. There is no record of

her ever having been enrolled in the New England Conservatory of Music, nor does her name appear in any school recital programs from this period.⁶⁰

Even though Gertrude Simmons relocated to Boston to pursue her musical interests, she also moved in the literary circle of publisher and photographer, Fred Holland Day, upon introduction by Gertrude Käsebier. Within a year of telling her first Indian tales to her friend in New York City, Zitkala-Sa was writing her own memories, encouraged by Käsebier and her new friends in Boston to do "vaster work."⁶¹ Other factors contributing to Zitkala-Sa's shift to pursue a writing career were financial necessity; she wrote to Montezuma she was "penniless."⁶² Even though the Indian Office agreed to pay Gruenberg's fees, the need to practice six to eight hours a day to achieve her goal required additional resources; someone would have had to assist her financially.⁶³

Other important factors working against a musical career for Gertrude was the overwhelming atmosphere of racism and sexism in Eurocentric music conservatories. As an American Indian woman, Gertrude Simmons was never going to succeed as a professional violinist in 1900. As with many women of her time, Gertrude settled for teaching piano in later years and picked up the violin when time allowed.

She could however, in 1900, support herself writing stories, for writing had become an acceptable occupation for the "New Woman" of the twentieth century. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg states that, "The 'New Woman' refers to successive generations of educated and self-supporting middle-class women, who, between the 1880s and 1920s, demanded careers and public roles."⁶⁴ Journalists at the turn of the century described the "New Woman" in the 1890s as the "Gibson Girl;" athletic, independent, urban, sophisticated and college-educated, she sought "equality" and fellowship among men.⁶⁵ The New Woman conveyed a spirit of rebellion, something familiar to Gertrude.

Almost a year since Thomas Marshall's death, Gertrude was preparing to return to Carlisle. In March 1900, Zitkala-Sa began rehearsing with the Carlisle all-star Indian band preparing for a national and European tour.

Miss Gertrude Simmons widely known by her Dakota name — Zitkala-Sa, is with us, and will remain until the Band starts on its tour, when she is going along as violin soloist. She is looking well and says that the people of Boston have treated her well.⁶⁶

Rehearsing for the upcoming band tours filled her time and practice on both the violin and oral recitation. The band rehearsed for the Carlisle community and by the end of one month, she and the band were ready to perform.

The popular weekly magazine, The Outlook, published the Käsebier photograph of Zitkala-Sa seated with a violin to complement Jessie W. Cook's article, "The Representative Indian" with the caption, "Miss Zitkala Sa, a Yankton Sioux, [a] young girl numbered among the contributors to the Atlantic Monthly, gifted with unusual musical genius."⁶⁷ Miss Simmons, the only female in the fifty-three-piece orchestra, traveled with her chaperone, Mrs. Cook.

Former Carlisle school physician, Carlos Montezuma, M.D. of Chicago was engaged as "care-taker and health-keeper" of the group.⁶⁸ Born in the Arizona desert in 1867, Carlos Montezuma's birth name was Wasaja. While touring the Southwest in the early 1870s, a Chicago photographer, Carlo Gentile, purchased Wasaja from Pima slave dealers and gave him his name. Contrary to Gertrude's Quaker education, Montezuma's early education was in the Chicago public school system, where he studied and played with non-Indian children, assimilating quickly into American life. Montezuma worked his way through medical college and found employment with the Indian Service in 1891. After various unhappy assignments on western reservations, he served as Carlisle Indian School Physician from 1893 to 1896, at which time Montezuma left the Indian Service for private practice in Chicago (figure 4.17).⁶⁹ Like other members of

the small circle of educated American Indians, he frequently came to visit and speak at Carlisle Indian School. When the Carlisle Indian Band toured the United States in 1900, Dr. Montezuma accompanied them as official chaperone. (Figure 4.18 shows the Wheelock Bandstand at Carlisle.)

Unfortunately, the 1900 Paris concert was never held, nor did the Band leave for Europe. Musical director Dennison Wheelock's baby died suddenly two weeks before the much anticipated departure date. The tour abruptly ended and the musicians recruited by Wheelock from around the country found themselves on their own.⁷⁰ Everyone in the Carlisle band and community were saddened by the loss of baby Wheelock. For many, going to the Paris Exposition in June was the chance of a lifetime. Instead of returning to Boston when the group dispersed, Zitkala-Sa spent the summer of 1900 at home at the Greenwood Agency, on the Yankton reservation with her seventy-year old mother. In the autumn of 1900, Gertrude returned to Boston for nine months. Her formal training on the violin was indefinitely suspended, and so Zitkala-Sa resumed her life as writer, until she acquired a teaching position at the Devils' Lake Reservation at Ft. Totten Agency that began the following June.

A few months after the Carlisle band tour abruptly and sadly ended, Carlos Montezuma initiated contact with Gertrude. Responding to a query from Montezuma in early 1901, probably wanting to know if she was still grieving the death of her fiancé Thomas Marshall, Zitkala-Sa let Montezuma know that she was ready for courtship rituals to begin. She wrote, "the sad affair of which you hint was not an easy matter to deal with. But [the] power of depressing influences is only temporary. If we would claim our full heritage we must be masters of our circumstances."⁷¹ This speaks to Zitkala-Sa's fortitude and her reliance on the power of her Sioux heritage to sustain her through this difficult time.

Not to be discouraged by the break-up of the Carlisle band, Pratt found other venues for his "representative Indians." Pratt arranged for the Carlisle Band to perform and for Zitkala-Sa to recite "The Famine" from Hiawatha in Washington D.C. at the Lafayette Square Opera House and the Washington Salon. Now, in addition to writing, Zitkala-Sa appeared publicly as an Indian Maiden violinist and orator. Attending the latter performance were President McKinley and the First Lady. The Red Man and Helper reported that, after Zitkala-Sa's dramatic recitation of "The Famine," the

First Lady presented Zitkala-Sa with a nosegay of purple violets.⁷²

Having been influenced by her new friends Joe Black Fox and other "professional" Indians she met a couple summers ago in New York City, Zitkala-Sa needed an Indian dress. She enlisted the help of Alice Fletcher in a letter dated February 1901.

By Major's [Pratt] request I am learning the "Famine" from Longfellow's Hiawatha to give it in the Lafayette Opera House. I would like to give it with the Indian dress. I wonder, Miss Fletcher if you would or could let me wear your Indian dress? Miss deCora has an ordinary one which I first meant to use but she has work now which needs her buckskin dress for the model. She told me of your beautiful Indian dress; and so I have been wondering if you could help me out in this matter. This is a long postscript but I came to nigh forgetting.

Respectfully,
Zitkala-Sa⁷³

Fletcher's reply to Zitkala-Sa is not part of the record, however Zitkala-Sa did appear as,

A Dakota girl in a Dakota costume of beaded and fringed buckskin, with her long black locks braided in two braids, she was decidedly picturesque. The recital from start to finish would have satisfied Longfellow's highest ideal of native grace and eloquence.⁷⁴

During Zitkala-Sa's last nine months in Boston, she wrote her first fiction, "The Trial Path" and "The Soft-

Hearted Sioux." Published in Harper's Magazine in 1901, both stories were clearly influenced by her recent experience at Yankton during the summer of 1900. Zitkala-Sa spent her mornings at her writing desk in a little room she rented at the agency. When not with her mother in her canvas summer lodge, "Gertie" was visiting elders and listening to stories. She writes, "The mellow stream from the star above, a maid of twenty summers, on a bed of sweetgrass, drank in with her wakeful eyes."⁷⁵ The adult nature of the content in "The Trail Path" retells a grandmother's story as she told it to Zitkala-Sa. It gives the reader a glimpse of *Ihanktonwan* life before Christianity eroded many traditional customs. The "Trail Path" shows Yankton people as human beings, capable of passion, jealousy, censure, and resolve.

While she lived at home the summer of 1900, Zitkala-Sa witnessed the effects of allotment on the Yankton reservation. With no provision for heirship, parcels too small to divide were rapidly being sold, eroding the Indian land base even further. And by this time on the reservation, well-established Episcopalians were competing with Presbyterian missionaries for the souls of Yanktons. In Zitkala-Sa's story, "The Soft-Hearted Sioux," the reader is exposed to the irony and tragic sadness experienced by

the old ones who have no one to hunt for them and whose grown children return from schools with Bibles, refuting traditional religion. Children were taught that the *Ithanktonwan* worldview was inherently wrong and government regulations prevented sacred ceremonies. As a result, the *tyospaye* or extended family, previously united by traditional beliefs, was seriously weakened.⁷⁶ "The Soft-Hearted Sioux" received criticism from Carlisle's paper, The Red Man and Helper, as being "morally bad."⁷⁷

Zitkala-Sa's most developed short fiction "A Warrior's Daughter," was first published in Everybody's Magazine in April 1902. The seven illustrations by E. S. Blumenschein were not included in the 1921 version in American Indian Stories. The 1902 Blumenschein illustrations are worth mentioning for the fact that they are used to distinguish shifts in time and place embedded in the five scenes of "Warrior's Daughter."⁷⁸ The story opens with eight-year-old Tusee preparing for her first dance. At this same age Zitkala-Sa, denied the opportunity of Tusee by federal regulations and Indian agency life, was departing for boarding school.

"A Warrior's Daughter" takes place when *Ithanktonwan* social systems revolved around warfare and women played a very important role in supporting the military activity of

men. Typical of warrior societies, the title of Tusee's story tells the reader that a woman's status was primarily reflected in the position of her father; after which followed her brother, husband, sons, and her own warrior status. Zitkala-Sa writes, "Great Spirit, speed me to my lover's rescue! Give me swift cunning for a weapon this night! All-powerful Spirit, grant me my warrior-father's heart, strong to slay a foe and mighty to save a friend!"⁷⁹ In the enemy's camp, women "join in the singing, and rise to dance with their victorious warriors." "Watchful women" also accompanied war parties and "hid away in secret places" as their men approached the enemy camp.⁸⁰

The story of "A Warrior's Daughter" is embedded with many cultural mores, especially those that affect gender roles and values.⁸¹ "Like her mother, [Tusee] sits on her feet."⁸² Earlier the reader saw Tusee's father, the "chieftain's bravest warrior" sitting with crossed shins. It is not only war honors that distinguishes this man but also the fact that he is "one of the most generous gift givers to the toothless old people."⁸³ In addition, the reader learns that young men did not buy their wives, but rather earned the privilege of asking for their hand in marriage. Tusee's father requires that her lover provide a

fresh "enemy's scalp-lock" before he sanctions their union.⁸⁴

In "A Warrior's Daughter" as with many of the early stories included in American Indian Stories, many greetings and expressions of adults and elders are written in Dakota. It is another way Zitkala-Sa retains connection to her language and culture. The reader learns that Tusee's uncle, whose "features were of the Southern type," was taken captive from an enemy camp "long years ago" by Tusee's father. He was integrated into the family unit because the "unusual qualities of the slave had won the Sioux warrior's heart." Even though he was granted his freedom, Tusee's uncle chose to "stay in the warrior's family."⁸⁵

After writing these stories, Zitkala-Sa returned to writing autobiography. "Why I Am a Pagan" was published in 1902 in the Atlantic Monthly. This story has received much attention from scholars. Renamed "The Great Spirit" for inclusion in the 1921 edition of American Indian Stories, discussion of this story will take place in the context of 1921, later in the Gallery tour.

From New Woman to Sioux Wife

At the height of what seemed like a burgeoning career, twenty-four year old Zitkala-Sa found herself at the

crossroads of culture. She made choices that took her out of the city and affirmed her identity as a Yankton Sioux woman when she gave up her life as a "New Woman" and went home to her reservation to marry. What we know about Zitkala-Sa's choices comes primarily from her letters to Dr. Carlos Montezuma of Chicago. During their long-distance letter-writing relationship, from February 1901 to the spring of 1902, Zitkala-Sa became engaged to Montezuma.⁸⁶ Zitkala-Sa's letters not only tell us about her independent nature, but they speak to her concerns for Indian people, including their economic dependence on the federal government, poor health and education, and lack of enfranchisement. The letters reveal her questioning of Euro-American standards, religion, politics, and societal mores, many of which she rejects. In addition, the rhetoric in Zitkala-Sa's letters to Montezuma affirms her Dakota-Sioux identity.⁸⁷

Popular women's periodicals Ladies Home Journal and Practical Housekeeper and Good Housekeeping Magazine compliment the letters, establishing the context of late nineteenth and early twentieth century society in Boston and Chicago. When Zitkala-Sa broke her engagement to Dr. Montezuma for the second time, she rejected both Montezuma the man and mainstream society's guidelines for marriage.

Collecting Dakota stories for her forthcoming book, Old Indian Legends, in the summer of 1901, while she was in North Dakota, Zitkala-Sa found the courage to assert her Indian feminine identity. Her traditional Dakota childhood, Quaker education, and independent lifestyle gave her the strength to reject the trappings of mainstream feminine ideals: those of married woman as helpmate and housekeeper. It is here that Zitkala-Sa made choices crucial to the way she lived the rest of her life. Married in May 1902, Zitkala-Sa became Raymond Bonnin's life-partner, until her death in 1938. As a Sioux wife, Zitkala-Sa was able to exert herself as an independent woman and a national activist without conflict.

Zitkala-Sa as Gibson Girl

Boston was the ideal setting for Zitkala-Sa's life as a New Woman, where she was both college girl and magazine writer. Her life in the east as a young adult was drastically different from that of her Dakota cousins at home on the reservation. As an adult living in an urban center such as Boston, Gertrude Simmons most likely lived in a boarding house, where all her meals were prepared and she bore no responsibility for housecleaning.⁸⁸ She was a working girl, enjoying a career in one of two new major

fields of employment opportunity that had opened up to young women in the late nineteenth century, social work and magazine writing.

However, like her white sisters before her who had careers in teaching and nursing, the New Woman would still be expected to give up her career for marriage, children and managing a household.⁸⁹ In 1900 only five percent of the nation's married women were gainfully employed outside the home. Middle class women, as helpmates to their husbands and society, turned to volunteer work and club activities while their new rights "expanded expectations of marital happiness."⁹⁰ In a way, the modernization of daily life in the Progressive era was a double-edged sword for many women. Instructional articles and advice columns in women's magazines seemed to foreshadow what contemporary American women have come to know as the "superwoman" myth.

Unlike Gertrude, most young women had been trained since childhood for their future roles growing up in American households under Victorian dictates. As a college student, Gertrude was privileged to study music, literature, history, and Latin. It is likely that she became familiar with etiquette books and magazine features instructing women on the best personal care, cold baths, deep breathing and beauty sleep.⁹¹ Having had her musical

talents recognized early in her life, Gertrude was never trained in domestic science. She was an anomaly, the Indian girl orator at Earlham College.⁹²

Gertie's childhood contained nothing to prepare her for being a "housewife," for she lived in a tipi until she was eight years old. The domestic arts of beading and quill work she learned from her mother differed from the needlepoint and crocheting of her urban peers. Yet, we hear that she is eager to bring to her marriage a display of her female Indian handiwork when she promises to make Montezuma beaded cushion covers. She adds, "It will be my pleasure to make with my own hands such beaded buckskins as you have not in your collection. That will be my fancy work when I come to live with you."⁹³ Unfortunately, it is not known how, or even if, Montezuma responded to Zitkala-Sa's offer to bead traditional Indian clothing for him.

Comparing Women's Roles

The Sioux housewife and her middle class American counterpart are contrasted in two articles from Good Housekeeping magazine, appearing in April 1901 and October 1901 respectively. Hampton Institute student Winona Keith, described Sioux women's dress and home life in an article titled, "How the Sioux Keep House." Keith wrote, "Of

course, the women do not know very much about housekeeping. In fact, they don't know anything about it."⁹⁴ They adorn their one-room, dirt floor cabins with "beautiful beadwork hanging on the walls."⁹⁵ Keith tells middle class readers that Sioux women prefer to cook out of doors and they love to drink coffee, which they call "black medicine."⁹⁶ Sioux women found their sod-roofed cabins stifling, and slept in their tipis whenever possible, especially in the warm weather. Sioux women occupied their time preparing food, sewing simple dresses and doing beadwork. Daily chores such as hauling wood "has always been the women's work, and although it is heavy, the older women are never willing to give it up. They would feel that they were not doing their share."⁹⁷

Another thing that Keith points out which differentiates Sioux women from Euro-American women is that "they never wear a hat of any kind; even on the hottest days they are bareheaded;"⁹⁸ intimating that the Sioux woman had no sense of fashion. Years later, Gertrude was frequently photographed wearing or holding the latest-style hat and hairstyle; already middle-aged, Gertrude did not bob her hair in the 1920s.

Women's magazines were prone to pity the housewife who could only afford to hire poor quality help.⁹⁹ At the same

time, they began instructing women how to do it themselves as seen in the October 1901 Good Housekeeping article entitled "Housework as Exercise." The New Woman who married no longer had time for bicycle rides and tennis; she got her exercise at home while caring for her house.¹⁰⁰ The article covers everything a wife needs to know about housework: what to do, when to do it, how to do it and very importantly, what to wear when executing these strenuous household tasks. The message was unbutton those tight collars, take off the corsets and petticoats, hike up those long skirts and pull the blinds. Whenever possible, "wear a gymnasium suit for scrubbing and sweeping."¹⁰¹

Zitkala-Sa expressed on more than one occasion, an intense fear of housekeeping. She wrote to Montezuma, "I know so little about keeping a house in running order that the undertaking is perfectly appalling to me."¹⁰² Frequently she talked about having her cousin come to live in Chicago and help her out in newly married life. "My cousin [Lucy] would not only be a companion but she could help me in puzzling problems for she is quite a housekeeper."¹⁰³ In another letter she wrote, "Sometimes when I think of our plans I do you wrong. I seem unfit for making a home cheery for every one...I am worried beyond words, being totally unfit for [house] work or hostess."¹⁰⁴

By suggesting her cousin come to live with them after marriage, Gertrude was relying on the traditional female support network that existed in Sioux and other Native communities. Ethnographer Alice Marriott embraces this topic in a chapter entitled "The Household" from The Ten Grandmothers. Hunting-Horse, the young husband and father figures out, with help from a female relative, what is "wrong" with his new wife, Spear-Woman. He tells the new bride and mother, "I think you're too tired to have fun...maybe if your sister comes you won't be so lonesome. There will be someone to help you with the work too."¹⁰⁵ Unlike their Native cousins, in the increasingly individualized American culture, women in the early twentieth century were expected to do it all, without help. The growing publishing industry and the development of the domestic science movement produced a plethora of books and magazines advising wives on home management, child-rearing, marital relations, fashion, and of course, the latest and best products to buy to make all of this easier to manage as thrifty consumers.¹⁰⁶

It is a given that Good Housekeeping and Ladies Home Journal reveal the glorification of home and motherhood.¹⁰⁷ The articles and advertisements that did apply to the single woman, only concerned her inevitable marriage.

Ladies Home Journal ran series such as, the "Easter Bride's Wardrobe," "The American Girl as a Bride," and "The Correct Wedding of Today."¹⁰⁸ "The Preliminaries and Preparations According to the Very Latest Rules," presented guidelines for gowns for bride and maids, mothers and sisters; the wedding supper or breakfast; floral bouquets appropriate for church and home weddings; protocol for gifts, including the groom's; souvenirs for attendants; and choosing the date, which was the bride's prerogative.¹⁰⁹

Zitkala-Sa chooses from Both Cultures

In May 1901, it appears that Montezuma was pushing for a November wedding, but Zitkala-Sa was adamant about choosing the date. She wrote, "At least one year I must give [my mother]. If you do not wish to wait for me a year, marry when and whom you choose."¹¹⁰ Later, she suggested that they elope, "we could run around the corner to some Justice of the Peace and be married quietly the evening of arrival."¹¹¹ The bulk of the June letters reveals a very tumultuous relationship. By the end of June Zitkala-Sa wrote, "I've a big mind to marry the other fellow [Ray Bonnin] and let you find elsewhere the properly prolonged courtship."¹¹² It is obvious that Montezuma was not hearing what she was saying about her mother. She wrote,

I insist once again upon your securing the position of agency physician in some Sioux country...on my mother's account, I simply cannot leave her out of my plans...if you cannot comply then we shall postpone the day while I teach here and take care of my mother...If we marry it will be when you have carried out my wish, not before.¹¹³

Clearly, Gertrude was in charge here. She also wrote about the type of wedding she wanted, "you are right in believing I do not like display. It is my wish to have our wedding informal and very quiet."¹¹⁴ But at the same time, Zitkala-Sa was following the dominant society's protocol for a bride-to-be. She was long-distance fabric shopping in June 1901 for her trousseau, which according to the latest article, "Plans for the Season's Weddings" should have "elegant simplicity." The article details styles and fabrics and manners appropriate for newly married woman.¹¹⁵ In one of her letters to Montezuma, Zitkala-Sa wrote, "The samples came back being not what I wanted. I thought not to bother you, for I know just where such things are in Boston."¹¹⁶

By planning an intimate wedding, Zitkala-Sa eliminated the need for the rules offered by Ladies Home Journal for ushers, the maid of honor and father of the bride, and etiquette for the reception. The ring, however, was a different story. The wedding ring is not necessary for the groom, but for the bride, the ring is the signifier of a

wife's obedience to her husband.¹¹⁷ Zitkala-Sa had much to say about "the ring" to Montezuma:

I have often wondered within my heart why you did not choose to honor me with your ring. Perhaps you took my joke in earnest. I said I did not wish to be stamped so I could not have fun! Still I want you to do what you want to. For my part I should have been proud to have been trusted to wear the usual symbol of love.¹¹⁸

Although symbolic of a culture with whose hegemony she wrestled, Zitkala-Sa does not give up on the ring. In response to an invitation to accompany Montezuma to Arizona in the fall, she replied,

I'd rather you give me my Arizona in the form of an engagement ring. I do not wear common jewelry but I think the only two I should ever prize would be the engagement ring and the wedding ring. I want to give you a duplicate to the plain wedding ring and shall expect you to wear it too. Of course it would have to be a little larger to fit your finger.¹¹⁹

In anticipation of the engagement ring compounded with conflict over its status symbol, Zitkala-Sa wrote to Montezuma, "As to the ring, will you place it in a candy box? People here are so adamant about knowing everybody's affairs that I do not wish them to pry around the small box."¹²⁰ By this time in late June, Zitkala-Sa was preparing to leave Fort Totten, North Dakota, where she had been collecting stories for several weeks, for home at Yankton, South Dakota. In her last note to Montezuma from Fort Totten she wrote, "Yesterday the stage driver said he would

bring the box today...I'll not wear it here, for I do not like to create talk."¹²¹

Zitkala-Sa and Montezuma's engagement had been off and on again, with the ring going back and forth from Chicago to Ft. Totten to Chicago and back to Yankton. By February of 1902, the engagement is off again, however, Zitkala-Sa does not really want to part with the ring, "I have waited to see what you say about the ring, and in the meanwhile wear it as a friendship ring."¹²² Certainly, it does appear as if she wanted it both ways. She even told Montezuma she started wearing a ruby ring August 1901, a gift from her future husband, Raymond T. Bonnin.¹²³

At times it seems as if Zitkala-Sa was purposely looking for an argument. She had been in charge of the Susan Longstreth Literary Society at Carlisle Indian School and very easily could have been missing intellectual stimulation. Some of her speech was definitely evasive. A girl would not answer "yes" to any question that might be put to her by a suitor, for fear he would tell others she said "yes" to him and appear promiscuous. The back and forth resistance on Zitkala-Sa's part can also be related to traditional Sioux courtship patterns. Raymond DeMallie points out that if the tensions between the sexes in Lakota culture are perceived as a battle between men and women,

then the central point of the complementary duality of male and female is lost.¹²⁴ Montezuma's unfamiliarity with Sioux culture explains the apparent rhetorical misunderstandings over the content of letters crossed in the mail.

Besides all the confusing rules and demanding societal dictates about marriage, there may have been some other Sioux factors pulling Zitkala-Sa away from Montezuma. It is apparent that he was not familiar with the custom of prohibitive speech between a mother-in-law and son-in-law, asking when he was going to meet Zitkala-Sa's mother. She told him not to bother about meeting her mother; it would have been too difficult. "As a sign of respect one did not talk to, or even look directly at one's mother-in-law. [I]t always required a third party to communicate between parents and children-in-law."¹²⁵ Perhaps Zitkala-Sa knew her mother would not have approved of such a "city-slicker" Indian. After all, her brothers knew nothing about him either. Zitkala-Sa remarked early in the engagement, "I have not told my brothers."¹²⁶

Despite the fact that literary scholars play up a rift between Zitkala-Sa and her mother, there is ample evidence to the contrary in her letters and in her published short stories.¹²⁷ Zitkala-Sa remembers this scene from the summer of her fifteenth year, home from school and not fitting in.

Zitkala-Sa woke one night to her mother's "wailing in the hills to the spirit of her brother for support" to help her daughter through this difficult time.¹²⁸ Even though Zitkala-Sa eventually returned to school, any divide between mother and daughter disappeared after that summer. Perhaps another pull from home came from her loyalty and sense of obligation not only to her mother but to her older brother as well.

Although the ultimate decision as to whether a girl should marry a particular suitor was the responsibilities of her male relatives, particularly her brothers, in theory and normally in practice, girls were allowed to make their own decisions as to whom to marry.¹²⁹

This custom is also shared by Winnebago Indians, another Siouian culture, as we know from Mountain Wolf Woman's autobiography, Mountain Wolf Woman Sister of Crashing Thunder. Mountain Wolf Woman's mother speaks to her daughter about the arranged marriage, "It is your brother's doing. You must do whatever your brothers say."¹³⁰ Perhaps Gertie's older brother David re-introduced her to his co-worker, Raymond Bonnin at one of the agency dance hall socials, when she was home the summer of 1901. Ray was no longer the teenager Gertie knew at White's Indian School; he was an educated man with an allotment, ready for a wife.

When Zitkala-Sa ended her relationship with Montezuma and the life he represented at the time, she was on her way, in the words of Diné scholar Rebecca Tsosie, "to assert[ing] older values and perceptions which have always allowed Indian women to maintain a sense of autonomy and self-worth."¹³¹ In choosing Ray Bonnin over Carlos Montezuma and other suitors, Zitkala-Sa was affirming her identity as a Sioux woman. She wrote, "OH! How I'd like to return to olden times!"¹³² She knew if they lived during their grandparents' time, that Ray might have shown up at the entrance to her mother's lodge with at least four good horses.

¹ Richard H. Pratt "The Advantages of Mingling Indians and Whites" extracted from the original report of the 19th Annual Conference of Charities and Corrections, Denver 1892, Pamphlets in American History (PAH) I 509, reprinted in Francis Paul Prucha ed., Americanizing the American Indians: Writings of the "Friends of the Indian" 1880-1900 Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973 (261)

² Prucha ed., Americanizing the American Indians (260)

³ A few descendents of Carlisle students with whose work I am familiar are: authors Leslie Marmon Silko, Susan Power, and Roberta Hill, activist comedian Charlie Hill, higher education science and engineering consultant Dr. Norbert Hill, retired child development advocate, Orietta Cuellar, Director of the Native American Institute at Michigan State University, Dr. George Cornell, and former director of the Institute for American Indian Studies at the University of South Dakota, Dr. Leonard Bruguier.

⁴ The Castillo San Marcos was built between 1672-1695 as an outpost of the Spanish Empire. Renamed Fort Marion by the United States Army in 1821, it became a National Monument in 1924. The name officially became The Castillo San Marcos National Monument in 1942.

⁵ Photograph courtesy of the National Park Service, St. Augustine, Florida; See the Carlisle Indian School Research web pages edited by Barbara Landis for profiles on the Fort Marion prisoners.

⁶ Harper's Weekly May 11, 1878; reprinted in Linda F. Witmer The Indian Industrial School: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1879-1918 Carlisle, PA: Cumberland County Historical Society, 2000 (1993) (8)

⁷ For a pictographic history of CIS, see Linda F. Witmer The Indian Industrial School: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1879-1918 Carlisle, PA: Cumberland County Historical Society, 2000 (1993).

⁸ Witmer Indian Industrial School (3-4)

⁹ The Indian Helper December 11, 1891 (2); transcribed by Barbara Landis

¹⁰ The Indian Helper December 3, 1889. For ten new orders for The Indian Helper, the subscriber would be sent the before and after shots of the first group of Pueblo students taken three years apart. "And for fifteen (subscriptions), we offer a group of the whole school on a 9 x 14 inch card. Faces show distinctly, worth sixty cents."

¹¹ Carlisle Indian School (CIS) United States Indian School, Carlisle Pennsylvania 1895 (49)

¹² Frederick Hoxie "Chauncey Yellow Robe and the Wild West Shows" Talking Back to Civilization: Indian Voices from the Progressive Era Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's (117)

¹³ Yellow Robe played a role in the first Native-acted silent movie, The Silent Enemy (1930), directed by H. P. Carver. Filmed in Ontario, Canada in the 1920s, the film starred Penobscot dancer, Molly Spotted Elk. Ironically, Yellow Robe played a quintessential tragic Indian, Chief Chetoga.

¹⁴ Copied from an edition Indian Helper December 25, 1898, CIS files, Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, PA; This photo is not part of the Choate Collection and unfortunately, the original no longer exists.

¹⁵ Indian Helper July 9; July 16; August 6, 1897

¹⁶ Zitkala-Sa "An Indian Teacher Among Indians" American Indian Stories 83

¹⁷ Indian Helper September 24, 1897; "Side by Side" was published in The Earlamite March 16, 1896.

¹⁸ Indian Helper October 29, 1897

¹⁹ Indian Helper January 21, 1898; For further reading on King Philip's War see Russell Bourne The Red King's Rebellion: Racial Politics in New England, 1675-1678 New York: Atheneum, 1990

²⁰ Jenny Hale Pulsipher "Our Sages and Sageles": a Letter on Massachusetts Indian Policy after King Philip's War" www.historycooperative.org/journals/wm/ (4); reprinted from William and Mary Quarterly 58:2

²¹ Pulsipher, "Our Sages and Sageles" (4)

²² Reprinted in Hoxie's Encyclopedia of North American Indians, 374; the un-signed original hangs in the American Antiquarian Society. This print is also the frontispiece of William Apess' Eulogy for King Philip published in 1836.

²³ CIS, United States Indian School 57

²⁴ CIS, United States Indian School 57

²⁵ Indian Helper July 1, 1898; I was unable to find Taube's first name or initials.

²⁶ Indian Helper August 12, 1898

²⁷ Michaels Käsebier 169; It is likely that Gertrude received a sitting fee, although no record exists. It is highly doubtful she shared in Keiley's profits from the sale of her portrait. As recently as 1985 and 1988, two Zitkala-Sa prints were sold through the Lee Gallery and Sotheby's Auction House; they may have been the same print.

²⁸ Housed in the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, it may be viewed by appointment.

²⁹ "Zitkala-Sa" Glycerine Print, Joseph Keiley 1898; National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution S/79.26

³⁰ Zitkala-Sa American Indian Stories with a new introduction by Susan Rose Dominguez Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003 (1921); This print was also published in Camera Notes V: 1901-02, (32)

³¹ Keiley was the historian for Alfred Stieglitz's Linked Ring; See Weston J. Naef, "Joseph T. Keiley" The Collection of Alfred Steiglitz: Fifty Pioneers of Modern Photography New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978.

³² The Gertrude Käsebier Collection is housed in the Division of Photographic History at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. Biographical information on Käsebier is derived from Gertrude Käsebier: the Photographer and Her Photographs by Barbara L. Michaels, New York: H.N. Abrams, 1992. The Käsebier collection contains 109 photographic prints and 40 photomechanical reproductions of Dakota and Lakota (Sioux) Indians by Gertrude Käsebier and 15 drawings by Sioux Indians collected by her. The entire collection was donated by her granddaughter, Mina Turner, in 1969; Rayna Green, "Gertrude Käsebier's 'Indian' Photographs: More Than Meets the Eye" History of Photography January 2000 (60).

³³ Barbara L. Michaels Gertrude Käsebier: the Photographer and Her Photographs New York: H.N. Abrams, 1992 (38)

³⁴ Michaels, Käsebier 38

³⁵ Michaels, Käsebier 27; Landis conversation August, 2004

³⁶ Michaels, Käsebier 42

³⁷ Michaels, Käsebier 29

³⁸ Käsebier grew up in Iowa and Colorado with only Indian friends as a child.

³⁹ Susan Bernardin "The Lessons of a Sentimental Education: Zitkala-Sa's Autobiographical Narratives" Western American Literature 32.3 (Summer 1997) 218; see also Shirley Samuels, ed., the Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth Century America New York: Oxford University Press, 1992

⁴⁰ Zitkala-Sa "The Cutting of My Long Hair" "The School Days of an Indian Girl" American Indian Stories 52

⁴¹ Zitkala-Sa "The Cutting of My Long Hair" American Indian Stories 51-52

⁴² Green "Gertrude Käsebier's 'Indian' Photographs: More Than Meets the Eye" (58, 59); For further discussion and before and after photographs of Indian girls at Hampton Institute, see Laura Wexler "Tender Violence: Literary Eavesdropping, Domestic Fiction, and Educational Reform" The Yale Journal of Criticism 5.1 (1991) 151-187

⁴³ Michaels, Käsebier 44

⁴⁴ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 4; Red Bird the Yankton runner, was spelled according to how it was heard as "Zitkanan." Gertrude Simmons chose the Lakota pronunciation and spelling, Zitkala, perhaps because Thomas Marshall, her fiancé in 1899 was Oglala Lakota.

⁴⁵ Z. S. (Ft. Totten, ND) to Carlos Montezuma (Chicago) [c. June-July, 1901]

⁴⁶ Michaels, Käsebier 42; Käsebier's hand-written recordings of these tales were never published. The Lee Gallery in New York City disclosed the tales were sold in 1992 and are part of a private collection. Attempts to establish the existence of these tales are ongoing. "American Indian Portrait" (Joe Black Fox) published in Michaels, Käsebier (38)

⁴⁷ Green, "Gertrude Käsebier's 'Indian' Photographs: More than Meets the Eye" (59)

⁴⁸ Michaels, Käsebier 36, 42

- ⁴⁹ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma c. June 1901; there was no copy Outlook magazine, which ran one of the Käsebier photos in January 1901, among the Bonnin papers. It is my belief that Raymond did not have a copy of any of the portraits taken by either Käsebier or Keiley.
- ⁵⁰ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma c. March 1901
- ⁵¹ Michaels Käsebier 42; Gertrude Käsebier kept her own apartment in New York City.
- ⁵² Michaels, Käsebier 42; Indian Helper October 21, 1898
- ⁵³ CIS-Choate 3, courtesy of Cumberland County Historical Society (CCHS), Carlisle, PA
- ⁵⁴ The Indian Helper April 28, 1899
- ⁵⁵ The Indian Helper January 6, 1899 reported, "Miss Simmons has gone to Boston to take special musical training." Gruenberg (1854-1928) came to Boston from Vienna in 1889 and became head of the violin department of the New England Conservatory in 1895 (MS MUS 234-2 Harvard).
- ⁵⁶ The Indian Helper March 9, 1900; CIS graduate Oneida Dennison Wheelock conducted the famous Carlisle Band when Zitkala-Sa was the featured violin soloist (c.1900).
- ⁵⁷ The Outlook May 5, 1900 cited in Dominguez "Zitkala-Sa "The Representative Indian" xiii
- ⁵⁸ The Indian Helper March 28, 1890
- ⁵⁹ Zitkala-Sa could not transcribe music in 1912 when working on *The Sun Dance* opera with William Hanson; he did all the musical transcriptions of the "Indian" melodies she played on her violin; notes Sun Dance Land, William Hanson Papers, MS 299, L. Tom Perry Special collections, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU; see chapter five for detailed discussion.
- ⁶⁰ The New England Conservatory is frequently confused with the Boston Conservatory of Music, which has no record of Gertrude Simmons either, With regard to student records, similarly, Potawatomi writer Simon Pokagon claimed to have studied at both Oberlin College and Notre Dame University, but does not show up on any rosters. Oberlin Archivist Tammy Martin believes it was common practice for Professors to take on "special students" of this type (meaning Native American and African American) during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- ⁶¹ Michaels, Käsebier 42; Zitkala to Montezuma, April 3, 1901
- ⁶² Z.S. to Montezuma c. June-July 1901
- ⁶³ References to correspondence with William A. Jones, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, are numerous in Michaels' biography of Käsebier.
- ⁶⁴ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg "The New Woman" Wilma Mankiller, Gwendolyn Mink, Marysa Navarro, Barbara Smith, and Gloria Steinem eds., The Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998 (430)
- ⁶⁵ Nancy Woloch ed., Early American Women: A Documentary History, 1600-1900 Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company 1992 (528-29); see also Norton and Alexander "Work and Work Cultures in the Era of the "New Woman," 1880-1920s" and "The "New Woman" in Public Life and Politics, 1900-1930" Mary Beth Norton and Ruth M. Alexander Major Problems in American Women's History New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2003
- ⁶⁶ The Indian Helper March 9, 1900
- ⁶⁷ The Outlook May 5, 1900. Käsebier's photograph of Zitkala-Sa was unattributed by The Outlook. In November 1900 Everybody's Magazine printed the same photograph of Zitkala-Sa without giving credit to Käsebier.
- ⁶⁸ "Our Band on the Road" The Indian Helper March 30, 1900; Montezuma (1867-1923), an Yavapai-Apache, was purchased from captivity in the Southwest as a child and educated in Chicago public schools. He was the

CIS physician from 1893-1896. Carlos Montezuma and Zitkala-Sa carried on a tumultuous letter-writing relationship in 1901 at his instigation. Their "engagement" was on and off, ending the second time when she wrote him she was married in June 1902. Zitkala-Sa's letters to Montezuma are in The Carlos Montezuma papers (WSHS microfilm). The 1901-1902 letters, transcribed by Susan Rose Dominguez can be found at the Carlisle Indian School Web site (2003).

⁶⁹ Iverson, Carlos Montezuma 98

⁷⁰ The Indian Helper July 24, 1898; The Wheelock's baby is not named

⁷¹ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [20 February 1901]

⁷² Red Man and Helper March 1901

⁷³ Zitkala-Sa to Alice Fletcher [20 February 1901] Alice Fletcher Papers, MS 4558, Smithsonian National Anthropological Archives; transcribed by Linda Waggoner.

⁷⁴ Red Man and Helper March 1901

⁷⁵ Zitkala-Sa "The Trial Path" American Indian Stories 127

⁷⁶ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 16-17

⁷⁷ The Red Man and Helper April 12, 1901

⁷⁸ It is not likely that Zitkala-Sa was consulted by Blumenschein, nor by publisher John Wanamaker. While scenes of camp life appear accurate, the costuming of the heroine Tusee confuses East Asian with American Plains Indian dress.

⁷⁹ Zitkala-Sa "A Warrior's Daughter" American Indian Stories 146

⁸⁰ Zitkala-Sa "A Warrior's Daughter" American Indian Stories 144,145

⁸¹ See Beatrice Medicine "'Warrior Women'- Sex Role Alternatives for Plains Indian Women" in The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine eds., Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983 (267-280).

⁸² Zitkala-Sa "A Warrior's Daughter" American Indian Stories 138

⁸³ Zitkala-Sa "A Warrior's Daughter" American Indian Stories 137

⁸⁴ Zitkala-Sa "A Warrior's Daughter" American Indian Stories 143

⁸⁵ Zitkala-Sa "A Warrior's Daughter" American Indian Stories 139; The above paragraphs concerning Zitkala-Sa's fiction written in Boston in 1900-1901, are taken from Dominguez, "Zitkala-Sa: The Representative Indian" (xiv-xvi).

⁸⁶ Zitkala-Sa's correspondence to Montezuma is on Reel 1 of the Carlos Montezuma Papers (microfilm).

⁸⁷ Unfortunately, Montezuma's letters to Zitkala-Sa are not among the existing papers in the Gertrude Bonnin papers housed at the Brigham Young Archives, nor are there copies among the Montezuma Papers.

⁸⁸ Robert H. Walker "Urban Home and Family" in Portrait of America Vol II Reconstruction to the Present Stephen B Oates ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983 (79); Woloch, Early American Women 528

⁹⁰ Lois W. Banner Women in Modern America Orlando: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1995 (1974) 45

⁹¹ Walker, "Urban Home and Family" 85

⁹² Dexter Fisher "The Evolution of a Writer" American Indian Quarterly 5.3 (1979); reprinted as introduction to Zitkala-Sa American Indian Stories 1985(1921) Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, xi; Zitkala-Sa was also proficient on both piano and violin.

⁹³ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [1 June 1901]

⁹⁴ Winona Keith, "How the Sioux Keep House" Good Housekeeping 32:4 (280)

⁹⁵ Keith, "How the Sioux Keep House" (280)

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- ⁹⁶ Keith, "How the Sioux Keep House" (280); When Gertie returned to Yankton after three years in Indiana, there was a cabin nearby her canvas tipi.
- ⁹⁷ Keith, "How the Sioux Keep House" (280)
- ⁹⁸ Keith, "How the Sioux Keep House" (280)
- ⁹⁹ Walker, "Urban Home and Family" 80-81
- ¹⁰⁰ According to Doreen Rappaport who interviewed Gertrude's descendant at Yankton, Hazel Ashes, Gertrude played tennis whenever the opportunity arose (conversation November 2003). She learned tennis as part of women's physical education curriculum at Earlham College.
- ¹⁰¹ "Housework as Exercise" Good Housekeeping October 1901 (293)
- ¹⁰² Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [30 May 1901]
- ¹⁰³ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [30 May 1901]
- ¹⁰⁴ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [15 August 1901]
- ¹⁰⁵ Alice Marriott The Ten Grandmothers Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945 (83)
- ¹⁰⁶ Woloch Women in Modern America p. 47
- ¹⁰⁷ founded in 1897 and 1899 respectively
- ¹⁰⁸ Ladies Home Journal and Practical Housekeeper April 1899, 1900, 1901; Good Housekeeping April 1900; February and March 1900
- ¹⁰⁹ "The Correct Wedding of Today" February 1901 (20)
- ¹¹⁰ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [28 May 1901]
- ¹¹¹ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [c. June 1901]
- ¹¹² Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [c. June 1901]; For further discussion of Zitkala-Sa's letters to Montezuma, see Ruth Spack, "Dis/engagement: Zitkala-Sa's Letters to Carlos Montezuma, 1901-1902" MELUS 26.1 (Spring 2001) 172-204.
- ¹¹³ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [31 August 1901]
- ¹¹⁴ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [1 June 1901]
- ¹¹⁵ Babette A. Muelle "Plans for the Season's Wedding" Good Housekeeping April 1901 (316)
- ¹¹⁶ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [3 June 1901]
- ¹¹⁷ "The Correct Wedding of Today" March 1900 (20)
- ¹¹⁸ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [1 June 1901]
- ¹¹⁹ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [6 June 1901]
- ¹²⁰ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [c. June 1901]
- ¹²¹ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [21 June 1901]
- ¹²² Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [c. February 1902]
- ¹²³ Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [22 August 1901]
- ¹²⁴ Raymond J. DeMallie "Male and Female in Lakota Culture" in Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine eds., The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women New York: University Press of America, 1983 (252-254)
- ¹²⁵ Marla Powers Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual and Reality Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986 (80)
- ¹²⁶ Letter to Montezuma from Zitkala-Sa [6 June 1901]
- ¹²⁷ Zitkala-Sa, "A Trip Westward" American Indian Stories 88-89
- ¹²⁸ Zitkala-Sa, "Four Strange Summers" American Indian Stories 73
- ¹²⁹ De Mallie, "Male and Female in Lakota Culture" 251
- ¹³⁰ Nancy Oestreich Lurie Mountain Wolf Woman Sister of Crashing Thunder Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1961 (29)
- ¹³¹ Rebecca Tsosie "Changing Women: The Crosscurrents of American Indian Feminine Identity" Vicki Ruiz and Ellen Carol DuBois eds., Unequal Sisters New York: Routledge Publishers, 1994 (525)
- ¹³² Zitkala-Sa to Montezuma [3 April 1901]

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**THE GERTRUDE BONNIN STORY:
FROM YANKTON DESTINY INTO AMERICAN HISTORY, 1804-1938**

VOLUME II

By

Susan Rose Dominguez

A DISSERTATION

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Chapter Five: Mountains, Motherhood, St. Mary, and Music

Located in the music area of the Parlor, Chapter five holds the memories of Gertrude's life during the Utah years (1902-1917) after she and Raymond moved as newlyweds to Utah in the summer of 1902. Surrounded by mountains and Mormons, Gertrude and Raymond lived on the Uintah-Ouray reservation at Whiterocks where Raymond worked for the Indian Service as a property clerk. Within a few short months of marriage at age twenty-six, Gertrude began a new phase of her life as a wife and mother-to-be, isolated in the northern mountains of Utah.

Utes and Mormons

The Uintah-Ouray Reservation was quite different from Yankton, South Dakota and conditions were even further removed from Gertrude's previous life in Boston in 1900. She wrote in 1910, "In this wilderness, closely fortified by the Rockies, there seem to be no real Christians or civilized men. The Utes are groping in Spiritual Darkness: the majority of the White people are Mormons."¹ Knowing the background of Mormon settlement in the area and the history of the Uintah-Ouray Reservation makes it easier for the Gallery visitor to imagine the atmosphere into which the Gertrude and Raymond moved in 1902.

Jan Pettit notes in her book, Utes: The Mountain People, that by the 1850s, the ancient homelands of the Utah Utes around Salt Lake became the sacred home of the Latter Day Saints. Mormon leader Brigham Young served as the first governor of Utah Territory and superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1850-1857. Young wanted to treat the Indians fairly and as long as they "wanted to farm and use the land in a civilized manner, they could stay."² In his treatment of Ute-Mormon relations in "The Indians in Utah Territory," S. Lyman Tyler quotes from one of Young's messages to the territorial legislature. Young wrote,

I have uniformly pursued a friendly course of action towards them feeling convinced that independent of the question of exercising humanity toward so degraded and ignorant a race of people, it was manifestly more economical and less expensive to feed and clothe [the Indians] than to fight.³

Despite the fact that the Book of Mormon identified Native Americans as a lost branch of the house of Israel called Lamanites, Pettit asserts, "problems between the United States government and the Mormons ultimately resulted in hardships for the Utes."⁴ Pettit complements the written record with Ute oral tradition, which, "relate[s] horrible mass killings of men, women, and children who were enticed into Mormon buildings or driven into lakes to drown."⁵

The Uintah-Ouray Reservation was originally decreed by Executive Order in 1861 by President Abraham Lincoln, the year before Martial Law was declared in Utah to enforce anti-polygamy legislation.⁶ However, the Senate did not ratify the Order until 1870, and it took another eleven years before the reservation became the new home of three mutually distrustful bands in 1881. David Rich Lewis distinguishes between the three Ute Bands confined to the Uintah-Ouray Reservation in his article, "Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865-1928." Lewis explains the reason behind the factionalism in Northern Ute country after the forced migration in 1881 of the Uncompahgre and White River Utes from Colorado. He writes, the Uintah Utes,

had the longest contact history and the longest exposure to reservation agriculture, were the most progressive of the Northern Ute Bands. The Uncompahgre [Ouray] Band suffered the most internal divisions, those who settled on river-bottom farms and those who maintained a more...nomadic and herding lifestyle.⁷

Lewis continues, "Finally, there were the White Rivers...classed as wild and rebellious traditionalists, abundantly opposed to any change in their way of life."⁸

When Gertrude and Raymond moved to Whiterocks in 1902, the Uintah-Ouray Reservation was seven years into its ten-year allotment process, which was completed in 1905. In an

essay titled, "Utah's Unassimilated Minorities," Richard Ulibarri writes, "the fact that most of the good agricultural land was on the Uintah section of the reservation and that the Utes wanted to maintain hunting and grazing lands and avoid farming, turned the whole experience into a fiasco."⁹ Jan Pettit also notes, "The Ute Indian people have never been comfortable with the allotment system. Their centuries-old culture teaches a communal system that does not fit well with individual ownership of land."¹⁰ Moving here was like stepping back in time. As a child, Gertrude would have heard stories about the transition to a reservation. She already knew first-hand what was happening to yet another indigenous land base.

Not all the surplus land in the Uintah Basin went for white settlement. Three years after the Bonnins moved to the Uintah-Ouray Reservation, President Theodore Roosevelt invoked Executive powers and took back some of the land designated by President Lincoln for the Northern Utes in 1861. Approximately 1,110,000 acres were withdrawn from the Uintah-Ouray Reservation in 1905 to create the Uintah National Forest Reserve.¹¹ By 1909, Ute lands in the Uintah Basin had decreased from four million acres to about

360,000 acres. This is approximately the same size as the Bonnins' homeland, the Yankton Sioux Reservation.

Guide to the Utah Period

The following chronology covers the years 1902-1917, and will be helpful to follow Gertrude's travels and some of the over-lapping phases of her life during the Utah period.

May 10, 1902

Gertrude Simmons and Raymond T. Bonnin are married in a civil ceremony in Tryndall, South Dakota.

Summer 1902

Gertrude and Raymond relocate to Whiterocks, Utah where Ray is employed at the Uintah and Ouray Reservation Agency as a property clerk.

May 1903

Gertrude gives birth to a son, Raymond Ohiya Bonnin.

Fall 1905

Gertrude is employed as a temporary teacher at the Whiterocks Agency school. The allotment process that began in 1895 is completed when the government opens surplus Ute lands to white settlement, particularly cattle ranchers.

c. 1905-1906

Gertrude and Ray "adopt" a young Ute boy, Oran Curry.

1908

Gertrude meets William F. Hanson while taking music lessons in nearby Vernal, Utah. Through Hanson's stories about local Ute lore, the Bonnins meet Little Bighorn survivor Old Sioux. Ray coaxes him out of his cave and he lives with the Bonnins until his death in 1915.

Fall 1909

Raymond is appointed head teacher at the Whiterocks Agency School; he resigns after disputes with Episcopalians.

Winter 1909-Spring 1910

The Bonnin family resides at Fort Yates, North Dakota on the Standing Rock Reservation. Gertrude supports the family as a clerk. In 1909, Gertrude converts to Catholicism.

1911

Gertrude establishes a letter-writing relationship with the Jesuit priest of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. Raymond is reinstated as clerk at the Uintah-Ouray Agency in Utah. Gertrude begins collaborating with William Hanson on an "Indian" opera.

Winter 1913

"The Sun Dance" opera premieres in Vernal, Utah.

May-June 1913

Gertrude spends two weeks studying violin in Ohio and enrolls her ten-year old son in boarding school with Benedictine nuns in Nauvoo, Illinois. The Bonnins move to Fort Duchesne, Utah.

1915

Gertrude receives support from the Society of American Indians (SAI) for the first Indian-run community center on a federal reservation.

1916

Gertrude Bonnin is elected Secretary of the SAI.

1917

Ohiya is home from boarding school. The Bonnins relocate to Washington D.C.; Raymond joins the U. S. Army and Gertrude and Ohiya occupy a small apartment in the city.

The Bonnin's Utah Household

Gertrude and Raymond's only biological son, Raymond Ohiya, was born in May 1903; he was known by his middle name Ohiya, a common Dakota name that translates as "winner" or "winning."¹² The Bonnins also adopted a Ute boy of about the same age, Oran Curry. It is not known exactly

when Oran came to live with the Bonnins. Although Oran Curry was never legally adopted, he called Gertie and Ray "mother" and "father" all their lives.¹³ After 1908, the Bonnin household also included their adopted grandfather. Old Sioux "Bad Hand" was a Battle of the Little Bighorn survivor who lived with the Bonnins from 1908 until his death in 1915.

In the living area of the Bonnin's small home stood Gertie's piano. Besides the obvious connection to her former life in the East, playing the piano soothed Gertrude and undoubtedly provided an outlet from the four males under her care.¹⁴

Gertrude Bonnin's only official employment in Utah was with the Indian Service as a temporary teacher at the Uintah reservation school at the Whiterocks Agency, for a few months in 1905. There seemed to be no need for Gertrude's skills at this isolated agency. She did pick up some clerical work for Agent Martin in 1913. But after all, she was a mother with two small boys that kept her busy for a few years. When Ohiya was five years old, Gertrude began once again, to pursue her passion for music. For a few years, Gertrude was able to make money teaching piano lessons and improve her own playing through lessons, both of which took her into Vernal, the closest town.¹⁵ It is

there in 1908, she met music teacher William F. Hanson who became friends with both Gertrude and Raymond. There was a photograph of Ohiya, Raymond and two unidentified Ute friends in the Hanson collection (figure 5.1).¹⁶ Sometime after 1910, she began collaborating with Hanson on his "Indian" opera. Gertrude also began volunteer teaching at the school in Vernal where she founded and directed the Uintah Academy Band.

During their fifteen years in Northern Utah Gertrude and Ray made occasional visits back to Yankton. In the middle of the Utah period, the Bonnin family resided at Fort Yates on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota for six months during the winter and spring of 1909-1910. Gertrude made one other trip off the Uintah-Ouray reservation in the late spring of 1913 with her son Ohiya to Westerville, Ohio before he went to boarding school in Nauvoo, Illinois. After Gertrude returned from this trip, she and Raymond moved from the Agency at Whiterocks south to Fort Duchesne, Utah where they lived for four years on a small ranch until relocating to Washington D.C. in 1917.

"Dear Father"

Until now, scholars have assumed that Gertrude Bonnin's pen lay inactive from 1902-1917. However, a cache

of letters located among the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions (BCIM) records held in the Marquette University Archives reveals a relationship with Roman Catholic priests that both Raymond and Gertrude had for several years.¹⁷ This relationship of rhetoric was, especially for Gertrude, one of intellectual companionship. The letters also reveal that the priests of the BCIM often acted as liaisons between the Bonnins and Indian Service officials. Dating from 1910, the letters indicate that during the six months at Standing Rock, Gertrude was the sole provider for her family, working as a clerk at a salary of seventy-six dollars per month.

Married for seven years, the mother of a six-year old son, Gertrude was thirty-five years old when she converted to Catholicism at Standing Rock. She wrote,

My Dear Father Ketcham, Last winter while at Ft. Yates, I met Father Bernard, Father Martin and Father Ambrose. I saw the wonderful work they are doing, they and the [Benedictine] Sisters. I was converted!¹⁸

In addition to providing evidence of Gertrude's Catholicism, the letters reveal cultural and social, personal and political, intellectual, and spiritual conditions of Gertrude's conversion in 1909. Her involvement with the St. Mary Women's Society at Standing Rock supported her status as wife, mother, and caregiver.

Catholicism gave Gertrude the strength to tolerate conditions in Utah when the Bonnins returned to the Uintah-Ouray Reservation in the summer of 1910.

There is a significant sense of irony surrounding Gertrude Bonnin's conversion to Catholicism. In Zitkala-Sa's 1902 published essay, "Why I am a Pagan," she publicly denounced Christianity. She wrote, "I prefer to their dogma my excursions into the natural gardens where the voice of the Great Spirit is heard."¹⁹ Still decrying Christian dogma, this essay also appeared in 1921, re-titled, "The Great Spirit."²⁰ In an interview Gertrude granted N. L. Nelson in Utah in 1913, she is quoted as saying,

I have been trained in the concepts of the Christian religion, but I do not find them more beautiful, more noble, or more true than the religious beliefs of the Indian. Indeed if one allows for a change in names, the two sets of concepts are much the same. I should not like to see my people lose their ideals, or have them supplanted by others less fitted to influence their lives for good.²¹

Adding this statement to Gertrude's Catholic conversion invites the question, "What kind of Catholic was Gertrude Bonnin?" The answers lie in various conditions of her conversion. A cursory glance hints that hers was a conversion of convenience. But upon closer reading of the "Dear Father" letters, stories of discrimination and even hate crimes can be heard. As educated Indians, the Bonnins

believed they were entitled to be treated just like other American citizens. At this point in time, this meant securing employment with compensation comparable to what white employees received and opportunity for advancement. Both Gertrude and Raymond used their relationship with Catholic priests to interface with the federal government when it stood to serve their family's economic and educational needs as well as professional goals.

Catholicism did not diminish the Bonnins' Sioux identity. Gertrude wrote in a 1912 letter, "My husband is an Indian and I am an Indian."²² The roots of Gertrude Bonnin's "conditions" reside in her *Ihanktonwan* heritage, which includes the history of Catholic Yankton relations. The Yankton chief, Padániapapi (Struck by the Ree) was a Catholic. He heard Father Pierre DeSmet preach to the Sioux in 1844, and was baptized by him in 1866, at age sixty-two. However, the Catholic presence at Yankton remained sporadic until 1913 when the first permanent Catholic mission was established. Until that time, Yankton was occasionally visited by traveling Catholic missionaries. Marquette University archivist Mark Thiel suggests that one of them may have baptized Raymond as a child.²³

Christopher Vecsey points out that the Jesuits grafted Catholicism onto traditional Lakota spirituality, keeping

many terms and ceremonial practices.²⁴ Historian William Rollings notes, "When traditional ways become irrelevant to new realities, some Indians created new faiths that incorporated familiar symbols and ritual with new ideologies."²⁵

The Roman Catholic Church and American Indian Reservations

As the United States conquered the plains and created reservations, federal policy after 1869, known as Grant's Peace Policy, entrusted local Indian administration to Christian missionaries who were already established at an agency. After 1885 reservations were opened up to other Christian denominations. However, the government favored Protestants over Catholics, in part, because the Catholic Church was well established in the Southwest and California. In reaction to this federal policy, the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions (BCIM) was chartered and staffed in 1874. Housed in Washington D.C., the BCIM is still a viable organization today.

Of the thirteen American Sioux reservations, the Catholic Church was at first only allowed to establish two permanent missions in Dakota Territory, one at Fort Totten on the Devil's Lake Reservation (known today as Spirit Lake), and another at Fort Yates on the Standing Rock

Reservation. Both the Devil's Lake Mission, run by Jesuits, and Standing Rock Mission, run by Benedictines, served multi-tribal communities.²⁶ In the late 1880s, after Grant's Peace Policy gave way to allotment and the reservations were "opened up," the Jesuits established missions on Rosebud, Pine Ridge, and Crow Creek Reservations. Shortly before her marriage Gertrude Simmons worked as a temporary teacher at the Crow Creek Agency school.²⁷

History of the Catholic Sioux Congress

The first Catholic Sioux Congress was organized in the summer of 1891, on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, hosting Indians from Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, and Devil's Lake reservations.²⁸ Given the devastating massacre at Wounded Knee the winter before, Sioux people were left with serious physical, social and spiritual needs. The annual summer gatherings served partially as a replacement for the banned Sun Dances. In 1883, Secretary of the Interior, Henry M. Teller established the Courts of Indian Offences to "eliminate heathenish practices...such as the sun-dance" among the Indians. All dances and traditional religious ceremonies became officially prohibited by a blanket federal policy.²⁹ In his Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for 1883, Teller

said, "If it is the purpose of this government to civilize the Indians, they must be compelled to desist from the savage and barbarous practices that are calculated to keep them in savagery."³⁰

At the Congresses, thousands of Native faithful from Dakota Territory came together and celebrated social and religious solidarity. Christopher Vecsey tells us, "They renewed both their religious and kinship obligations, helping to create a culture that bound Catholic and Indian relations in a single knot."³¹ This group event, laden with much ceremony, was an exciting place where Sioux families and entire bands camped together to visit and feast. Babies and adults were baptized, confessions were heard and Eucharistic processions paraded the Congress circle. Requiems were held for those who died during the past year. Apostolic papal dignitaries were there in their finery to shake hands with all.

The Congress itself may have been one of the early conditions of Gertrude Bonnin's conversion. She wrote in 1910 from Whiterocks, Utah, "Oh—how I long to be at Fort Yates in June for the Indian Catholic Congress."³² Gertrude's desire to speak at the Catholic Sioux Congress would finally be realized ten years later. Even in 1920, people still came in horse-drawn wagons and camped in tents

or lodges; the whole affair could take close to two weeks (figure 5.2). From the beginning, the federal government disapproved of these Congresses for several reasons: they were large, inter-tribal gatherings; they took Indians away from their farms; and they caused Catholic Indians to be noticeably absent during Fourth of July celebrations at reservation agencies.³³

The St. Mary and St. Joseph Societies

A major part of the Congresses were the speeches, discussions and resolutions made by the participating St. Joseph and St. Mary Societies. In 1884 Jesuits at Devil's Lake created sodalities for married Catholic Indian men and women to serve as models of Catholic virtue." These early sodalities were lay fellowship societies devoted to community prayer in the Dakota language, and charitable deeds. One of the prime virtues pressed upon sodalists was fidelity in marriage." "Worthy" sodalists also became prayer leaders, community organizers, officers, and doorkeepers for meetings. Society members administered to the sick, cared for those in mourning, and led discussion groups. As with traditional Indian communities, the decision-making process was by consensus.

From the sodalists were chosen Indian catechists who were compensated five dollars per month for their internal or tribal missionary efforts. Nicholas Black Elk (1863-1950) who converted to Catholicism in 1904 is perhaps the most well known Catholic Lakota catechist. From 1907-1912 Black Elk served as an active catechist. He and other Indian catechists were sent to reservations at Father Ketcham's request as part of the Roman Catholic Church's "missionary experiment" of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions.³⁶ In the introduction to The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt, Raymond Demallie quotes extensively from Black Elk's letters to Sinasepa Wocekiye Taeyanpana, the Sioux Catholic Herald, and letters to Father Ketcham. Demallie notes that in his every day life, Black Elk was a "pillar of the church" at the Holy Rosary Mission, Pine Ridge, South Dakota.³⁷

Membership in the early Catholic Sioux sodalities was designated according to gender and limited to those individuals married in the Catholic Church. In traditional Sioux culture, separate men and women's societies were also the norm. In fact, from early childhood, many activities were gender specific. Raymond DeMallie notes, "the distinction between male and female was the single most important attribute for defining an individual in Lakota

culture. Sex differences were emphasized in virtually every aspect of life."³⁸ Summarizing ethnographic research, Nancy Shoemaker states in her introduction to Negotiators of Change that, "evidence overwhelmingly points to gender, age, and kin as the three essential principles determining one's identity role within Indian society."³⁹ So in that regard, the St. Joseph Society for men and St. Mary Society for women were not unusual; the attraction of the sodalities was social and cultural.

Women also had quilting and beading societies, which parallel earlier quillwork and ceremonial regalia societies. Women enjoyed each other's companionship while doing their handiwork or cooking, where they could talk about their children and husbands. It is this women's world that is another condition of Gertrude's conversion to Catholicism. The St. Mary Society was well established at Standing Rock when the Bonnins moved there in 1909. As a working mother, Gertrude most likely appreciated the female camaraderie.

Both traditional Sioux and Catholic women's societies reflected values of hard work and generosity, loyalty, and marital fidelity. The St. Mary Society focused on helping women find inner strength to keep their marriages working. Shoemaker points out, "Indian women saw what they wanted to

see in Christianity, [and] selectively appropriated Christian symbols and rituals without necessarily accepting Jesuit patriarchy."⁴⁰

There is a story that during the Catholic Sioux Congress of 1892, Lakota men pointed out to the Jesuits that the women needed to be called in for certain decisions. They were told that the "women's honor and privilege is to govern the house and raise and educate good men."⁴¹ However, while women were not part of the business of the Congress, they did hold leadership positions among themselves and selected representatives to speak publicly to the entire Congress. In The Hidden Half, Patricia Albers points out that, "from the beginning of the reservation period, (c. 1870), federal policy excluded Sioux women from those areas where the interests of native communities and capitalism intersected."⁴² This is not to apologize for the Catholic view of women, merely to point out that the sisterhood of the St. Mary Societies was welcomed by women who were being forced by the dominant, Protestant society and federal policy into individualized lives as farmer's wives and consumers.

Another condition of Gertrude's conversion was the fact that the Catholic Church often stood in opposition to federal policy. The timing and length of the summer

Congresses went against policy of prohibitive group gatherings and Indians leaving their reservation farms without permission. In 1889, federal policy had shifted from favoring religious-run schools to government-run boarding schools. The Jesuits educated Sioux Indians on their rights as Americans, particularly those of the First Amendment. They helped many Sioux communities articulate arguments for using their own tribal "trust" funds for education of choice. Harvey Markowitz explains the method by which Catholic Sioux schools and missions circumvented federal policy by arguing, "Congress and the Indian Bureau were infringing on the religious liberty of the Indian parent who desired to give his child a parochial education."⁴³

Ten years passed before Gertrude's dream of attending a Congress was realized. As a delegate to the 1920 Congress, Gertrude Bonnin spoke out against divorce and peyote. This opportunity met a political condition for Gertrude to assert her personal agenda. Notes found in the Holy Rosary Mission (HRM) records had this to say about Gertrude's participation in the 1920 Congress:

Mrs. Bonnin was one of the many speakers who took part in discussing questions bearing on the religious and social welfare of the Indians. The Sioux are notorious orators...she

could hold them for hours by the power of her oratory. Education of their children, the schools, the family, divorce, danger to faith and morals were thoroughly discussed and practical solutions adopted.”⁴⁴

The topic of Gertrude’s second speech at the 1920 Congress concerned what she considered the devastating effects of peyote. Comparing peyote to opium, Gertrude noted “great harm among the Southern Indians.”⁴⁵ Hazel Hertzberg points out that the Catholic Church agreed with Bonnin on the harm of peyote use, which it believed caused individuals to “reject the teachings of the Church.”⁴⁶ Delegates unanimously placed themselves on record as opposed to its use and in favor of legislation for its suppression on the reservations. While no federal statute was ever passed, seven states banned peyote.

In one of the photographs of the Catholic Sioux Congress held at Holy Rosary Mission on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in July 1920, Gertrude can be seen, arms outstretched, addressing the crowd under the shade of the circular arbor (figure 5.3). Dressed in a WWI era two-piece suit adorned with a crocheted lace collar, she wears other indicators of middle-class America including a wristwatch. Her long hair is carefully coiffed into a French twist. She wears a string of beads, and a beaded pouch with a cross design. On her lapel is the insignia of the League of

American Pen Women; an owl perched in a triangle made of a pen, paintbrush, and pencil.⁴⁷ Gertrude Bonnin loved to speak publicly. In an autobiographical sketch she wrote later in her life, Gertrude mentions giving over four hundred lectures during her lifetime.⁴⁸

Gertrude's appearance at the 1920 Catholic Sioux Congress also afforded her the opportunity to listen. As an activist, she worked all her life on reforms she felt would benefit her people. In another photograph (figure 5.4), note that her eyes are averted as she is poised to listen intently to this unidentified Lakota man.

"The Sun Dance" Opera and Old Sioux Bad Hand⁴⁹

As noted in the Guide to the Utah period, Gertrude Bonnin met Mormon music teacher William Hanson in 1908, the year before moving to Standing Rock for six months. Born in 1887 in Vernal, Utah, the son of Danish musicians, Hanson grew up with Indian children as playmates. He strongly desired to "preserve" traditional ceremonies and music.⁵⁰ Vernal, Utah, was one of the white towns that sprang up in the middle of Indian land, near the Agency at Whiterocks. According to Doreen Rappaport, Gertrude spent a fair amount of time in Vernal.⁵¹ Gertrude taught piano lessons in town as well as took lessons herself.⁵²

After returning to the Uintah-Ouray Reservation in 1910, Gertrude Bonnin, as "Zitkala-Sa," began collaborating with William Hanson on the creation of "The Sun Dance" opera, which premiered in Vernal, Utah in 1913. It stands as the first opera, written all, or in part by, a Native person." In the extensive William F. Hanson collection in the archives at Brigham Young University, a review of the opera highlighted one of the dancers called, Old Sioux. Seated in the middle of the cast picture, wearing a buffalo horn headdress was, "the centenarian Sioux." This photograph was made into a promotional postcard announcing the opera in 1913 (see figure 5.5).⁵⁴ The aged man's identity and stories began to emerge with four eagle wing-bone whistles found in a manila envelope tucked in the back of one of the archival boxes in the Hanson collection.⁵⁵

Living alone in the hills for a very long time, Old Sioux Bad Hand, as he called himself, occasionally appeared to trade with local Utes, communicating in sign. Legend told of "Badhand," a survivor of the "big battle,"⁵⁶ meaning the 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn. Gertrude and Ray learned about Old Sioux from Hanson. Up in the hills, north of Fort Duchesne, Old Sioux Bad Hand lived in a willow wickiup, surviving on fish, berries, roots, and small game such as skunk.

In fact, it is because of a skunk that he and the Bonnins found each other. Some teenage boys were setting up camp downwind from Old Sioux, who the boys described as an Indian, "busy as a beaver...washing two eviscerated skunks in the fast cold running water."⁵⁷ Upon seeing the boys, Old Sioux retreated to the woods; however, his trail was easy to follow. Upon hearing that Old Sioux had been sighted, the Bonnins immediately sought out the aged warrior. Speaking to the scared man in the Dakota language he had not heard for many years, save for his own thoughts and payers, Raymond coaxed the tall, very thin old man out of hiding. He did not know that the war, as he knew it, was over. He lived over thirty years without human companionship, without ceremony, without sharing a smoke, without his family, and without his language. He lived without telling the stories of his people, without carrying on his oral tradition.

Hanson's notes describe the deep wrinkles that cut deeply into Old Sioux's brow and his demeanor as "fearful, reticent and suspicious."⁵⁸ The Bonnins told Old Sioux, "Washington Boss has long since forgotten and forgiven...all peoples live in peace. Will you not come to our home? Live with us that we may care for you."⁵⁹ Old Sioux was accepting of the Bonnins, but he did not want to leave his home in

the hills, even though he only had one old, thinning buffalo hide for the upcoming winter. Raymond brought in a United States soldier, who presented Old Sioux with a blue woolen army coat, a present from the "Big Boss in Washington." Accepting the coat as a token of peace, Old Sioux wrapped it around his shoulders as one would a blanket. After Ray showed him how to put his arms in the sleeves, Old Sioux was rarely seen without it; he walked with honor once again. He even unwrapped his bad hand, the hand that had been shot in the "big battle."⁶⁰

It took a while for Old Sioux to be able to verbalize in Lakota, after not speaking it out loud for over twenty years. One can only imagine the happiness he felt to participate in conversation. Once again, he became a contributing member of the group. The Bonnins became Old Sioux's family for the last seven years of his life. Although he no longer blessed babies, dancers, hunters, and warriors, he could tell his stories. This telling helped Old Sioux fulfill his role as an elder, a role that was denied him for so long. His contributions to his new family also included trapping and cleaning skunk for Sunday dinner.⁶¹ Old Sioux chose to tell his story to Zitkala-Sa and his life reveals aspects of strength, honor and importance of kinship. Old Sioux told stories of the Indian

battle against Custer and of Sitting Bull's council with Bearskin Coat Miles.

For Gertrude, born just months before the famous battle of 1876, and Ray, born four years later, hearing stories of their Sioux peoples was surely special, for listening, as well as the telling of history, is an integral part of their culture. By listening to Old Sioux's stories and caring for him, the Bonnin's fulfilled their roles as children and grandchildren.

The "big battle" and the "council" are two of the stories in handwritten transcriptions found in the Sun Dance Land file in the Hanson collection. It is likely that Gertrude translated Old Sioux's narrative orally while Hanson wrote down her words.⁶² Old Sioux mentions six Arikara spies working for the U. S. Army, who deserted upon seeing the size of the Indian camp, which stretched for over two miles, with perhaps as many as 3000 Indians. They laid out the plan of attack scheduled to commence from two directions and the warriors readied themselves.

Of all the different accounts of the Indian Wars, James Welch's Killing Custer offers the best match for Old Sioux's version of Sitting Bull's council with "Bear Skin Coat" Colonel Nelson Miles in late October of 1876.⁶³ Old Sioux described Bear Skin Coat Miles as "middle-aged,

wearing a black, cloth coat trimmed in bearskin. His Lieutenant wore bear claws on the front strop of his cape." Old Sioux said the object of the council was to "make peace and to shake hands." Again, from the transcription of Old Sioux's narrative:

After council, twenty-six Indians were at the river. We saw Bear Skin Coat with his men on [a] boat. As they passed, they threw crackers out. Someone spoke in Sioux saying, "Eat these crackers." The women were going to carry them in their blankets, but seeing the soldiers nudging one another, they left the crackers.⁶⁴

The second day after council broke, Miles' regiment attacked Sitting Bull's camp, after which time, Sitting Bull's Band roamed for six months before crossing into Canada. It not known if Old Sioux stayed behind so as not to be a burden, or if he remained with the group for a while. At some point, he made his way down the rivers, from Montana through Wyoming to Utah. After the Bonnins adopted Old Sioux, he lived in a shelter behind their government-issue house.

Old Sioux's Last Dance

The Bonnins brought Old Sioux to Vernal, Utah for the opera's premier on February 13, 1913. Gertrude incorporated the Algonquian legend of the fireflies into one of the opening scenes, "night in the sun dance camp circle." Old

Sioux was very afraid of the electric lights, tiny electric globes swinging from the ceiling of Orpheus Hall used to imitate the fireflies. Calming him, Zitkala-Sa told him to remember the fire that came from the hooves of a stampeding herd of buffalo. She asked him if he ever saw the sparks to which he replied, "Oh yes, I know now."⁶⁵

In a photograph taken of Old Sioux in 1913 (figure 5.6), we see he did take off his blue army coat for the opera, wearing his new leggings and moccasins adorned with Zitkala's beadwork. One cannot help but admire his horned headdress. Most noticeably, he no longer hid his hand with the missing fingers. Old Sioux proudly holds his pipe in his bad hand.

Within the opera, Old Sioux participated in all of the dances except the final sun dance scene, which he said was for young men. Hanson's notes indicate that during one performance after the circle dance, Old Sioux, without prompting or permission, remained in the circle and began to,

solo dance with the grace of a soaring eagle, looking down upon its prey. Then with fluttering wings, with tightened and gripping claws and loud eagle shrieks, he became the giant bird that was clutching his kill. Old Sioux then strutted triumphantly around the circle.⁶⁶

During a performance on May 14, 1914, Old Sioux rose and took center stage after the "Chief" sang "Tall Trees," the blessing song of the center pole. Hanson writes:

The tribal admonition in the Sioux language by the opera basso had so moved the old veteran that he responded further with emotional fervor. He bowed in obeisance to the center pole, raised himself, arms outstretched to the heavens. He embraced the worship pole, stroked the tree with his eagle wing as his buffalo robe dropped to the ground. He stepped back and whipped his own arm with the eagle tip, which made [the] eerie sound of the flapping of giant eagle wings; all the while, he chanted in his language.⁶⁷

Old Sioux had not blessed a center pole since Sitting Bull's sun dance in June of 1876. Thirty-eight years later, Old Sioux participated in one last dance. While for the Brigham Young students this Sun Dance was performance art, for the Ute dancers and Old Sioux, it was an opportunity to sing and dance and pray and safely be Indian. For Old Sioux, participation in "The Sun Dance" opera was more than playing Indian, it was praying to *Wakan Tanka* and once again, living Indian.

Hanson's notes indicate that sometime after Old Sioux's "rebirth" he ceased his activity. The old grandfather was content to sit and wait during his final days with his faithful grandchildren, the Bonnins. In fulfillment of a sacred promise, they buried Old Sioux

dressed in his favorite buckskin and feathers. Hanson wrote,

They enclosed in the crude grave the peace pipe from the Pipestone quarry, [his] eagle feather medicine wand, the long war-bonnet of eagle plumes with the buffalo frontal made long ago by his dutiful wife. The blue United States Army coat that he constantly carried was also interred with an eagle wing bone whistle, and a bouquet of eagle down wrapped in the sweet herbs of the Sun Dance religion, as the old centenarian requested.⁶⁸

Hanson spent many years gathering materials. His notes from the revised 1938 score reveal, "Zitkala-Sa worked tenaciously in helping the composer to assimilate and record the plot and helped acquire the sacred chants for transcribing."⁶⁹ She would play the Indian melodies and chants on her violin for Hanson to transcribe. Musicologist Edward Hipsher made this comment about Zitkala-Sa's contribution to the opera,

In this collaboration it was she who furnished the missing links that made a story of the Sun Dance; she who revised Mr. Hanson's poems, phrase by phrase, so that they should truly interpret her people; she who criticized his music, whenever it departed from true Indian melody.⁷⁰

In her book Indian Story and Song, Alice Fletcher describes the difficulty that the Western ear has in transcribing Indian song, "the continual slurring of the voice from one tone to another produces...the impression of

out-of-tune singing. The pulsating voice creates a rhythm within the rhythm of the song.”⁷¹ When in fact, these half tones and even quartertones give Native American music its distinctive characteristics. Turn of the century Americans, as well as many today, could not or chose not to hear the beauty in Native music. Frederick Jacobi, in his essay, “On Indian Music,” equates Native American melodies with Chinese music. Both are based on a pentatonic scale, as opposed to the seven-note scale of European music.⁷²

The Sun Dance (Wiwanyag Wachipi), a “Romantic Indian Opera” in five acts, weaves a love story with pan-tribal legends, Native values, and depictions of every day life set against the backdrop of the Ute Sun Dance. Rooted in ancient beliefs, the Sun Dance is essentially a giant prayer, invoking the sacred power *Wakan Tanka* with song. The focus of the Sun Dance shifted from insuring successful bison hunts and warfare during the early reservation years, to concern over illness and community misery. It is a group ceremony involving singers, dancers, musicians, and spectators as well as a complex mythology.⁷³ To this day, the Sun Dance involves deep cleansing and self-sacrifice through sweats, fasting, and sometimes piercing, testing the limits of participants’ physical, mental, and spiritual

endurance.⁷⁴ It has been referred to as "the most awe-inspiring of Native American rituals."⁷⁵

The Utes were the last tribe to acquire the Sun Dance (about 1890), long after Plains people were forced to take up reservation living and adopt Christianity. Although Jesus Christ fasted, and medieval monks purged their bodies with whips, "Indians were jailed or denied their rations for participating in the Sun Dance ceremony."⁷⁶ Even though the Utes did not practice piercing rituals, the dominant attitude towards their Sun Dance is revealed in the following statement from Uintah-Ouray Reservation Agent Kneale: "The Sun Dance must cease...an outmoded pagan celebration, Utes must now spend more of their time caring for their crops and flocks instead of being at tribal functions for such long intervals."⁷⁷ Remaining adamant in their determination to retain the festival, the Utes took their thanksgiving prayer to the Great Spirit underground. Omer Stewart believed that since the Utes did not practice "self-torture," their agents tended to be more tolerant.⁷⁸

In the fifty-year period from 1883-1933 when traditional Indian ceremonies were being suppressed by missionaries as well as government, Zitkala-Sa, through the medium of opera, celebrated her Dakota culture. As with her literature and her political work, Zitkala-Sa's

collaboration on The Sun Dance affirms her role as a "representative Indian," conveying her culture to non-Indians. For those who participated in the productions of this opera, the experience was not unlike the experience of Native men, women, and children in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. It was a safe way to be Indian. A photograph in the Hanson collection shows Zitkala-Sa at the opera in her buckskin dress, with a tobacco tie hanging from her beaded yoke (figure 5.7). She is wearing a traditional Plains Indian woman's vertical breastplate, a thin beaded choker, and a silver concha belt over a silk scarf around her waist. Zitkala-Sa is as eclectic as the opera. She is pan-tribal in her dress, including her hair. Even though she wears her hair in two braids, they are not wrapped in the traditional Plains Indian style.⁷⁹

This opera is more than the story of a lovers, heroes, and villains. It debunks the stereotyped images of noble savages, and wild Injuns preserved in thousands of popular songs and novels written at the end of the nineteenth century during the campaign to "civilize the Indian."

Edward Hipsher wrote in 1924,

The opera does not depict the Indian in the dime novel fashion similar on the stage and screen. It is a portrayal of the real Indian, a conscientious attempt to delineate the manners customs, dress, religious ideals, superstitions, songs, games,

ceremonials--in short, the life of a people too little understood.⁸⁰

The Sun Dance opera incorporates traditional legends and songs from several tribal sources. Parallels can be drawn between Zitkala-Sa and Hanson's narrative of the Sun Dance and German Romantic Opera in several ways. The plot incorporates legend, mythology, supernatural beings and events, spiritual elements of Nature, and folk-like melodies. The music occasionally stops for spoken sentences, often accompanied by choral Indian chants. These scenes of dialogue tell the story of the Sun Dance ceremony and interpret it for the audience. In Act III for example, Winona's monologue explains the mythology of the fairies of the night, the witches of pipestone quarry and the elfin arrowhead makers.⁸¹

The combination of Western instrumentation with traditional Indian drums and flutes is exemplary of the cross-cultural phenomena within this opera. The eagle-wing bone whistles are the smallest of the Indian flutes; no two are exactly the same note. The constant blowing on the part of the dancers, matches the intensity of the prayers within the Sun Dance ceremony.⁸² In several scenes, "war cries, whoops, and trills" are sung to the accompaniment of "bass drum and tom-toms." Unfortunately, the Chieftan's "ad lib" oratory in the last scene was never recorded.⁸³ A complete

scene synopsis of The Sun Dance opera can be found as a note for this chapter.⁸⁴

The Sun Dance *Wa-chi-pi* premiered February 13, 1913, in Orpheus Hall, Vernal Utah for three performances, utilizing local talent. One of the Ute dancers also sketched the backdrop for the 1913 productions (figure 5.8). Hanson's notes indicate that Gertrude waited in the wings with Old Sioux. There were eleven performances the following year at Brigham Young University with skilled soloists, a sixty-piece orchestra, and a chorus of one hundred Native singers and dancers.

In 1935 the opera was revived and performed by the Brigham Young University Opera Company under the direction of Music Professor A. C. Lund. The new mounting featured "superb new scenery" by Professor E. H. Eastmond (figure 5.9). Zitkala-Sa was not involved with this production. However, she was given credit as co-author under her married name. The playbill reads,

The Indian Opera, A beautiful story of the Red Man, delightfully told in song and music. "THE SUN DANCE" by Mrs. R. T. Bonnín and Mr. William F. Hanson.⁸⁵

The BYU student newspaper reported, "Mrs. Bonnín has been detained at home this year. It is quite unnecessary to

mention the fact that her general presence has been greatly missed.”⁸⁶

Three years later, Brigham Young Music Professor John Hand Young, a student cast member in the 1915 production, took a production to Broadway for one night. In 1938, the New York Light Opera Guild selected “The Sun Dance” as “Opera of the Year” and it was performed at New York City’s Broadway Theater three months after Zitkala-Sa’s death. Indians from many American tribes volunteered to participate. The role of “Chieftan” was played by Yolache, a famous Yakima baritone often heard on 1930s radio. One hundred and fifty members of the New York Society of American Indians attended in full Indian regalia.⁸⁷

Among Raymond Bonnin’s papers was a publicity flyer for the 1938 New York premiere of “‘The Sun Dance’ by William F. Hanson, Zitkala-Sa Collaborator” printed in red ink on thick yellow paper. A studio photograph taken of the collaborators in 1913 (figure 5.10), shows William Hanson wearing the buckskin outfit Zitkala-Sa made for him. Hanson wrote a personal note, “Dear Mr. Bonnin, If there is any possibility of your attendance at the performance April 27, let me know...bring Ohiya if possible and his wife.”⁸⁸ Director John Hand’s words about this opera in 1938 reflect common romanticized notions of American Indians.

"The Sun Dance" is without question one of the finest works dealing with the American Indian ever to be presented on the operatic stage...It is one of the most striking educational sources in existence, and will retain future generations, authentic Indian melodies, musical forms and effects existent no other place in our history.⁸⁹

Seeing the opera as a metaphor for the "turbulent cultural waters that Bonnin navigated in her life," P. Jane Hafen writes of Zitkala-Sa, "often she seems caught between validating her indigenous beliefs and seeking public approval...not necessarily oppositional...but part of the complex mediation Native peoples frequently reconcile."⁹⁰ As I have stated elsewhere, this work is also problematic, for by,

placing sacred ceremonies on display in an opera, Zitkala-Sa and Hanson were attempting to open a genre where the possibilities for misunderstanding were, and still are, rife. Although filled with faithful borrowings from Native tribal cultures, with melodies accompanied in a rather straight forward tonal idiom, even this modest filtering through a white cultural prism might be greeted warily. A new mounting of this work would demand a significant degree of cross-cultural negotiation and understanding that cannot be derived from the score [or libretto] alone.⁹¹

Spring 1913: Another Crossroads

Working on the opera with William Hanson made Gertrude thirsty for more classical music. After the costumes were

packed up and the whirlwind of the opera calmed in the dry still air in Utah, Gertrude stated she intended to "improve my mind and direct my boy's course in school."⁹² Gertrude missed the intellectual stimulation and cultural activity of urban centers and the East. With her son coming of age, Gertrude's relationship as a mother was changing as well. Gertrude and Raymond both went away to school, and given the recent tension between Gertie and Ray, taking Ohiya out of Utah made sense at the time.

A very complicated set of circumstances arose between husband and wife in the Spring of 1913. On May 10, 1913 Raymond's immediate supervisor, Agent Baker, filed charges against his superior, Superintendent Jewell Martin for allegedly covering up crimes in violation of State Law, committed by Raymond Bonnin on April 22, 1913. Bonnin was accused of, "assaulting his wife, Gertrude Bonnin in a jealous rage over the alleged attentions to her by Asa C. Chapman, formerly financial clerk at the Agency."⁹³

A few weeks after the alleged incident, and the day after Baker filed charges, Gertrude took Ohiya out of Utah. They traveled by train to Westerville, Ohio, about thirty miles from the capitol city, Columbus. Westerville is the location of Otterbein College and the home of Gertrude's "dear friend" Maud Russell. We learn of this trip through

two letters she penned to Carlos Montezuma on the front and back ends of her stay in Ohio. The first letter was written from the Chicago train station on May 13, 1913. Montezuma still lived in the house on South Park Street he bought twelve years earlier, when he believed Zitkala-Sa was going to be his bride.

Passing through Chicago, Gertrude may have experienced a pang of regret for letting Montezuma go. The following excerpt is from the letter Gertrude wrote to Montezuma one month after she was married on June 23, 1902. The content clearly indicates their relationship needed closure. Simply signed, "Z" she wrote,

I told you months ago I had met another...Did I not once return that infernal ring? Who used his powers of persuasion to cause me to wear it again? You did, you uptight blameless man! Have you forgot how you contradicted me every time I told you I thought it useless to consider matrimony?⁹⁴

Zitkala-Sa must have had Montezuma going in circles.

Looking back at her letter to him postmarked October 19, 1901, from Andrews, South Dakota, she wrote, "I have a friend out here who claims all I can give by the laws of natural affinity. In a few days I shall return your ring to you."⁹⁵ Despite what Ruth Spack calls Zitkala-Sa's "dis/engagement" to Montezuma, their letter-writing relationship continued.⁹⁶

Having previously only "regretted the loss of the circlet as a token,"⁹⁷ Gertrude finally apologized, eleven years later, for "losing" the engagement ring and for her behavior. In her letter dated May 13, 1913, she wrote, "I humbly beg your forgiveness for my gross stupidity of former years."⁹⁸ She also attempted to open their once familiar dialogue. Perhaps the memory of the flattering attention Montezuma paid her over a decade ago, surfaced in Chicago. She wrote,

In all sincerity I want to say that you had a narrow escape—but you escaped. I was not worthy because I did not recognize true worth at the time."⁹⁹

Gertrude included her friend's address, in case he wished to write back, which he apparently did. But Gertrude did not find the time to write back to Montezuma until the return trip. Gertrude studied piano for two weeks with Professor Grabill of Otterbein College. She was not an enrolled student and was no doubt paying for private lessons.¹⁰⁰ After her two-week piano intensive, it became clear to Gertrude in order to earn a music diploma, she would need to practice for many months if not years, to reach the level of proficiency required. On her return trip, Gertrude wrote, "I practiced six hours a day. Now that's hard labor. You know I have a great desire to finish things I had once started."¹⁰¹

From the train station in Burlington, Wisconsin she wrote, "Time got away so fast that I am taking a wait here for a few letters, among which is one to you...I fully meant to write to you and General Pratt, while I was in Westerville but I didn't have the time."¹⁰² Her former intellectual relationship with Montezuma, once laced with dialogue of romance and courting now took on a different nature. Ten years later, as Gertrude Bonnin she said, "thank you for the compliment General Pratt says you paid my boy."¹⁰³ Asserting her status as a married woman and a mother, Gertrude took the initiative to resume their former friendship.

Spalding Institute, Nauvoo, Illinois

On the way back from her music refresher at Otterbein, the train took Gertrude and her son from Columbus to Chicago and to Montrose, Iowa where they traveled by ferry across the Mississippi River to Nauvoo, Illinois. Gertrude enrolled Ohiya in the Spalding Institute, a boarding school for boys run by Benedictine Sisters.¹⁰⁴ Gertrude wrote to Montezuma revealing her maternal feelings when she took Ohiya to school in June 1913. "I know it is necessary to educate him but this knowledge does not make it any easier to leave him."¹⁰⁵ Gertrude had been looking for the right

Catholic school for a couple of years.¹⁰⁶ Both Gertrude and Raymond wanted their son to be educated like they were. The details of how the Bonnins came to choose Spalding Institute are not known. Perhaps the connection stems to their six-month stay at Fort Yates on the Standing Rock Reservation where the Bonnins were exposed to Benedictine Monks and Sisters. Gertrude wrote to Father Ketcham just a few months earlier, "My Dear Father Ketcham, I believe I must place my boy in an Indian school. A Catholic School or mission...perhaps the fact of his Indian blood would prove a subtle hindrance to him in a White school."¹⁰⁷

With Ohiya in school and Oran not needing her as much now that he was growing up, Gertrude had to find new channels for her passions and energy when she returned to Utah.¹⁰⁸ She was determined to continue her musical study at home. Gertrude told Montezuma she would "try and go every summer to some place to study under a real first-class teacher of music...I intend to improve my mind." It seems as if this may have been her compromise with Raymond.¹⁰⁹ Gertrude told Montezuma in the June 1913 letter she doubted she would "do anything worth while for some time to come as I shall have to spend so much time in practice and teaching too."¹¹⁰ She also had to spend time reassuring her husband she still loved him. She wrote, "I am returning to Utah

because Mr. Bonnin insists upon it."¹¹¹ Gertrude had to go home and face her neighbors, who overheard the Bonnins arguing and witnessed Gertie's dramatic exit from her home with Ohiya in hand. An atmosphere of rumors grew out of what she called, the "magnification of their mistake."¹¹²

The entire affair took many months to calm down. In a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Mr. Martin defended himself and Raymond Bonnin. Martin wrote that Raymond T. Bonnin,

informed me that...he felt Mrs. Bonnin had manifested too great an interest in the musical and literary tastes and culture of Mr. A.S. Chapman...and that he feared she was coming to appreciate Mr. Chapman more than himself and that he felt in danger of losing her affections.¹¹³

Raymond admitted to Martin they had a "tilt...[but] he feared losing what he coveted most...her affection."¹¹⁴ Gertrude also found herself in a defensive position for causing her husband to upbraid her in the first place. She poured her heart out in long letter to Father Ketcham in October 1913. She wrote,

Dear Father, It is the chagrin of having my private family misunderstanding put on file in Washington and forcing me to make a defense that hinders me. I AM INNOCENT OF ANY IMMORAL ACT. My mistake was in showing too much interest...in a man who came frequently to our home. We have tried to live it down, God only knows how hard.¹¹⁵

For the next two years, Gertrude immersed herself in home life and giving piano lessons. Re-establishing her friendship with Montezuma had also opened the door to the national scene of American Indian reform through the Society of American Indians (SAI). Gertrude welcomed the opportunity to be associated with the "organization" as she referred to the Society, even though she could not attend national meetings. She wrote, "It is not that I lack interest or even public spirit, but my duties seem to limit me to the home, for the time, at any rate."¹¹⁶

By 1915, Gertrude secured financial support from the SAI to start a pilot program community center on the Uintah-Ouray reservation. Gertrude's article entitled "A Year's Experience in Community Service Work Among the Ute Tribe of Indians" was published in the Society's quarterly journal, the American Indian Magazine in the Fall 1916 issue. In this account of the first Indian-run community center on a federal Indian reservation, Gertrude described weekly sewing and quilting circles, the Monday lunch and resting room for mothers, instructive and social programs of the local SAI chapter, and fulfilling one's duty to the elders.

After staying home for three years, Gertrude traveled to Cedar Rapids, Iowa in September 1916, for the annual SAI

meeting, where she was elected Secretary. It seems as if being involved with politics was more acceptable to Raymond than her musical pursuits of a few years ago. Gertrude was intellectually starving in Utah and by being involved with the Society she stood in service to others and satisfied her own needs for intellectual companionship. But by the close of 1916, things were becoming unbearable. Gertrude wrote, "My Dear Father, My work as Superintendent of Community Service for the Society of American Indians has been hampered this year by this unfriendly spirit of [Agent] Kneale and his wife."¹¹⁷

It was after both Kneale and his wife singled out her son, that Gertrude and Ray realized they really needed to move out of Utah. Gertrude told Father Ketcham, "Before Thanksgiving, Kneale got up in the night and shot Ohiya's pet burro to death...[and] at Christmas Mrs. Kneale told her Sunday school class of whites Ohiya Bonnin should not be allowed to come to the Christmas Tree."¹¹⁸ One month later, Gertrude wrote again to Father Ketcham from Los Angeles, California, where the Bonnins traveled for "a few weeks vacation." Gertrude wrote,

My Dear Father, We are considering quite seriously leaving the Indian Service and venture upon an independent business of our own. It is far wiser we leave before we are driven to an act of desperation...People are needy and we are able to help them...after 14

years, we have earned their confidence, but we are weary and worn out with the unjust and petty persecutions of the political appointees who would make the Goddess of Liberty to blush! Could she get [a] peek into the despotic reign of pinheads! The very cause of persecution had been because I have been doing work, real uplift work to advance my race.¹¹⁹

After refreshing their bodies and minds in California, Gertrude and Raymond returned to Utah only long enough to pack and relocate to Washington D.C.. With the Indian Service behind them, Gertrude believed her work for Indian people would be better appreciated coming from the nation's capitol.

¹ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Martin [25 May 1910] BCIM Records, Marquette University Archives; according to the Apologetics Index, in 2000 the Roman Catholic Church, The Presbyterian Church (USA), The United Methodists, and the Southern Baptist Convention all publicly declared that "Mormonism is a cult" and Mormons are not Christians, <http://www.apologeticsindex.origin04.html>, November 24, 2001

² Jan Pettit Utes: The Mountain People introduction by Eddie Box, Boulder: Johnson Books, 1990 (108)

³ S. Lyman Tyler "The Indians in Utah Territory" Richard Poll ed., Utah's History Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1989 (1977) 359

⁴ Pettit Utes: the Mountain People 108; for further reading on the inferior status of Native Americans to the Mormon Church see Thomas W. Murphy "From Racist Stereotype to Ethnic Identity: Instrumental Uses of Mormon Racial Doctrine" Ethnohistory 46.3 (Summer 1999) 451-480

⁵ Pettit Utes: the Mountain People 108

⁶ President Lincoln declared Martial Law for Utah Territory on September 24, 1862

⁷ David Rich Lewis "Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865-1928" Hoxie et al ed., American Nations: Encounters in Indian Country, 1850-Present 2001 (203)

⁸ Lewis "Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy" 203

⁹ Richard O. Ulibarri "Utah's Unassimilated Minorities" Richard D. Poll ed., Utah's History Logan, UT: University of Southern Utah Press, 1989 (642)

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- ¹⁰ Pettit Utes: The Mountain People (134)
- ¹¹ Ulibarri "Utah's Unassimilated Minorities" 642; another 56,000 acres were set aside by the federal government in 1909, for the Strawberry Valley Reclamation Project.
- ¹² John P. Williamson An English-Dakota Dictionary St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992 (261)
- ¹³ Correspondence between Oran Curry and Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin c. 1930s and notes from the Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ¹⁴ In a letter dated 16 September 1913, Jewell D. Martin wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that Mr. Bonnin informed him that Mrs. Bonnin had many "little social meetings and musicals" in their home; copy in the correspondence file, BCIM Records, Marquette University Archives.
- ¹⁵ Vernal is a white settlement in the middle of Ute lands about 20 miles northeast of the Whiterocks Agency.
- ¹⁶ The photographer is probably Hanson; Courtesy of William Hanson Collection (MSS 299) L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; 1908 seems accurate; Ohia appears to be about five years old.
- ¹⁷ BCIM Records correspondence files, Marquette University Archives. The Bonnin letters to Father Ketcham and Father Martin were rejected for inclusion in The Crossing of Two Roads: Being Catholic and Native in the United States (2003), a collection of 104 letters and documents of Native Catholic voices edited by Marie Therese Archambault, Mark Thiel, and Christopher Vecsey, for reasons of being too personal and "confessorial." It was with promise of decorum and sensitive approach that I was granted permission to copy the letters.
- ¹⁸ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham 25 May 1910 BCIM Records, HRM 52.1.1, Marquette University
- ¹⁹ Zitkala-Sa "Why I am a Pagan" Atlantic Monthly December 1902 (801-803)
- ²⁰ More accessible, pagination is from Zitkala-Sa's 1921 version, "The Great Spirit" in American Indian Stories (107)
- ²¹ N.L. Nelson "Indian Opera on an Indian Reservation" Deseret News c.1913; clipping in the Bonnin Collection, BYU. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, (the official Mormon Church), owned this Salt Lake City newspaper.
- ²² Gertrude Bonnin to Fr. Ketcham c. March 1912
- ²³ Conversation with author, November, 2003; there are no Yankton Catholic records prior to 1913
- ²⁴ Christopher Vecsey Where the Two Roads Meet V. III Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999 (9)
- ²⁵ Willard Hughes Rollings "Indians and Christianity" in Phil Deloria and Neal Salisbury eds., A Companion to American Indian History (127)
- ²⁶ Although Zitkala-Sa lived at Fort Totten in 1901, she does not make reference to anything or anyone "Catholic" in her letters to Carlos Montezuma c. June-July 1901.
- ²⁷ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [c. October 1901]; as with Devil's Lake, there is no mention of anything "Catholic" in her letters from Crow Creek Agency.
- ²⁸ The Catholic Sioux Congress remains an annual event to this day.
- ²⁹ Extracts from the Annual Report of the Secretary of Interior November 1, 1883, Prucha Documents (160)
- ³⁰ Prucha Documents (160)
- ³¹ Christopher Vecsey "Introduction" Vecsey, Mark Thiel, and Marie Therese Archambault eds., The Crossing of Two Roads: Being Catholic and Native in the United States, xxiv

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- ³² Gertrude Bonnin to Fr. Martin, 25 May 1910; BCIM Records (correspondence file)
- ³³ Mark Theil "Catholic Sodalities Among the Sioux" U.S. Catholic Historian V. 16 (1998) 66
- ³⁴ Vecsey et al., Crossing of Two Roads 122-125
- ³⁵ The Roman Catholic Church has always stood in opposition to divorce.
- ³⁶ Raymond J. Demallie ed., The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984 (19)
- ³⁷ Demallie ed., The Sixth Grandfather 27
- ³⁸ Raymond DeMallie "Male and Female in Traditional Lakota Culture" in Albers ed., The Hidden Half 238
- ³⁹ Nancy Shoemaker "Introduction" Nancy Shoemaker ed., Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women New York: Routledge, 1995 (5)
- ⁴⁰ Shoemaker Negotiators of Change 20
- ⁴¹ Mark Thiel "Sodalities Strengthen Faith of Dioceses' West River Catholics" West River Catholic January 1991 (11)
- ⁴² Patricia Albers "Sioux Women in Transition: A Study of their Changing Status in a Domestic and Capitalist Sector of Production" Albers ed., The Hidden Half 182
- ⁴³ Harvey Markowitz "The Catholic Indian Mission and the Sioux: A Crisis in the Early Paradigm" Raymond DeMallie and Douglas Parks eds., Sioux Indian Religion: Traditions and Innovations Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987 (133)
- ⁴⁴ HRM 4.1.1 Marquette University Archives
- ⁴⁵ HRM 4.1.1 Marquette University Archives
- ⁴⁶ Hertzberg, Hazel W. The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1971 (256); to date, the most comprehensive study of the Society of American Indians.
- ⁴⁷ 1920 Catholic Sioux Congress, HRM records, Marquette Archives; LAPW membership was by nomination; Gertrude's acceptance letter from the League of American Pen Women (LAPW) c. 1920 was among her papers in the Bonnin Collection, BYU.
- ⁴⁸ Bonnin Collection, BYU Archives
- ⁴⁹ In the 1913 copyrighted-version of the musical score, the title appears as The Sun Dance and Sun Dance (Wa chi pi). In William Hanson's memoir, Sun Dance Land (1967), it appears as "The Sun Dance Opera." William Hanson Collection (MSS 299) L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU
- ⁵⁰ Sun Dance Land chapter notes, William Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁵¹ Doreen Rappaport interviewed Hazel Ashes, a great-niece of Gertrude Bonnin, in 1996 at Yankton; she shared details of their conversation, 3 November 2003
- ⁵² notes from William Hanson's daughter, Neva Hanson Grenier; Sun Dance Land notes, William Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁵³ For discussion of the opera see Susan Dominguez "Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin), 1876-1938: (Re)discovering The Sun Dance" American Music Research Center Journal 5 (1995); Catherine Smith "An Operatic Skeleton on the Western Frontier: Zitkala-Sa, William F. Hanson, and The Sun Dance Opera" Women & Music 5 (2001); Smith points out that Hanson's name alone was on the piano score copyrighted in 1912. Zitkala-Sa's name was added to a more orchestrated version of the musical score copyrighted in 1913.

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- ⁵⁴ Patricia Albers shared with me a copy of one of the original postcards from her collection.
- ⁵⁵ Neva Hanson Grenier Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU; The whistles had been gifted to Hanson by Ute dancers who participated in the opera.
- ⁵⁶ Hanson Grenier, Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁵⁷ William Hanson, Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁵⁸ Hanson, Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁵⁹ Hanson, Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁰ Hanson, Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶¹ Hanson, Sun Dance Land notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶² The cursive differs significantly from Gertrude or Raymond's handwriting.
- ⁶³ A small sampling of other comparative resources are:
 Dee Brown Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1970; Jerome A. Greene, ed., Lakota and Cheyenne: Indian Views of the Great Sioux War, 1878-1877 Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994; Gregory F. Michno Lakota Noon: The Indian Narrative of Custer's Defeat Missoula, Montana: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1997; United States Army Military Division Record of Engagements with Hostile Indians Within the Military Division of the Missouri, 1868 to 1882 Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1882; Herman J. Viola Little Bighorn Remembered: The Untold Story of Custer's Last Stand New York: Rivilo Books, 1999; James Welch with Paul Stekler Killing Custer: The Battle of the Little Bighorn and the Fate of the Plains Indians New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994.
- ⁶⁴ Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁵ Hanson, Sun Dance Land chapter notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁶ Hanson, Sun Dance Land chapter notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁷ Hanson, Sun Dance Land chapter notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁸ Hanson, Sun Dance Land chapter notes, Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁹ "The Sun Dance Opera" 1938 score notes, William Hanson Collection, BYU
- ⁷⁰ Edward Ellsworth Hipsher American Opera and Its Composers New York: DeCapo Press, 1978 (1927) 246
- ⁷¹ Alice Fletcher Indian Story and Song from North America Boston: Small, Maynard and Co., 1970 (1900) 117-118
- ⁷² Frederick Jacobi "On Indian Music" The American Indian 1:4 (Summer 1944) 24
- ⁷³ Joseph G. Jorgenson The Sun Dance Religion: Power for the Powerless Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978 (17-18); see also Royal Hassrick, The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, (1964); Gordon MacGregor, Warriors Without Weapons Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945; Ruth Underhill, Red Man's Religion: Belief and Practices of the Indians North of Mexico Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965
- ⁷⁴ The Utes did not practice the piecing rituals.
- ⁷⁵ Mary Crow Dog with Richard Erdoes Lakota Woman New York: Harper Perennial 1990 (252)
- ⁷⁶ Steve Wall, Wisdom's Daughters: conversations with Women Elders of Native America New York: Harper Collins, 1993 (104); see also Jo Allyn Archambault "Sun Dance" and Gloria A. Young "Intertribal Religious Movements" DeMallie ed., Handbook of North American Indians Vol. 13, Part 2, Washington D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution, 2001 (983-995, 996-1010)
- ⁷⁷ Agent Kneale (c. 1906) William Hanson Collection, BYU

⁷⁸ Omer Stewart Peyote Religion: A History (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987 (129-30)

⁷⁹ Photographs taken of Gertrude after 1926 reveal her braids wrapped in the fashion of mature Plains Indian women.

⁸⁰ Hipsher American Opera 247

⁸¹ For further discussion of the particular dances within the Sun Dance ceremony see Reginald and Gladys Laubin Indian Dances of North America; Their Importance to Indian Life Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977; Judith Vander Songprints: The Musical Experience of Five Shoshone Women Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988

⁸² Hassrick The Sioux 146; Laubin, Dances 279, 285

⁸³ The opera's libretto was included in P. Jane Hafen's edited collection Dreams and Thunder: Stories, Poems and the Sun Dance Opera Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001 (124-151)

⁸⁴ The Sun Dance Opera: Scene Synopsis

Prologue: Shoshone village in Wyoming; Men chant in background. Sweet Singer, a Shoshone brave enters. His song tells us that he is leaving his land in disgrace because he had stolen love-leaves from the Medicine Man in order to lure a young maid. His plan has backfired, causing the maid to fall hopelessly in love with Sweet Singer. Sweet Singer departs for Dakota country and the young woman he has tricked follows him.

Act I: Sioux village near woodland banks of a river.

Act I scene 1: We meet the other two members of the romantic triad, Winona the chieftain's daughter, and Ohiya her suitor. Ohiya's solo, "The Vow" (written in both Dakota and English) is based on two Sioux love songs and the score calls for Winona to "ad lib." This is the first of several such directives in the score, making space for the inclusion of authentic elements, such as language and traditional practices.

Act I scene 2: Ohiya's lodge; opens with Ohiya's mother pleading with him to finish his love-flute and "break-not our love traditions." This hopeful future mother-in-law is waiting to give gifts. The scene then shifts to "dreamland/night" and is in "retrospect." Ohiya's mother, her shorn hair signifying her widowhood, sits by the smoldering fire, talking in her native tongue to her babe and to her star, her departed husband. "To A Star," the lullaby that she sings with piano, flute and women's chorus, is noted in the score as "an old Indian love chant as told by Mrs. R. T. Bonnin/Zitkala-Sa, Sioux."

Act I scene 3: Ohiya's mother, Blue Necklace and the village gossips share several rumors that raise suspicion about Sweet Singer, who turns out to be a guest in the chief's lodge. Leading the gossips in song, Blue Necklace is sure Sweet Singer will attempt to lure their daughters.

Act I scene 4: Comic relief comes with the character Hebo and Sweet Singer's unsuccessful attempt to teach Hebo the Sun Dance songs.

Act II: Woodland camp at Sun Dance Grounds and the circle camp in the meadow; there is no Western instrumentation, only drums and the four scenes in this act contain several aspects universal to Sun Dance ceremonies.

Act II scene 1: The Circle Dance, sometimes known as the Squaw Dance or Round Dance; three Indian singers surround the drum in this scene of dance and choral singing.

Act II scene 2: Sham battle complete with horses and pageantry; personified "tall trees" are captured for the Sun Dance arena.

Act II scene 3: The parade, in which the prayer pole is carried, is led by Ohiya and chorus. Once the center pole is in place, the chief sings his magnificent bass solo, "Tall Trees." It alternates with a genuine Sun Dance chant in which the braves verbalize their vows, accompanied only by drum.

Act II scene 4: A Victory Dance is followed by the dedication of the "tall trees," adopting them into the tribe. This dance, also known as the War Dance or Ute Turkey Dance, includes the women's chant from the Sioux Scalp Dance. It is clear here that Zitkala-Sa is integrating inter-tribal collaboration into this cross-cultural endeavor. The dancers are warriors with battle experience and those who have counted coup. Many war cries, whoops and trills are sung to the accompaniment of the bass drum.

Act III scene 1: Chieftan's teepee in the moonlight; with his flute, Ohiya serenades Winona who is beading in her teepee. Winona's spoken monologue explains the mythology of the fairies of the night, the witches of pipestone quarry, and the elfin arrowhead makers. This scene is a good example of Zitkala-Sa's use of pan-tribal legends.

Act III scene 2: After her solo "The Magic of the Night," the chorus joins Winona in singing "To the Witches of the Night," in which she beseeches the witches not to carve her lover's face into the quarry walls.

Act IV: Sun Dance Arena

Act IV scene 1: Shoshone Maid laments over her lost lover Sweet Singer, who has sent gifts to the chief in attempts to win Winona. The Chief and Winona enter as the maid hides. In the chief's aria, "Great Eagle," he prays for wisdom to choose the ablest man for his daughter to wed. It includes a Medicine chant, tom-toms, and eagle-bone whistles. Score notes indicate "ad lib" in native language. Sweet Singer then encounters Winona, mocking her for picking sweet herbs for her lover. He boasts that Ohiya will be disgraced after failing in the Sun Dance because he is weak. This scene closes with the Shoshone Maid and Sweet Singer's duet, and the Shoshone Maid's solo. She calls to the witches of pipestone quarry and begs to be one of them who have the power to carve men into the walls of the cliffs.

Act IV scene 2: Sun Dance Arena the next morning; "Sun Call" by medicine man. Act IV ends the next morning with the "Sun Call" by the Medicine Man. The "Great Spirit Hear Prayer" is comprised of Ute and Sioux Sun Dance motifs. Notes in Hanson's manuscript Sun Dance Land indicate that the blessing of the dancers by the Medicine Men is deliberately not incorporated on stage because of the sacredness of these prayers.

Act V scene 1: Sun Dance Arena; The Sun Dance begins; Sun Dance songs, Winona's aria; As in Act II, there is no Western instrumentation in the final act, only the drum and continuous Eagle-bone whistles. The stage is set appropriately with center prayer pole and booths surrounding the arena. Men chant and women trill to the accompaniment of drums. Dancers fall and are carried to their booths. Female attendants soothe their dancers with sweet herbs during these rest periods. While Ohiya struggles on, the Curtain closes and reopens with a finale. Ohiya is taken to his booth to rest as Winona, dressed in an elk skin wedding dress, approaches the center pole for her aria, "My Love On Burning Sands Asleep." Finally we have Ohiya's last struggle and success as he backs away from the center-prayer-pole.

Act V finale: chief's speech and final choral number

There is a "grand pause" followed by the chief's chant and an "ad lib" in his native language. The orchestra then plays the overture and the final song, "He Won Winona," sung by the entire chorus.

⁸⁵ Poster in Sun Dance file, William Hanson Collection, BYU

⁸⁶ "Sun Dance Opera Scores Big Success" White and Blue January 11, 1915

⁸⁷ notes, William Hanson Collection, BYU; the New York Society of American Indians is no longer a viable organization.

⁸⁸ Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁸⁹ John Hand, Director's notes, "The Sun Dance" 1938 score, William Hanson Collection, BYU

⁹⁰ P. Jane Hafen "Introduction" P. Jane Hafen ed., Dreams and Thunder; Stories Poems and the Sun Dance Opera by Zitkala-Sa Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001 (xx)

⁹¹ Susan Dominguez "Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) 1876-1938: (Re)discovering *The Sun Dance*" American Music Research Center Journal 5 (1995) 94

⁹² Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [23 June 1913]

⁹³ Indian Office to Mr. Jewell D. Martin [9 Sept 1913], cited in Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [4 October, 1913] 3, BCIM Records, Marquette University; Charges were filed Raymond Bonnin in violation of Section 4310 and 4496, 4190 and 4195 of the Laws of Utah, 1907; "wife-beating" was against the law in Utah. The outcome of these charges are unknown at this time; this is one of the episodes in Gertrude Bonnin's life that remains incomplete at this time.

⁹⁴ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [23 June 1902]

⁹⁵ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [19 October 1901]

⁹⁶ see Ruth Spack "Dis/engagement: Zitkala-Sa's Letters to Carlos Montezuma, 1901-1902" MELUS 26.1 (Spring 2001) 172-204

⁹⁷ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [23 June 1902]

⁹⁸ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [13 May 1913]

⁹⁹ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [13 May 1913]

¹⁰⁰ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [13 May 1913]; [10 June 1913], Carlos Montezuma Papers; Efforts to learn Professor Grabill's first name have been unsuccessful. I have not come across the name "Maud Russell" in any other documents relating to Gertrude Bonnin. Gertrude mistakenly refers to Otterbein College as "Otterbein University."

¹⁰¹ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [13 May 1913]

¹⁰² Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [23 June 1913]; Burlington, Wisconsin was one of the stops between Chicago and Iowa.

¹⁰³ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [23 June 1913]

¹⁰⁴ Benedictine Sisters migrating from Erie, Pennsylvania, established the St. Scholastica convent in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1874. Renamed Saint

Mary's in 1879, the Spalding Institute for boys was added in 1907; information from the Sisters of Saint Benedict web site based out of Rock Island, Illinois, <www.stmarymonastery.org>. We know that by January 1917, Ohiya was back in Utah, so it is possible to assume he spent three years at the school and completed the eighth grade before returning home in the spring or summer of 1916.

¹⁰⁵ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma 23 June 1913. The details of how Bonnin chose Spalding Institute are not known. She and Ray had been looking for the right Catholic school for her son for a few years.

¹⁰⁶ Correspondence between both Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin and Father Ketchum mentions the desire to give their son a Catholic education, but the Bonnins were not interested in the Lakota Catholic mission schools.

¹⁰⁷ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [19 March 1913]

¹⁰⁸ There was no mention of Oran's schooling in any of the Bonnin papers or correspondence.

¹⁰⁹ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [23 June 1913]

¹¹⁰ Gertrude Bonnin to Carlos Montezuma [13 June 1913]

¹¹¹ Gertrude Bonnin to Dr. Montezuma [23 June 1913]

¹¹² Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [4 October 1913]; Rappaport 3 November 2003

¹¹³ Martin to Indian Office [16 September 1913], cited in Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [4 October 1913] 3

¹¹⁴ Martin to Indian Office [16 September 1913], cited in Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [4 October 1913] 3

¹¹⁵ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [4 October 1913] 2

¹¹⁶ Gertrude Bonnin to Dr. Montezuma [23 June 1913]

¹¹⁷ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [29 January 1917]

¹¹⁸ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [29 January 1917]

¹¹⁹ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [26 February 1917]

Chapter Six: Personal, Political, and Professional

This chapter takes place further in the middle of the Gallery, in the Bonnin Study. The Study represents Gertrude Bonnin's national political life as a mature woman and a professional Indian dedicated to the causes of enfranchisement, social justice, "racial uplift," and self-determination for Indian peoples. The Bonnin study places Gertrude and her husband Raymond among other educated American Indians and non-Indian members of sympathetic organizations who sought reform of federal-Indian policy.

When Gertrude and Captain Bonnin moved into the Stone House in 1926, the records of Gertrude's life for the decade 1916-1926 were placed in the Study. After touring the Stone House in 1936, Blanche Syfret McKnight described the Bonnin study as,

furnished with modern file cases, [an] unobtrusive desk, typewriter, and table. It is in this room that Zitkala-Sa and her husband, Captain Raymond T. Bonnin...study and write constantly on behalf of their people.¹

The Study is the logical room to hold the memories of this phase in Gertrude Bonnin's life, where the "personal was the political."²

Society of American Indians

The first photograph visible in the Bonnin Study is a group photo of the Society of American Indians taken on the steps of the Carnegie Library at the Sixth Annual Conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 29, 1916. Gertrude is noticeable in the front row, wearing a sophisticated suit, holding her hat (figure 6.1).³ The 1916 conference was Gertrude Bonnin's first SAI meeting.⁴ Her voice emerged on the national political scene that day in September when Gertrude Bonnin, also known as Zitkala-Sa, was elected secretary.

Gertrude's new position, coupled with the United States' involvement in World War I in 1917, provided the desperately needed opportunity to get out of Utah, a place where, as educated Catholic Sioux Indians, Gertie and Ray had few friends. The Bonnins relocated to the nation's capital and Raymond enlisted in the U.S. Army at nearby Fort Myers, in Arlington, Virginia. Like so many other American women, Gertrude supported the war effort at home through involvement with the Red Cross. She eagerly took on more duties for the Society of American Indians.

After fifteen years in the mountains of northern Utah, it is likely Gertie relished the chance to participate once again in urban life.⁵ The first Bonnin apartment in

Washington D. C. was on Northwest Mintwood Place, one of many "three flats" nestled in the middle of an "ethnic" residential neighborhood. From a small writing desk, or perhaps from her kitchen table, Gertrude carried out her secretarial, and later, editorial duties for the SAI. During the war years, the Bonnin apartment became the headquarters of the SAI.⁶ Like Zitkala-Sa's life in Boston as a "representative Indian" in 1900, Gertrude Bonnin's life in the seat of national politics, had to be exemplary. As a woman whose husband was serving their country, she proudly attended to her new position of importance.

Gertrude Bonnin and fellow SAI members were part of the generation of college-educated American Indians who came of age surrounded by assimilationist ideology. Sometimes referred to as "red progressives," many began writing, publishing, and speaking publicly at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁷ They began to act collectively as reformers in 1911 during forums held at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio at the invitation of Fayette Avery McKenzie. Among the guest lecturers in Professor McKenzie's sociology classes was Gertrude's second fiancé, Dr. Carlos Montezuma.⁸ Seeds of the organization can be found in Zitkala-Sa's letters to Montezuma dated 1901. Zitkala wrote she would not be part

of any organization that suggested women have an auxiliary position. She felt strongly that women had every right to be full members and officers in any organization representing American Indians.⁹

The first modern lobby of American Indians, the SAI was a group of dedicated professional men and women representing several Indian nations, who strove to advance their race through assimilation and citizenship.¹⁰ The SAI's agenda "tended to combine concern for the rights of tribes with an orientation toward assimilating American Indians into the larger Euro-American culture."¹¹ Executive board membership was exclusively American Indian including anthropologist Arthur C. Parker (Seneca), physicians Charles Eastman (Santee Sioux) and Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai Apache), artist Angel DeCora (Winnebago), and Episcopal minister, Sherman Coolidge (Arapaho), to name a few. The society offered individual memberships to American Indians. The bulk of the associate membership was made up of noteworthy reformers including Richard Henry Pratt. Many members' paths had crossed through Carlisle Indian School at some point in their lives either as students, teachers, or staff members. Sometimes called "the best and brightest" of their generation, other SAI leaders included educator

Laura Kellogg (Oneida) and attorneys Thomas Sloan (Omaha) and Marie Baldwin (Chippewa).

SAI members were proponents of tribal values as well as advocates of social progress and putting forth a better public image for Indians across the country. One of the goals of the SAI was to educate the American public about the abilities and aspirations of American Indians. To achieve visibility, the SAI began publishing the Quarterly Journal of the American Indian in 1913; renamed The American Indian Magazine in 1916. The journal featured editorials, reports on Indian policy, literature, historical essays, and self-publicity. Robert Allen Warrior suggests that, "understanding the literary output...requires an acknowledgement of how closely authors related to each other politically and how much the work they produced was guided by the political landscape they inhabited."¹² The SAI represented the first instances of an intellectual, activist movement in which individual Indians came together to promote their race. With the exception of 1917, the SAI held a well-publicized convention every September from 1911 to 1923.

The Society's journal published two photographs of Zitkala-Sa in the winter of 1917. In the first, she appears in traditional attire complemented with a beaded choker

captioned, "Our Sioux Secretary." This portrait was chosen for the frontispiece of her second book, American Indian Stories in 1921 (figure 6.2).¹³ Although Gertrude is wearing a "traditional" dress, her braids were not wrapped in the style associated with traditional Sioux women. A second 1917 photograph of Gertrude appeared in the same issue of American Indian Magazine. In a much smaller cameo shot, Gertrude Bonnin is wearing a shirtwaist blouse. Her hair is styled on top of her head in accordance with the fashion of the era (figure 6.3).¹⁴

As editor of American Indian Magazine, Gertrude Bonnin wrote numerous editorials and essays urging support of total U. S. Citizenship and self-determination for American Indians.¹⁵ Her articles promoted citizenship and demanded inclusion into the political process.¹⁶ She believed, as did the suffragists, that enfranchisement was necessary for complete citizenship. Gertrude lived as one who could assimilate to the ideals of "Americanization" and still remain Indian.¹⁷

Reprinted here is the first poem Zitkala-Sa published since her Earlham College days. "The Red Man's America," appeared in the 1917 Winter edition of the Society's journal. It epitomizes Gertrude's sentiment in the rhetoric of the republic:

My country! 'tis to thee
Sweet Land of Liberty,
My pleas I bring.
Land where OUR fathers died,
Whose offspring are denied
The Franchise given wide,
Hark, while I sing.

My native country, thee,
The Red man is not free,
Knows not thy love.
Political bred ill,
Peyote in temple hills,
His heart with sorrow fills,
Knows not thy love.

Let Lane's Bill swell in the breeze,
And ring from all the trees,
Sweet freedom's song.
Let Gandy's Bill awake
All people, till they quake,
Let Congress, silence break,
The Sound prolong.

Great Mystery, to thee,
Life of humanity,
To thee, we cling.
Grant our home-land be bright,
Grant us just human right,
protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our king.¹⁸

The SAI publicly supported the national war effort and the 12,000 American Indian men in the armed forces. It encouraged members to purchase war bonds and participate in Red Cross activities.¹⁹ The winter 1919 edition of American Indian Magazine ran a full-page photograph of "Captain R. T. Bonnin, Sioux" in his officer's uniform (figure 6.4). Raymond Talesphause Bonnin enlisted in the United States Army in 1917, as a private and was honorably discharged

with the rank of captain after two years of duty. He served in the Food Provisions Unit of the Quarter Master Corps in Washington D. C.

Gertrude's Campaign against Peyote: 1917-1932

Between 1916 and 1919, the "Sioux secretary" and editor made many public appearances around the country. According to newspaper records, Gertrude spoke at the Glenwood Mission Inn, Riverside, California, while the Bonnins vacationed in California before moving to Washington D. C. in 1917.²⁰ Riverside is also the home of the Sherman Institute, a federal Indian manual labor training school, where Gertrude was "enthusiastically received [by] the student body as she toured the facilities."²¹ The Riverside Daily Press ran a full-length photo of Zitkala-Sa, in her "traditional" Dakota attire. "Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin Wants Indian Reservation Put on Map--Wants Drug Habit Wiped Out." The article reported Gertrude Bonnin as representing the agenda of the SAI, a group of "progressive Indians who are trying to bring pressure to bear on the federal government that will cause the present reservation system to be changed."²²

Gertrude's personal agenda for years was fighting for anti-peyote legislation. "One of her strongest pleas, was

for a law that would wipe out of the Indian reservations the deadly drug habit."²³ Anthropologist Omer Stewart referred to Gertrude Bonnin as "one of the most powerful women who ever lived in the United States." He credited her with being the major influence in the anti-peyote legislation of fourteen states.²⁴ Both Gertrude and Captain Bonnin were among several Indian leaders and reformers who testified before the standing Senate sub-committee on Indian Affairs, as to the "evils" of peyote.²⁵ Gertrude spoke from "personal witness" on the Uintah and Ouray reservation in Utah where peyote use was prominent and, according to Gertrude, used in a non-spiritual manner.²⁶

There is however, no evidence that Gertrude or Raymond ever participated in a ceremony using peyote, much less ingested it themselves. How close the Bonnins really were to peyote use is speculation. Gertrude never missed an opportunity to inform the public about the "baneful effects" of peyote.²⁷ Invited to speak on "Indian Symbols" at the first "women's open table," at the National Arts Club in 1918, Gertrude managed to get her message in print through a reporter covering the event for the New York Herald. Gertrude Bonnin favored including peyote prevention in a \$150,000 Congressional appropriation bill to prevent the use of alcohol on Indian reservations.²⁸

Peyote use as well as dissent over federal policies of the Indian Bureau caused a schism among Indian leaders. Conflicting ideologies emerged after World War I, particularly over tribal self-determination as opposed to American individualism. In 1920, after her husband lost his bid for presidency of the SAI, Gertrude became disillusioned with the direction of the organization; the new SAI leadership was directly opposed to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and sought to immediately dismantle the system, with no regard for traditional reservation Indians. Both Gertrude and Raymond favored reform of the Indian Bureau. They feared if the Indian Office discontinued commodities, the elderly traditionals on reservations would starve and be forced to sell their properties.

In addition to being divided on the status of the Indian Office, SAI members were factionalized over peyote. In the 1919 election for SAI president, Raymond Bonnin ran against Charles Eastman, who stood in favor of respecting ceremonial peyote use.²⁹ By 1920, Gertrude Bonnin had been an active member of the SAI for over four years and it was now time to move on. Although surely there were some hurt feelings and perhaps some bitterness, Gertrude left no indication of this in any of her writings; she simply

resigned as editor of the magazine and relinquished her board position. The journal became a magazine about Indians written by non-Indians rather than the journal of Indian opinion it had once been.³⁰

1921

Once Gertrude found herself free from the responsibility and headaches of the SAI, she renewed her passion for fiction writing with two new pieces, which were included in American Indian Stories. This book, through which most contemporary readers know Zitkala-Sa, includes her previously published autobiographical stories from The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's Magazine, and Everybody's Magazine. The new stories, "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman" and "A Dream of Her Grandfather" were added along with a new essay, "America's Indian Problem."

Gertrude's prior first-hand experience with her family's land claims and leasing allotments, her experience as a property owner in Utah, coupled with her recent involvement in the SAI and close proximity to policy makers and public debate, painted the big picture of Indian affairs. According to Joseph G. Jorgensen, the atmosphere of land allotment and coerced assimilation, by 1916, made

white domination of American Indians practically complete. "Between 1891 and 1916, two Congressional Acts, an amendment, and official Indian Affairs policy had obliterated the few existing safeguards for American Indians."³¹ Increased awareness of the direction of federal Indian policy allowed Gertrude to articulate the paradox of allotment in a new piece of fiction, "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman."³²

Gertrude based this fictionalized allegory on a 1920 land claim filed by Ellen Bluestone, a mixed-blood Yankton who grew up on the Standing Rock Reservation. This well-developed story holds many embedded themes, which include *Ihanktonwan* history and customs such as birthright and naming, hospitality and trust, as well as biting commentary on corruption and graft. This story presents two sides of an unfortunate yet common situation during the allotment period on many Indian reservations. It also opens the door to tribal enrollment, an issue that varies from tribe to tribe.

Blue-Star Woman's name represents Zitkala-Sa's fascination, since childhood, with the tattoos on some of the tribal elders, especially the blue star tattooed on the bronzed forehead of an old warrior in "The Legends," the second vignette from "Impressions of an Indian Childhood,"

written twenty years prior. This naming of Blue-Star Woman places the central character in the generation of "old-time men and women of the tribe" who were taken advantage of by educated, mixed-blood grafters.³³

As the story continues, time had come for Blue-Star Woman to provide proof of her membership in the tribe. However, "the unwritten law of heart prompted her naturally to say, 'I am being. I am Blue-Star Woman. A piece of earth is my birthright'." Zitkala-Sa continues the old woman's story, "the lack of written records of a roving people, placed a formidable barrier between her and her heritage."³⁴ Blue-Star Woman's adherence to tribal practices prevented her from speaking the names of departed family members.

In the story, Blue-Star Woman receives a visit from two "would-be white men" whose "celluloid collars appeared like shining marks of civilization." Feigning concern for her welfare, Blue-Star Woman's "nephews" ate the last of her fry bread like "ravenous wolves" as she rehearsed her many hardships to them. In return for securing Blue-Star Woman's place on the tribal rolls, the "shrewd schemers" ask for half of the land she will receive.³⁵ Blue-Star Woman remembers, "in bygone days, brave young men of the order of the White-Horse Riders sought out the aged, the poor, the widows and orphans to aid them...without pay."³⁶

By example of Blue-Star Woman, Zitkala-Sa demonstrates the paradox of the reservation allotment system. The nephews laugh, "we use crooks, and crooks use us in the skirmish over Indian lands."³⁷ Nibbling on her last morsel of bread, "the poor old Indian woman" realizes she has become involved with tricksters for the security of firewood and food.

The second half of "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman" centers around Chief High-Flier's protest of Blue-Star Woman's tribal enrollment. Jailed for being "one of the bad Indians, singing war songs and opposing the government," Chief High-Flier's narrative is Zitkala-Sa's vehicle for criticism of tribal police, with their shiny brass buttons and "gold cords and tassels." She writes, "it was their foolish ilk murdered the great leader, Sitting Bull."³⁸

"The Blue Star Woman" includes a letter High-Flier writes to a prominent American woman, which he dictates to his granddaughter through Zitkala-Sa. She weaves Nakota expression and repetition of indigenous speech into Chief High-Flier's lament:

Those days were gone when Indian youths were taught to be truthful [and] merciful to the poor. Those days were gone...when public feasts were given in honor of the virtuous girls and young men of the tribe...a slowly starving race was growing mad, and the

pitifully weak sold their lands for a pot of porridge...Hunhunhe!³⁹

As the story climaxes, Chief High-Flier, who has been sitting in the foul air of his dingy cell for days without eating or sleeping, receives a vision as "a luminous light" steals "underneath his blanket." High-Flier sees a multitude of hands raised to a great stone figure. As "the Statue of Liberty" comes to life, she turns to face the home of the "American aborigine, her face aglow with compassion." In an almost melodramatic scene, Liberty's light penetrates Indian reservations and in Chief High Flier's heart, "lay the secret vision of hope born in the midnight of his sorrows."⁴⁰

In "Blue-Star Woman" Zitkala-Sa combines this "hope" with a strong sense of irony. Among the happy people who greet the old chief upon his release from jail are Blue-Star Woman's nephews. "We are glad we were able to get you out...we have great influence with the Indian Bureau in Washington D.C."⁴¹ Holding before High-Flier the deed to his own allotment, the nephews awaited the chief's mark; his own son pledged the young grafters half High-Flier's land as payment for securing his release from jail.

Hope is a reoccurring theme in another of Zitkala-Sa's post World War I stories, "A Dream of Her Grandfather."

This second story also illuminates the power of dreams and visions that is an integral part of *Ihanktonwan* worldview. Zitkala-Sa shares her dream of the vision inside the cedar chest. The cedar chest is commonly known in Euro-American culture as a "hope" chest. The reader can imagine what Zitkala-Sa may have stored in the chest. Perhaps there is a star quilt made in one of the Ute women's quilting bees, the dried nosegay of purple violets presented to her by Mrs. McKinley after her recitation from Longfellow's Hiawatha in 1901, and the white beaded buckskin dress she wears for public presentations.

"A Dream of Her Grandfather" also tells the story of the first Yankton delegation to Washington as well as connecting the reader to the author of the story. She wrote, "The dream was this: Returning home from an afternoon out, she found a large cedar chest had been delivered to her home. She sniffed the sweet perfume of the red wood, which reminded her of the breath of the forest."⁴² The gift inside the cedar chest, sent by Zitkala-Sa's "grandfather" in her dream, is a vision of Dakota people in camp life rejoicing because "help is near." The vision represents "new hope for her people" as Zitkala-Sa carries on her grandfather's "humanitarian work" in Washington D.C.. The cedar chest vision dispels previous notions of

Zitkala-Sa living in despair. This dream-story reaffirms that Gertrude Bonnin's work in Washington is for a worthy purpose.⁴³

Gertrude's "Appeal to the Women"

For help with her humanitarian work on behalf of Indian people, Gertrude hopefully turned to the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), making a direct appeal to the women of America to take up the Indian cause.⁴⁴ As newly enfranchised citizens, white women reformers all over the country were ready for a new national platform. In a passionate speech delivered at the GFWC's national convention in Salt Lake City, June 1921, Gertrude addressed many issues affecting American Indians: poor health and living conditions, education, citizenship, economic independence, equal opportunity and sovereignty.

Fresh from their successful fight for suffrage, civic-minded, middle-class women readily embraced their next cause under the direction of Stella Atwood of Riverside, California. As Atwood introduced Gertrude Bonnin, she told the convention delegates, "Now that our boys are home from the war and we have won the vote, let us turn our attention to the American Indian."⁴⁵ Atwood had previous contact with American Indians while serving on the National War Board.

Listening to complaints from reformers regarding the effectiveness of the Indian Bureau, she decided it was time to investigate the government's handling of Indian affairs.⁴⁶ It is fitting that, the GFWC established the National Indian Welfare Committee in Utah, where Gertrude lived for fifteen years, and brought all forty-eight state federations on board. The GFWC soon networked with Indian reform organizations to block the Bursom Bill in 1922 and expose the Oklahoma guardianship scandals in 1924.⁴⁷

In the early 1920s, the monthly publication of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs (IFWC), Edict Magazine, ran articles on American Indian issues, creating an informed body politic. Edict's readership of 500,000 voting-aged women coincided with the peak years of "political power" for American women as a gendered voting group, 1920-1924.⁴⁸ Edict Magazine espoused the rhetoric of Americanization ideology. Through research conducted by the National Indian Welfare Committee, clubwomen were made aware of the deplorable living conditions and lack of compassion that was part of everyday life for American Indians living on reservations at that time.⁴⁹

"America's Indian Problem"

Gertrude Bonnin matured to become, according to Alison Bernstein, "easily the most valuable Indian woman reformer of the 1920s and early 1930s."⁵⁰ A version of Gertrude's 1921 speech was included as the last entry in her 1921 book, American Indian Stories. In this polemic and powerful essay, "America's Indian Problem," Gertrude exposed the lack of access to courts and due process, and destitute social and economic conditions.⁵¹ Simultaneously published in Edict Magazine in December 1921, "America's Indian Problem" is a deliberate message addressed to middle class women of America.

Clearly "America's Indian Problem" was not written in the voice of Zitkala-Sa the storyteller, but in the voice of Gertrude Bonnin the activist. She wrote,

Now the time is at hand when the American Indian shall have his day in court through the help of the women of America. The stain upon America's fair name is to be removed, and the remnant of the Indian nation, suffering from malnutrition, is to number among the invited guests at your dinner tables.⁵²

Gertrude Bonnin was one of the most articulate and outspoken persons among the small number of nationally known Indians. She was not giving up simply because she was no longer affiliated with the SAI. Gertrude took her cause of self-determination for American Indians directly to female reformers, speaking these words before the General

Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) conference in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1921:

Americanize the first Americans! Give them freedom to hold open forums for the expression of their thought...to exercise their own judgment, to manage their own business, and finally, to become citizens of this republic whose constitution entitles each individual to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness...We want a democracy wheel whose hub shall be an organization of progressive educated Indian citizens and whose rim shall be the Constitution of your American Government--a wheel whose segments shall become alive with growing community interests and thrift activities of the Indians themselves.⁵³

This impassioned plea penetrated the audience's sense of American citizenship and civic duty as well as their humanitarianism. The following excerpt from the Federation News reflects the GFWC's response:

With Women Suffrage won, following a war of fifty years, standing organized women of America will now work for the enfranchisement of "the first Americans," who are still denied rights of citizenship and who as a subject people are kept as wards of the state under superintendents of practically unlimited powers.⁵⁴

Robin Muncy points out, "middle-class women emerged from the war better organized than ever before," and for many, the timing was right for a new platform. Social justice activities were more than hobbies; they had become part of female reformers' lifestyles.⁵⁵ The GFWC adopted a

platform to "work for citizenship rights [and] for the protection of their property" as well as closely following "upon a nation-wide Americanization campaign."⁵⁶

Gertrude's gratitude was filled with emotion as she responded to the resolution: "O sisters, work to that end; work in cooperation that the stain upon our country in the treatment of my people may be wiped out. This is the happiest day of my life and you have just taken the greatest step made in American civilization toward uplifting the aborigine."⁵⁷ Reporting on the convention, Mrs. J. Marc Fowler remarked, "Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin, a Sioux Indian of high culture and rare personal charm, is devoting her life to the interests of her people."⁵⁸ Fowler continued, "Perhaps the most notable achievement...was the creation of a Division of Indian Welfare. This action offers unlimited opportunities for the betterment and improvement in conditions of a long suffering people."⁵⁹ Americanization efforts already underway for foreign-born and laboring classes, were now extended to American Indians.⁶⁰

Gertrude concluded her talk with three suggestions. The first was for business schools for Indians, so "that they may have a voice in their own affairs, that they may have an opportunity to overcome their ignorance and

strengthen their weaknesses." She called for Congress to enact more stringent laws to restrain "unscrupulous white men" from preying on American Indians. Gertrude's final suggestion was that the,

Bureau of Indian Affairs be relieved of its practically unlimited autocratic supervision of an orderly people now kept prisoners on small remnants of land not shown on our maps in a prolonged wardship, never intended to be permanent, but assumed by the government as an emergency measure and not compatible with the idea of American freedom and American ideals, and contrary to the very constitution itself of the "land of the free."⁶¹

The General Federation News ran a full-length photograph of Bonnin in her traditional white buckskin dress with her hair in long braids. The by-lines read, "Indian Welfare Work Will Be Undertaken" and "Federated Women Want Citizenship Rights for American Indians." Excerpts from Gertrude Bonnin's "appeal to the women" have been transcribed for Gallery visitors to read (figure 6.5).

The formation of the National Indian Welfare Committee stands as "one of the dramatic moments in GFWC history."⁶² A potential two million recently enfranchised American women could be accessed for this cause.⁶³ With tears streaming down her cheeks, Gertrude said, "It has begun. Nothing can stop it. We shall have help."⁶⁴ The primary function of the Indian Welfare Committee was the collection and

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dissemination of information through field research, publication, and public forums. Their goal was to expose injustice and inequality in the Indian assimilation process. Gertrude's goal was that Indian people no longer be wards of the United States government, but be free and equal citizens. Gertrude's "appeal" in 1921 led to her subsequent association with the GFWC as a professional advocate for American Indians. She poured her passion into this agenda for the next fifteen years of her life.

Lectures and Law School: 1921-1926

Memories found in the Bonnin study also include those from the four years Raymond attended George Washington University Law School, beginning in autumn 1921. While Gertrude began her affiliation with the GFWC as lecturer and research agent, her husband Raymond returned to school as a law student and worked as a law clerk. Ray commuted across town from their second apartment on Northwest California Street to study law. Situated several blocks from their first apartment, the Bonnin's new, larger residence in the Chastleton apartments was also a "three flat," in what is now a slightly up-scale, historic neighborhood (figure 6.6-6.7). The GWU law school occupied the former Justice Building during the same years Captain

Raymond T. Bonnin was enrolled as a "special student" from 1921-1925 (figure 6.8).⁶⁵ It is not known if Raymond completed the course of legal study; he did not receive a law degree nor did he ever attempt to pass the Bar exam.⁶⁶

Shortly after beginning his legal studies, Raymond became a professional legal "representative" to American Indian tribes. Because he was not a member of the Bar Association, his relationship was limited to matters other than litigation.⁶⁷ What remains in the public record of Raymond's contracts with the Yankton and Ute tribes, is subsumed in tribal land claims files.⁶⁸ Captain R. T. Bonnin also served as an investigator for the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in the late 1920s.

Blocking the Bursom Bill in 1922

In 1921, Stella Atwood's report on the General Federation of Woman's Club's newly inaugurated National Indian Welfare Committee, was printed in a popular California monthly, Sunset Magazine. At this point in time Atwood met a frequent contributor to the magazine, John Collier.⁶⁹ Collier, a former New York social worker and current teacher at San Francisco State College, became intrigued with Pueblo Indians while visiting them as a tourist in 1920.⁷⁰ He kept abreast of federal intention to

open Pueblo lands through proposed legislation. After learning about the National Indian Welfare Committee, Collier sought out Atwood to solicit support from the GFWC's two million members.

Within a few months, Collier resigned his college teaching position to become a field and publicity agent for the GFWC with the financial backing of \$10,000 from California philanthropist Kate Vosburg.⁷¹ Vine Deloria Jr. noted "Mrs. Atwood [Chair National Indian Welfare Committee], in what was surely one of the most insightful moves in Indian history, asked John Collier to assist in the fight against the Bursom Bill, which if passed would have granted non-Indians access to Pueblo lands and water."⁷² Representing the GFWC, Collier began a survey and investigation of the Pueblos of New Mexico as a paid professional, marking his initiation into national Indian politics.⁷³ A unified Pueblo Council accepted assistance from the Indian Rights Association and the GFWC, who successfully carried out a lobbying campaign that focused on the Pueblos' loss of autonomy, unfair compensation of worthless public land, and the fatal loss of water rights."⁷⁴ The GFWC and IRA were joined by other reform organizations that also worked on behalf of the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico to defeat the Bursum Bill in 1922.

Models for National Indian Reform

The next two exhibits in the Bonnin study provide background information on two middle-class organizations that worked to "reform" Indian affairs. The Indian Rights Association (IRA) and the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA), served in part, as models for the National Council of American Indians, the Indian-run organization founded by Gertrude and Captain R. T. Bonnin in 1926. Although membership and leadership structure of these reform groups differed from the National Council, their procedures of research, investigation, and report, were similar.

Indian Rights Association (IRA)

In December 1882 thirty "well-connected" Quaker men, led by Herbert Welsch of Philadelphia, adopted a two-fold purpose.⁷⁵ The first was to protect the interest and general welfare of the Indians. The second was to initiate, support, or oppose government legislation and policies designed to "civilize" the American Indian. There were four facets to this civilization process: to educate, to Christianize, to make economically independent, and to achieve "an honorable absorption into the common life of

the people of the United States."⁷⁶ The IRA followed the basic design of the Women's National Indian Association, founded in 1879, to protect and further the rights and interests of Native Americans. The moderate tactics of this reform group dominated by the Society of Friends (Quakers) included lobbying, education, social programs, and legal defense.⁷⁷

Its reformers attended annual conferences at Lake Mohonk resort in upstate New York, where they discussed what was best for "the Indian." They shared the commitment of other "Friends of the Indian" to "save" the Indians by assimilating them into American society and dismantling the tribes.⁷⁸ The 1884 Lake Mohonk Conference proclaimed, "The organization of Indian tribes is, and has been, one of the most serious hindrances to the advancement of the Indian toward civilization...every effort should be made to secure the disintegration of all tribal organizations."⁷⁹

The Indian Rights Association was the first reform organization to make a deliberate effort to be directly involved in governmental Indian affairs. Since Congress held, and holds today, plenary power over American Indian tribes as domestic dependent nations, everything that had to do with Indians, went through some level of federal bureaucracy. The IRA was also active in supporting Indian

cases in state and federal courts, particularly in the years 1879-1906.⁸⁰ From 1882 to 1922, the IRA was the major non-governmental group to which individual American Indians turned for protection and support.

The earliest documented interaction between Gertrude Bonnin and the Indian Rights Association dates to December 1908. Gertrude was requesting the IRA's assistance dealing with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs regarding a personal property issue involving her aging mother in South Dakota.⁸¹ The IRA served as her liaison and introduced her to a new dimension of national bureaucracy; one she had come to know through written rhetoric exclusively, until she moved to Washington D.C. in 1917.

In the 1920s, a major shift was underway to reverse the effects of allotment instituted by early assimilationists. Both white and Indian reformers were beginning to doubt the "strength of rugged American individualism" as it applied to American Indians.⁸² The continuous sales of individual allotments and surplus lands had created a state of "pauperization" that accompanies landlessness.⁸³ Reformers relied on the Indian Rights Association as their primary source of information about Indian affairs. The IRA maintained a Washington agent who monitored the policies and actions of the Board of Indian

Commissioners, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congressional legislation. Occasionally the Washington agent was asked to represent the government in Indian matters. A successful lobby group, the IRA formulated policy on both sides of legislation affecting American Indians. Vital to the foundation of IRA policies and actions were yearly investigative trips made to various parts of the United States with Indian populations and reservations. They published reports of these research trips and numerous educational pamphlets.⁸⁴ In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Indian Rights Association sponsored the Bonnins, as representatives of National Council of American Indians.

American Indian Defense Association

In May 1923, the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA) was created as a result of the continuing Pueblo land grant controversy. John Collier became the Executive Secretary. Stella Atwood served on the Board of Directors and Gertrude Bonnin sat on the National Advisory Board.⁸⁵ The AIDA is exemplary of the new "Indian Reform" that emerged in the 1920s. "It cooperates with the Indian Bureau and the Department of the Interior while maintaining its freedom to criticize and dissent where necessary." These

words are part of a specific plan outlined in the AIDA's self-published pamphlet, An Appeal for the Indian.⁸⁶ By 1923, Indian governmental policy was under attack from both older and the new generation reformers.

Randolph C. Downes dates the beginning of modern Indian reform with the birth of the AIDA and its alliance with the GFWC, the IRA and other supporters of the "Indian cause," which at that time was the plight of the Pueblos of New Mexico. The "popular fashion [was] not with the Indian of the present, but with Indians of the past," hence the interest in the exotic Indian and tribal issues that dominated 1920s reform work.⁸⁷ John Collier's involvement with Pueblo culture is an example of the renewed emphasis of "tribalism" and fascination with authentic Indians that emerged in the 1920s. In 1923 the AIDA in collaboration with the GFWC's National Indian Welfare Committee issued the following statement of general principles:

The(AIDA) program emphasized the need of developing group loyalties and communal responsibilities, including tribal land holding, self-government, and religious freedom, the creation of an organization to promote the sale of genuine Indian arts and craftsmanship, and a complete reorganization of the education, health and irrigation services.⁸⁸

The goal was "to arouse the American conscience and focus its attention on the problem of the Indian."⁸⁹ Public

opinion had already blocked the Bursum Bill, helped secure financing for the Indian Health Service, and once again, "awakened interest in the Indian problem in Congress."⁹⁰ The association's quarterly bulletin, American Indian Life featured photographs of "Zitkala-Sa (Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin)" with accompanying stories in 1926 and 1929.⁹¹ Gertrude Bonnin remained on the AIDA National Advisory board over ten years, until the early 1930s. After being staunch supporters of John Collier, the Bonnin's relationship with him began to sour in 1932, after Collier interfered with internal Yankton politics.⁹²

Oklahoma's "Poor Rich Indians"

In 1923, oil baron Lewis Sinclair and Secretary of Interior Albert B. Fall were exposed as major figures in the national oil scandal known as the "Teapot Dome Affair." News articles such as "Oil, Mud and Tom-Toms" highlighted Fall's acceptance of \$100,000 from Sinclair for a lease on the nation's naval oil fields.⁹³ Exposing Sinclair also drew attention to corruption in Oklahoma's Indian country. In partnership with the IRA and the newly founded American Indian Defense Association, the GFWC participated in a 1923 investigation into county probate courts' dealings with guardianship and heirship scandals occurring within the

Five Civilized Tribes (Creek, Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole) and the Osage Indians of Oklahoma.

Historical background of Oklahoma's "poor, rich Indians," includes the guardianship scandals and the policy involved. The depth of the poker-player politics dates to two years before statehood with the discovery of oil in 1897.⁹⁴ When Oklahoma was granted statehood, all trust patent titles for the Five Civilized Tribes, were converted into fee simple titles. Federal guardianship was limited to adult half-bloods and full-bloods. Minors were removed from federal guardianship and assigned to probate court guardianships in 1918.⁹⁵ It is this atmosphere that perpetuated the legal graft against American Indians in Oklahoma. In a joint pamphlet issued by the AIDA and the GFWC, the situation was described thus:

Because Congress...took from the Interior Department all jurisdiction over Indian matters in Eastern Oklahoma, and transferred it to local County Courts, the estates of the members of the Five Civilized tribes are being, and have been, shamelessly and openly robbed. When Oil is "struck" on an Indian's property, it is usually considered *prima facie* evidence that he is incompetent. The Interior Department is powerless, under existing law, to protect these helpless Indians from wholesale plundering.⁹⁶

Gertrude as GFWC Research Agent

Stella Atwood chose Gertrude Bonnin to investigate the guardianship scandals in Oklahoma as research agent for the GFWC. The Indian Rights Association covered Gertrude's expenses and her \$150.00 honorarium.⁹⁷ The IRA and the AIDA also sent research agents to Oklahoma. This alliance between the GFWC, the IRA, and the AIDA produced a jointly written report published and distributed by the Indian Rights Association in 1924.

Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians: The Orgy of Graft and Exploitation of the Five Civilized Tribes---Legalized Robbery was co-written by Gertrude Bonnin, representing the GFWC, Charles H. Fabens of the AIDA, and Matthew K. Sniffen of the IRA. It appeared at a time when moral crusading was on the rise in reaction to national scandals, such as the Teapot Dome Affair, which pinnacleed in 1924.⁹⁸ Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians received national attention in reform circles and was entered in its entirety into the Congressional Record.⁹⁹ Senate hearings on guardianship and competency issues were held and government-ordered investigations and more reports followed the publication of Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians.¹⁰⁰

The Oklahoma exhibit in the Bonnin Study draws attention to three connections between the players in the

oil and guardianship scandals and Indians in Oklahoma. First, Chief Fred Lookout of the Osage tribe and a representative from the IRA, gave testimony at the 1918 Senate committee hearings on the "evils of peyote" in which Gertrude Bonnin testified.¹⁰¹ The IRA was present at all Congressional matters dealing with American Indian affairs, including appropriations and policy.¹⁰²

Second, Henry Sinclair of Sinclair Oil Company held oil leases in both the U. S. Naval Reserve, Wyoming and on Indian land in Oklahoma.¹⁰³ The Secretary of Interior held power of approval over all oil, gas, and mineral leases on federal domain land. Secretary Albert B. Fall was charged with accepting bribes, one from Sinclair, who was indicted on federal charges in Wyoming and contempt of Senate for refusing to answer questions or testify.¹⁰⁴ Oklahoma's oil boom bred a brand new generation of millionaires and none of them were American Indians. C.B. Glassrock described a scene in Oklahoma at the beginning of the twentieth century in his 1938 book, Then Came Oil: The Story of the Last Frontier. He wrote:

Monumental buildings arose upon the sites of teepees. Universities spread their influence over the ranges of the buffalo. Cocktails were dispensed from chromium-trimmed bars in luxurious homes. The calumet gave way to the cigarette. Civilization, rather than the cowboy was in the saddle. Conquest of the last frontier, and the changes, which the

coming of oil wrought upon it, is a drama in our national life.¹⁰⁵

The conquest to which Glassrock refers, was not carried out by a military campaign or settlers fighting wild Indians circling the wagons with bows and arrows. It was rather an exertion of power, power bought with oil money. The Oklahoma probate guardianship system was a mechanism of conquest that was rife with trickery, fraud, greed, and graft. Speaking of the men who exploited women within the guardianship system, Linda Hogan wrote in her novel Mean Spirit, "He doesn't need a business. He's got an Indian wife."¹⁰⁶

Third, there was significant national exposure in the elite print media, following the heels of the Teapot Dome Affair. Editorials in Outlook Magazine used the rhetoric of contemporary criticism in order to garner support for interest in the Oklahoma scandals.¹⁰⁷ A powerful article by John Collier, "Our Indian Policy" called for national action to put an end to "America's record of shame" finally closing the "Century of Dishonor."¹⁰⁸ Collier was referencing Helen Hunt Jackson's landmark work, A Century of Dishonor, published in 1880. How much had changed in forty years? Both the AIDA and the IRA were vocal about Indians in Oklahoma in the 1920s. Their audiences, middle-class, well-educated, professionals coupled with the GFWC's membership

and their grass-roots efforts finally got the attention of Congress.

In a Congressional hearing of the sub-committee on Indian Affairs Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians was introduced and read in its entirety. Congress proceeded to allocate \$25,000 for a full set of Congressional sub-committee hearings involving the situations in Oklahoma in Indian country.¹⁰⁹ "These Indians are all wards of the Government. There is no doubt about that, or that Congress is held responsible for their welfare."¹¹⁰ An Outlook Magazine editorial called for action: "It is not sufficient that public servants be merely free from corruption. It is also necessary that they should not be foolish, credulous, dilated in action, or inefficient."¹¹¹ This article reflected the administration of President Coolidge in 1924, who was determined to "root out the facts and to allow punishment for dereliction in duty to fall where it may."¹¹²

The Congressional investigation took place in November and December of 1924. Matthew K. Sniffen, Executive Secretary of the Indian Rights Association represented the three organizations responsible for the content of Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians. Sniffen was woefully under-prepared for the atmosphere of legal lip service being paid to the Congressional committee by the Oklahoma

authorities.¹¹³ The chair of the committee, Homer Synder of New York was under the opinion that the oral histories and interviews within Poor Rich Indians were "hearsay."

Gertrude Bonnin, who conducted the Indian interviews, was not called to testify; she was however, invited to attend. Gertrude declined on the advice from the GFWC's attorney. It seems as though someone threatened to sue Gertrude Bonnin for libel if she showed her face in Oklahoma ever again.¹¹⁴ The AIDA did not send a representative. Executive Secretary John Collier called for a private investigation of all Indian affairs, claiming a Congressional investigation was not sufficient.¹¹⁵

Indian Reform continued in different directions after the 1924 hearings. The AIDA retained its relationship of reform efforts for the Pueblos and the Navajos. Gertrude Bonnin resigned as research agent for the GFWC and became president of a new Indian-run organization, the National Council of American Indians, in 1926. About that time, Secretary of Interior Hubert Work authorized a nation-wide two-year investigation into Indian Affairs to be executed through the Brookings Institution. The findings, published in 1928 as The Problem of Indian Administration by Lewis Meriam et al, numbered over 800 pages. The "Meriam Report" caused a resurgence of reform activities, which had been

quieted by the Congressional "whitewash" investigation of 1924.¹¹⁶ The Meriam Report was a major impetus in Indian New Deal reform efforts.¹¹⁷

After the appearance of the Meriam Report, the GFWC once again undertook national Indian welfare work, with the Indian Welfare Committee becoming very active in the 1930s.¹¹⁸ Because of Gertrude Bonnin and her "appeal to the women" of America, the General Federation of Women's Clubs viewed national American Indian issues, as human rights initiatives. Their national lobbying efforts proved to have significant impact on federal Indian policy of the 1920s and into the New Deal era.

¹ Washington Evening Star December 31, 1936 (np) John Collier papers

² According to Benita Roth, C. Wright Mills introduced this concept in his book, The Sociological Imagination (1959), when he wrote about the intersection of public issues and personal problems, of personal biography and history. Donna Bickford says "The personal is political" became a common phrase associated with feminist dialogue, after Carol Hanisch's 1969 essay, "The Personal is Political" circulated feminist circles. It appeared in the collection, Feminist Revolution (1975) published by the radical feminist organization, Redstockings. Hannah Miyamoto dates the phrase to a 1964 slogan of the Students for a Democratic Society, inspired by C. Wright Mills; WMST-L File List archive 7 February 1998, 3 April 2003.

³ The original photo is located in the National Archives, Washington D.C.

⁴ Raymond Bonnin joined the SAI in 1917 just before enlisting in the Army at Ft. Meyers, Arlington, Virginia.

⁵ Sometime after 1910, Gertrude received about \$600 from the sale of her share of part of her mother's allotment at Yankton, with which she purchased a forty-acre "ranch" near Ft. Duchesne, Utah. The Bonnins had a team of horses, and Ohiya had a burro for a short time, but to my knowledge, the Bonnins did not have any livestock; evidence in the BCIM correspondence records, c. 1912.

⁶ Omer Stewart "Gertrude Simmons Bonnin" University of South Dakota News Bulletin No. 87 (1981) 11; Beginning in March 1918, Raymond was stationed in Washington D.C after Officer Reserve Training Camp at an unknown location.

⁷ See Tom Holm, "The Red Progressives" Between Two Worlds: The Survival of Twentieth Century Indians Arrell Morgan Gibson ed. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1986 (16-29)

⁸ Nabokov's Native American Testimony contains testimonials from the opening conference of the Society of American Indians in 1911. Minutes can be found in the Papers of the Society of American Indians (SAI), 10 reels microfilm.

⁹ Zitkala-Sa to Carlos Montezuma [c. June 1901]

¹⁰ For a thorough discussion of the Society of American Indians see Hazel W. Hertzberg Search for an American Indian Identity: Pan-Indian Movements Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971

¹¹ Duane Champagne ed., Native America: Portrait of the Peoples Detroit MI: Visible Ink Press, 1994 (3); Indian rights organizations already in existence were the Women's National Indian Association (WNIA), founded 1879, and the Quaker-dominant Indian Rights Association (IRA), founded in 1882.

¹² Robert Allen Warrior Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995 (10)

¹³ This portrait has been reproduced in all subsequent editions of American Indian Stories and included in numerous articles and chapters.

¹⁴ American Indian Magazine Winter 1917

¹⁵ After serving as acting editor for a year, Gertrude Bonnin became editor of the American Indian Magazine in 1918.

¹⁶ See American Indian Magazine "Break the Shackles Now--Make Us Free," Vol. 5 No. 4 (Fall 1917), "America, Home of the Red Man" Vol. 6 No. 4 (Winter 1919), and "Indian Gifts to Civilized Man" Vol. 6 No. 3 (Summer 1918)

¹⁷ "Americanization" programs and efforts were popular with white middle-class reformers who sought to educate immigrants as to the Protestant way of living: i.e., proper hygiene, child rearing, housekeeping and cooking.

¹⁸ American Indian Magazine Vol. 5 No. 1 (Winter 1917) 64; Democratic Senator Harry Lane from Oregon filed numerous bills to abolish the Indian Bureau. The first federal anti-peyote bill, drafted by the democratic Congressman from South Dakota, H. L. Gandy in 1916 was defeated in the House. Re-introduced by Carl M. Hayden in 1917, the bill was defeated in the Senate in 1918. Although no federal legislation was ever passed, several states did pass legislation prohibiting peyote use.

¹⁹ For further discussion of Indian involvement in World War I see Thomas A. Britten American Indians in World War I: At Home and at War Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997

²⁰ Gertrude Bonnin to Father Ketcham [c. June 1917] BCIM

²¹ Established in 1902, the Sherman Institute was the last of twenty-four, off-reservation, federal boarding schools opened for American Indian students across the country. Like those erected before it, Sherman Institute was modeled after the Carlisle Industrial School, founded by Richard Henry Pratt in 1879 in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Riverside, California was also the hometown of Stella Atwood, the future chairwoman of the National Indian Welfare Committee, formed at the GFWC convention, held in Salt Lake City in June 1921 (Indian Welfare Committee files, WHRC).

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- ²² Riverside Daily Press March 30, 1917
- ²³ Riverside Daily Press March 30, 1917
- ²⁴ Stewart, "Gertrude Simmons Bonnin," University of South Dakota Bulletin 87 (May 1981) 10-11
- ²⁵ Hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, 65th Congress, 2nd session, February 22, 1918; for discussion of Bonnin's role in the peyote hearings see Deborah Sue Welch, "Zitkala-Sa: An American Indian Leader, 1876-1938" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wyoming, 1985)
- ²⁶ I suggest since there was no alcohol to be obtained, given the reservation was in the middle of Mormon country, peyote may have replaced the "Saturday night drink."
- ²⁷ New York Herald March 19, 1918; Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ²⁸ New York Herald March 19, 1918
- ²⁹ Both Bonnin and Eastman lost to Omaha attorney Thomas Sloan.
- ³⁰ Hertzberg Search for an Indian Identity 190.
- ³¹ Joseph G. Jorgensen "A Century of Political Economic Effects of American Indian Society, 1880-1980" Journal of Ethnic Studies 6.3 (Fall 1978) 14
- ³² Discussion of "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman" appears in Susan Rose Dominguez, "Zitkala-Sa: The Representative Indian" in the 2003 edition of Zitkala-Sa's American Indian Stories (xviii-xx).
- ³³ Zitkala-Sa "The Widespread Enigma Concerning Blue-Star Woman" American Indian Stories 161
- ³⁴ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 159, 160
- ³⁵ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 165
- ³⁶ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 170
- ³⁷ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 170
- ³⁸ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 177; Congress authorized salaries for reservation "Indian police" in 1878; "The police force shall be supplied with uniforms with a few brass buttons for distinction" Francis Paul Prucha Documents of United States Indian Policy third edition Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000 (1990, 1975) 149-150.
- ³⁹ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 174, 177
- ⁴⁰ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 179, 180
- ⁴¹ Zitkala-Sa "Blue-Star Woman" 181
- ⁴² Zitkala-Sa "A Dream of Her Grandfather" American Indian Stories 156
- ⁴³ Zitkala-Sa "A Dream of Her Grandfather" 156-158
- ⁴⁵ Stella Atwood, Chair Indian Welfare Committee, California Federation of Women's Clubs, General Federation News August 21, 1921
- ⁴⁶ Kenneth R. Philp John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform, 1920-1954 Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1977 (26)
- ⁴⁷ The GFWC joined efforts with the Indian Rights Association (IRA) in 1922 and the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA) in 1923. Founded in 1890, the GFWC is the oldest and largest, non-partisan, volunteer-civic organization in the world. The GFWC's first national platform was child-labor reform.
- ⁴⁸ For further discussion of the loss of "women's power" once the National political parties developed women's platforms, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Women in the Parties, 1917-1932 in Anna Harvey Votes Without Leverage: Women in American Electoral Politics, 1920-1970 New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Sarah Deutch offers a social perspective on women's loss of political power after the 1920s. Clearly the political female power base began to erode quickly after

1926; see "From Ballots to Breadlines" No Small Courage ed. Nancy Cott New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

⁴⁹ In 1924, the GFWC adopted a resolution calling for reform of the Indian Bureau at the national level.

⁵⁰ Alison Bernstein "A Mixed Record: The Political Enfranchisement of American Indian Women During the Indian New Deal" Journal of the West 23:3 (July 1984) 13

⁵¹ David L. Johnson and Raymond Wilson "Americanize the First American" American Indian Quarterly (Winter 1988) 34

⁵² Zitkala-Sa "America's Indian Problem" American Indian Stories Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1985 (1921) 186; Edict Magazine December 1921 (5); Edict Magazine, the official voice of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs (IFWC), was published monthly in Chicago from 1920-1924. In 1920 the IFWC was the first state federation to form an Indian Welfare Committee followed by Oklahoma and California. As late as 1953, the IFWC still offered an annual college scholarship for young Indian women. See Mildred White Wells Unity in Diversity: A History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs Washington D. C.: GFWC, 1953 (428).

⁵³ "Americanize the First Americans" was a popular slogan of the early 1920s. Gertrude Bonnin and many others used it to title essays and editorials in the campaign for Indian citizenship. General Federation News Vol. 2 No. 1 (August, 1921) 9

⁵⁴ "Indian Welfare Work Will Be Undertaken" General Federation News Vol. 2 No. 1 (August 1921) 1

⁵⁵ Many women had just spent years working to secure the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act. Robyn Muncy Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935 New York: Oxford University Press, 1991 (102, 104-107, 159)

⁵⁶ General Federation News Vol. 2 No. 1 (August 1921) 1; See also George Sanchez, "Go After the Women: Americanization and the Mexican Migrant Women, 1915-1929" in Vicki Ruiz and Ellen Carol Du Bois eds., Unequal Sisters London: Routledge, 1994 (284-297)

⁵⁷ General Federation News Vol. 2 No. 1 (August 1921) 9

⁵⁸ Edict Magazine Vol. 2 No.11 (December 1921) 6

⁵⁹ General Federation News Vol. 2 No. 1 (August 1921) 1

⁶⁰ Various federated women's clubs' Departments of American Citizenship carried out these efforts.

⁶¹ General Federation News Vol. 2 No. 1 (August 1921) 9

⁶² General Federation News December 1921

⁶³ Women's suffrage had not yet been deemed a failure by the press, a tactic that began in 1924. See Kristi Anderson After Suffrage: Women in Partisan and Electoral Politics before the New Deal Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996

⁶⁴ Wells Unity in Diversity 217

⁶⁵ Raymond T. Bonnin, 1830 California St. Washington D.C., was enrolled for four years beginning autumn 1921 as a "special student" at George Washington University Law School; verified by the Registrar's office.

⁶⁶ During the years Bonnin was there, GW Law offered only a Master's Degree in Law. After 1936, a Bachelor's Degree became mandatory for admittance when the program began granting J.D. degrees.

⁶⁷ various correspondence in the Bonnin file of the John Collier papers c. 1934-1936

⁶⁸ The majority of Raymond's legal files were destroyed in 1951. David Whittaker, Catherine Uddal, and Emily Sorensen unpublished manuscript, "Guide to the Raymond and Gertrude Bonnin Collection" MS 1704 BYU Special Collections, Provo Utah: March 1996 (8)

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- ⁶⁹ Kenneth R. Philp John Collier's Crusade for Indian Reform 1920-1954 Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977 (257 n3)
- ⁷⁰ Philp Crusade for Indian Reform 26, 33; for further study of John Collier, his papers are available on microfilm (110 reels), Newberry Library
- ⁷¹ Vosburg was a friend of Collier's mother, an active California clubwoman (IRA papers, Atwood file)
- ⁷² Vine Deloria Jr. The Nations Within Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998 (1984) 40.
- ⁷³ Philp Crusade for Indian Reform 27
- ⁷⁴ Judith Nies Native American History New York: Ballantine Books (1996) 326-27
- ⁷⁵ Jack T. Ericson "History of the Indian Rights Association" Indian Rights Association Papers: A Guide to the Microfilm Edition, 1864-1973 Glen Rock, NJ: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1975 (1); see also William T. Hagan The Indian Rights Association: the Herbert Welsch Years, 1882-1904 Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985
- ⁷⁶ Ericson "History" IRA Papers Guide (1)
- ⁷⁷ Frances Abele, "U.S. Indian Activist Movements" Native America Portrait of the Peoples Duane Champagne ed. Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1994 (3)
- ⁷⁸ Colin G. Calloway First Peoples: A Documentary Survey of American Indian History Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999 (353-354)
- ⁷⁹ Second Annual Address to the Public of the Lake Mohonk Conference Philadelphia: Indian Rights Association, 1884 (6-7), cited in Calloway First Peoples (354, 374n4)
- ⁸⁰ Ericson IRA Papers Guide (2-3)
- ⁸¹ Gertrude Bonnin to Matthew K. Sniffen [9 July 1908], [11 December 1908], Indian Rights Association Papers (microfilm)
- ⁸² Hazel W. Hertzberg The Search for an American Indian Identity Syracuse: University of Syracuse Press, 1971 (179)
- ⁸³ Randolph C. Downes "A Crusade for Indian Reform, 1922-1934" The Mississippi Valley Historical Review 32.3 (December 1945) 332; for further discussion of landlessness, see Janet A. McDonnell The Dispossession of the American Indian 1887-1934 Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991
- ⁸⁴ The Indian Rights Association papers (IRA) (135 reels microfilm) Michigan State University
- ⁸⁵ American Indian Defense Association (AIDA) An Appeal for the Indian Philadelphia: AIDA, 1924 (13)
- ⁸⁶ AIDA Appeal for the Indian 12
- ⁸⁷ Hertzberg Search for an Indian Identity 191, 198, 200
- ⁸⁸ Downes "Crusade for Indian Reform" 336
- ⁸⁹ AIDA Appeal for the Indian 10
- ⁹⁰ AIDA Appeal for the Indian 10
- ⁹¹ American Indian Life was the bulletin of the Indian Defense Associations of California. Copies of American Indian Life (1926 and 1928) were left behind when the Stone House was vacated in 1942 after Raymond's death. Today, the current residents keep these issues in their study.
- ⁹² Captain Raymond T. Bonnin and Gertrude Bonnin to John Collier [3 March 1932] John Collier Papers, Newberry Library
- ⁹³ Stanley Frost "Oil, Mud and Tom-Toms" Outlook Magazine March 12, 1924; See David H. Stratton Tempest Over the Teapot Dome: The Story of Albert B. Fall Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998; for history spanning from removal from the Jacksonian era to the 1930's, see Angie

Debo And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940

⁹⁴ For history from post civil war to statehood, see H. Craig Miner The Corporation and the Indian: Tribal Sovereignty and Industrial Civilization in Indian Territory, 1865-1907 Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1976; for Osage county from 1870 to the 1930s, see Terry Wilson The Underground Reservation: Osage Oil Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Linda Hogan's compelling novel Mean Spirit New York: Ivy books, 1990, draws on true stories from the terror on the Osage reservation in the 1920s.

⁹⁵ An Act to provide for determination of heirship...Five Civilized Tribes S. 4151 June 14, 1918; cited in Statutes at Large 1919

⁹⁶ "Statement Regarding Misrepresentations" AIDA and GFWC (March 8, 1924) IRA Papers

⁹⁷ Correspondence between Gertrude Bonnin, Stella Atwood, and Matthew Sniffen, IRA Papers, 1922-24

⁹⁸ 1924 represents a crucial turning point in American Indian affairs that eventually produced legislative reform a decade later during what is known as the Indian New Deal. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 marked the end of land allotment and re-recognition of Indian nations and cultures.

⁹⁹ "Hearings before the Committee on Indian Affairs House of Representatives, Sixty-eighth Congress, First Session on H.J. Res. 181" Administration of Indian Affairs in the State of Oklahoma Washington: Government Printing Office, 1924

¹⁰⁰ In 1998, Blackwell publishers reprinted Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians, by Gertrude Bonnin with Charles K. Faben and Matthew H. Sniffen, in Native American Women's Writing 1800-1924: An Anthology edited by Karen Kilcup. The following year, Peter Nabokov drew attention to this report in a collection of primary documents and Native voices entitled, Native American Testimony.

¹⁰¹ Hearings Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, 65th Congress H.R. 8696, February 22, 1918 (peyote hearings)

¹⁰² The IRA papers are filled with Congressional hearings transcripts and correspondence.

¹⁰³ Burl Noggle Teapot Dome: Oil and Politics in the 1920s Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962 (144-45)

¹⁰⁴ Noggle Teapot Dome 154; The Teapot Dome Affair reached climax in 1924 after national exposure aroused public interest. It was one of many federal scandals such as those in the shipping industry, income tax collection, the Veteran's Bureau, war funds, and prohibition enforcement; Stanly Frost, "Oil, Mud and Tom-Toms" Outlook Magazine March 12, 1924. There were also state scandals occurring, such as impeachment proceedings against the newly elected governor, democrat Jack Walton in 1922.

¹⁰⁵ C. B. Glassrock Then Came Oil: The Story of the Last Frontier Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1938 (11)

¹⁰⁶ Linda Hogan Mean Spirit New York: Ivy Books, 1990 (193)

¹⁰⁷ M.K. Sniffen "Indians Robbed of Rich Oil Lands" The Philadelphia Record December 28, 1924 (IRA Papers)

¹⁰⁸ Sunset Magazine March, 1923

¹⁰⁹ Congressional hearings before Committee on Indian Affairs, 68th Congress, 1st session H.J. Res. 181 Administration of Indian Affairs in the State of Oklahoma February 21, 1924 Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1924 (32)

¹¹⁰ Congressional hearings before Committee on Indian Affairs, 68th Congress, 1st session H.J. Res. 181 (February 21, 1924) 130

¹¹¹ "The Teapot Dome Scandal" Outlook Magazine February 6, 1924; Albert B. Fall, Secretary of the Interior under President Harding received \$100,000 for an oil lease from Edward L. Doheny and \$25,000 from Henry F. Sinclair.

¹¹² "The Teapot Dome Scandal" 214

¹¹³ In the 500-page report, Sniffen's cross-examination and testimony, November 1924, covers 33 pages.

¹¹⁴ Correspondence between Gertrude Bonnin and Stella Atwood, March 8, 1924, April 28, 1924, IRA Papers

¹¹⁵ AIDA Appeal for the Indian 12

¹¹⁶ The November and December 1924 hearings were referred to in several instances as a "whitewash"; originally expressed by Sniffen in the IRA papers.

¹¹⁷ Lewis Meriam et al. The Problem of Indian Administration; a Report of a Survey Made at the Request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and Submitted to Him, February 21, 1928 Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928

¹¹⁸ Indian Welfare Committee file, WHRC

Chapter Seven: "In Service to the Red Race," 1926-1938

It is here that the Gallery tour reaches the time when Gertrude actually lived in the Stone House, out in the country, with her husband, Raymond, in what later became the Lyon Park neighborhood of Arlington, Virginia.¹ The episodes within the final chapter of Gertrude Bonnin's story take place primarily in the Bonnin Study. The major exhibit in this portion of the Gallery tour begins with the National Council of American Indians. Founded in February 1926, Gertrude and Captain Raymond T. Bonnin served as officers for twelve years, until Gertrude's death in January 1938.

The formation of the National Council of American Indians represents the culmination of Gertrude Bonnin's life work, what she expressed to The Washington Post Magazine as, "study, travel, writing, and dreaming."² The National Council was the highlight of both Gertrude's work for her "Indian Kinsmen" and her marital partnership with Raymond Bonnin.³ Gertrude wrote about her work and her relationship with her husband in 1933, "Captain Bonnin having gotten out of the Army in 1919, was able to help much in this work. He probably knows more Indians personally than any other person in the world."⁴ Gertrude

gives us a glimpse at the drive behind this tremendous endeavor to work for Indian Kinsmen, as she continues:

There were many Indians who wrote for help that were unknown to either of the Bonnins. This caused them to feel the real necessity of some sort of local organization in each Indian community from whence correct information could be had at all times. Letters from unknown persons could then be referred back to a reliable source for proper recommendations.⁵

The majority of the National Council's existing papers are typed carbon copies of reports and correspondence.⁶ Many of the documents involve Raymond Bonnin, making it apparent that Gertrude and Raymond were very much in partnership in this effort. Some of the letters reveal two-way conversations between Gertrude, as President of the National Council, and "lodge" leaders of tribal chapters.⁷ Other letters to individuals, allow the Gallery visitor to view Zitkala-Sa in her role as dutiful "granddaughter" to her elders. At her writing table, Gertrude proudly came full circle as she wrote to her "grandfather" Abraham Calico of Pine Ridge, South Dakota, "I am a Sioux woman" and an "enrolled Yankton Sioux."⁸

From 1927 until 1934, the National Council's office was located in close proximity to Congress in the Bliss Building, which also held the offices of the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA). Captain Raymond T.

Bonnin served the National Council as Executive secretary and treasurer. Raymond paid the Council's office rent with compensation he received working as a law clerk, an occupation he began during the years he spent studying law as a "special student" at George Washington University Law School from 1922-1926.⁹

Even though he never took the Bar exam, Captain Bonninn worked for law firms specializing in Indian claims and litigation as a "lawyer."¹⁰ His fluency in Dakota dialects and his Indian identity attracted individual Indian as well as tribal clients. His status as an enrolled Indian who asserted his rights, earned him respect from the law profession. Ray made good money for these years "considering" he did not have a college degree and was educated in an Indian school. He had contacts from law school that he maintained all his life.¹¹ After years in Utah and summers out west, photographs of Ray Bonninn reveal dark weathered skin in contrast to his white shirt collar.¹²

The National Council of American Indians was the Bonnins' way of giving back as professional tribally enrolled Yankton Sioux working in service for American Indians and tribes. Gertrude and Raymond each contributed their own expertise to the organization. Raymond laid the foundation with legal research, pouring through case law

and treaty cases. Gertrude handled publicity, utilizing her skills in historical training, critical argument, and elocution. Honorariums from public appearances, speaking and dressing as "Zitkala-Sa," covered tuition for a correspondence business course and paid for the mimeographing and mailing of the Council's newsletter. Gertrude Bonnin maintained a busy schedule lecturing to women's organizations, which tended to be receptive to reform efforts and political participation. One of her popular platforms in the late 1920s was the title of an essay published in the Friends' Intelligencer First Month 19, 1929.¹³

"What It Means to Be An Indian Today" was also the topic of Mrs. R. T. Bonnin's opening lecture for the Maryland League of Women Voters annual convention in May 1929 (figure 7.1).¹⁴ Gertrude's style is very direct, with no use of metaphor. In summary of her essay, Gertrude wrote,

To be an Indian today means to be an inarticulate subject under the plenary power of congress, presumed by the united States Supreme Court to be governed by Christian motives in its dealings with the ignorant and dependent race. It means to be hungry, sick, and dying while still used for a national political football.¹⁵

Beginning in 1924, Gertrude Bonnin served on the American Indian Defense Association's (AIDA) National Advisory Board at the invitation of Executive secretary, John Collier (former research agent for the GFWC).¹⁶ In addition to the National Council and AIDA offices, the Bliss Building also housed the Federal Indian Bureau (now known as the Bureau of American Indian Affairs or BIA). This proximity gave Gertrude a chance to hear first-hand, what was going on. As President of the National Council, Gertrude wrote the "INDIAN NEWS LETTER" sporadically from 1929-1933.¹⁷ Most often it opened with "Dear Kinsmen." Written, typed, mimeographed, and mailed to the reservations, the newsletters contained information regarding all that she heard while attending the standing Senate House Committee on Indian Affairs sessions.

Although written in a professional format, often times the rhetoric was passionate. Regarding pending legislation in 1932, to establish guidelines for forming tribal councils (S.3668), Gertrude urged Indians to write to their Senators and Congressmen, "Dear Indian Kinsmen, Citizen Indians, Get busy...we do not want ex-convicts, or unfrocked churchmen, or failures living on charity to be made members of our tribal councils."¹⁸ Gertrude continued to urge Americanization through adoption of the English language,

which she saw as paramount to participation in the political process. Over all, the tone of the newsletters was hopeful. Gertrude truly believed that disseminating information to the tribes would be welcomed and acted upon. "Let's have three cheers!" She was always encouraging her kinsmen to, "push the constructive program to 'HELP INDIANS HELP THEMSELVES.' You have a mind, a heart and a life. Make USE of them daily. Keep your eye on the ball and do good teamwork...ACT!!"¹⁹ In another newsletter, she wrote in her straightforward style,

Indians, are you blind, deaf and dumb human beings? NO! Prove you are alive by self-help activities. You are grown up. Begin in your own hearts. Have more confidence in yourselves...the way is open for improvement in your hearts, your homes, your Lodges, and your daily duties. Muster enough courage to wake up, and exert yourself wherever you are.²⁰

Occasionally, the Indian News Letters evoked pathos, such as the following,

When Columbus visited our continent, Indians were working out their own salvation but immediately after their treaty agreements with the government, the red race fell into voiceless captivity under the Indian reservation system. 'A vast majority of the Indians are poor, even extremely poor.'²¹

Gertrude Bonnin always tried to relate whatever her topic was in terms her "kinsmen" could understand by

speaking to them "with a straight tongue."²² In January 1933 she wrote,

BUREAUCRACY AND THE MACHINE AGE are a destructive pair...They are the white man's IYA TWINS. According to Indian mythology, IYA was a dreaded monster that swallowed entire villages alive. Thereafter, [in] his belly could be heard faint sounds of barking dogs, whinnying ponies, voices of children and wailing men and women. So now as of old, IYA TWINS would have us believe humanity was made for their consumption.²³

"Helping Indians Help Themselves"

The National Council of American Indians was the first post World War I, Indian-run, political action group with individual and tribal "lodge" memberships, to organize on the national level in the United States. Deborah Welch points out in her 1985 dissertation, "Zitkala-Sa: An American Indian Leader, 1876-1938," one of the principle purposes of the National Council, "was to develop an Indian political bloc [by] organizing the Indian vote, particularly at state and county levels to bring pressure on politicians."²⁴ The Council's other primary concerns were to pay attention to Indian citizens and tribes by protecting property rights and citizenship rights. In her definitive work on modern Pan-Indian movements, Search for an American Indian Identity, Hazel Hertzberg places the National Council of American Indians in the context of Pan-

Indian national reform. She states, "The National Council attempted to be a body representative of the tribes. In practice it seems to have been a small and struggling group owing its existence to the devotion of the Bonnins."²⁵

Gertrude wrote in 1929, "My Dear Kinsmen, as for the work Captain Bonnin and I contribute...we are doers of difficult things because we are tireless workers."²⁶

Although the Council was a small organization, considering its national scope and agenda, the Bonnins held the Council to high standards and objectives, including, "a constructive effort to better the Red Race and make its members better citizens of the United States."²⁷ Mention is made of the Council's Constitution and By-Laws in a description of the Council, written by Gertrude Bonnin c.1928; but to date, they have not been located.²⁸ There are no existing membership rolls, and it is doubtful if a master list was kept. Dues for tribal "lodge" affiliations were \$1.50 per year and individual associate memberships were \$1.00 per year. The intent was to promote tribal membership with the Council Lodges responsible for their own individual memberships. Gertrude wrote, "My greatest service, and that without remuneration, is in organizing the tribes into local lodges, branches of the National Council of American Indians, under their constitutional

rights as citizens, for constructive purposes."²⁹ Two versions of the Council's membership cards, complete with Zitkala-Sa's photograph, are part of the Gallery's exhibit on the National Council of American Indians (figures 7.2-7.3).

Gertrude Bonnin, through this National Council, was determined to educate and engage American Indian tribes and members in the national political arena. A short essay, written by Gertrude Bonnin entitled, "How the National Council of American Indians came into being and some of the things it is trying to do through organization," delineates the group's history and its mission. Highlights from this document follow:

For a great many years Indian Tribal Delegates have come to Washington D.C. in vain attempts to procure redress for their vast grievances on their scattered reservations. They met each other in the hotels and held informal councils where they discussed their problems and the difficulty to secure favorable action. Captain Bonnin and I were frequently invited...On the night of February 27, 1926...these men, representing some twenty-one tribes, organized the National Council of American Indians...I tried to decline the honor, but they insisted; I accepted the presidency...The plan of the organization was to have the National Headquarters in Washington as a Listening Post, and Local Lodges organized in all Indian country, in the course of time, until all the tribes be reunited under the rights of citizenship. The campground picture used on our letterhead is symbolic of our universal brotherhood.³⁰

A sketch of an Indian camp scene appeared on the Council's stationary (figure 7.4). It is the logo the Council used until 1933. On one version of the Council's letterhead, lists of both individual and tribal members ran down the side margins. Council membership appears to have peaked in 1928 with just over 100 "Advisory Members" and forty-nine tribes listed on its stationary. The camp scene logo was replaced with a buffalo skull and pipe design in 1933 (figure 7.5).³¹

Gertrude continues in her essay to explain what the National Council of American Indians actually does:

From Washington, information of pending legislation effecting Indians or their property is written in simplified English and sent to Local Lodges, where meetings are called...Important court decisions are also explained for their information and education.³²

Individual due process and protection of property rights seem to be the biggest concerns at the time this was written. Although Gertrude concludes,

In following up on the situations complained of in letter[s] from Indians, I appear before executive departments of the government. Regardless of whether the Indians who write are members or not, I respond to their call for help as best as I know how.³³

The National Council also strove to launch an "Information Service Program" in 1927, for adult Indian citizen voters with a projected annual budget of \$6000.³⁴

Hertzberg informs us, "the tribes to whom Mrs. Bonnin addressed her appeals did not respond, and the educated Indian elite took no interest in Mrs. Bonnin's work." Hertzberg attributes this to "personal factions and jealousies, ever the bane of Pan-Indian organization."³⁵ Just as with the Society of American Indians, ceremonial peyote use was a divisive issue among members. Hertzberg ends her brief discussion of the National Council of American Indians by offering this observation, "Mrs. Bonnin's tendency to run a one-woman show no doubt virtually precluded the active participation of other educated Indians."³⁶ Gertrude's belief that tribes and individuals would welcome what she did, also held the potential for misunderstandings. In her own words, Gertrude Bonnin "volunteered facts to members of [Congressional] committees, that the Indian's best interests might not be overlooked for lack of a more intimate acquaintance with existing conditions."³⁷

Representing not only the National Council, Gertrude Bonnin believed it was her duty, as an educated Indian, to represent all American Indians in their fight to manage

their own affairs, to help them achieve self-determination. She believed that her knowledge of due process and citizen rights entitled her to speak and be heard. Gertrude wrote, "Regardless of whether the Indians who write [to the Council] are members or not, I respond to their call for help as best I know how."³⁸ Whether or not Gertrude Bonnin deserved to represent herself as an authority is a discussion to embrace as we learn more about her work with the National Council of American Indians from 1926 to her death in 1938.

"Petition of the National Council of American Indians
to the Senate of the United States"

One of the first actions undertaken by the National Council, just two months after organizing, was to submit a petition to Congress for the record on April 24, 1926. Sponsored by Senator Thomas F. Bayard of Delaware, the forty-four page typed petition is for the most part, professionally written, filled with legal rhetoric and protocol. Consisting of four sections and a conclusion, this well-researched document occasionally reads like a history lesson in American Indian legal affairs and Indian case law. Gertrude Bonnin, as President of the National Council of American Indians, was the only signatory of the

Petition. It is possible other Council members had input into the petition and quite likely that Raymond played a major role in the research of this document. This is the reason I chose to cite the Petition as authored by the National Council of American Indians rather than solely Gertrude Bonnin. The Petition reveals Gertrude and Raymond's knowledge of due process and citizen rights, which entitled them to speak and be heard.

The National Council invoked First Amendment rights in the lengthy title of this document, written as follows,

Petition of the National Council of American Indians to the Senate of the United States of America Assembled. Under Amendment I of the Constitution. Congress shall make no law ***abridging*** the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for redress of grievances.³⁹

Part One, "The Constitutional Rights of the Indian Citizens" opens with the Articles of Confederation and the Proclamation of 1783, establishing the relationship between Congress and Indians as sovereign nation states. In essence, this Proclamation "prohibited unauthorized settlement or purchase of Indian lands."⁴⁰ This section of the Petition explains the treaty process by using the metaphor of fourteen council fires (thirteen states and the federal government). It delineates the treaty history of the Indian National Confederacy (Iroquois League) and

fourteen separate tribes from 1784 to 1786. The Petition refreshes Congress' memory about the first Congressional appropriations bill for expenses for the negotiation of treaties with tribes.

The Petition includes discussion of the various reenactments of the 1790 Trade and Intercourse Act that were extended to 1847, and reminds Congress, it "remains law today" that states are prohibited from making treaties.⁴¹ The Petition quotes President George Washington as saying to American Indians, "the General government will never consent to your being defrauded, but will protect you in all your rights." The Petition continues, "pledge of the Nation, made on its behalf by one whom the Indians today delight in honoring as "The Great Grandfather," the Indian tribes find their charter of rights."⁴²

Part One of the Petition runs through various Supreme Court decisions from 1823 to 1866, and federal legislation that had an impact on American Indians from the Railroad Act of 1862 to the abolishment of treaty making in 1871, and the General Allotment Act (Dawes Act) in 1887. Vine Deloria Jr. draws attention to the devastating legislation that followed the General Allotment Act of 1887. In his reader, Spirit and Reason, Deloria says that the amendment

to the Dawes Act permitting leasing of Indian lands to non-Indians under supervision of the Indian Bureau,

was the single most detrimental act the federal government ever perpetrated on Indians...Allotment then, was an effort to force Indians to become white farmers; leasing was a convenient loophole to enable them to survive without understanding the cultural change that would have enabled them to prosper.⁴³

In the conclusion of Part One, having established that Indians are "entitled to the same protection under the constitution as any other citizens of the United States," through the "plain facts of history," the Petition states,

Pending in Congress, as we shall show, [are] legislative measures designed for the express purpose of further divesting the Indians of their rights and despoiling them of property which was voluntarily ceded to them at a time when it was believed to possess no value in exchange for what was taken from them by force. These facts we will undertake to establish in any judicial tribunal to which you may give us access, just as we have proved similar ones in the past that are clearly recorded in the decisions of the Supreme Court.⁴⁴

Part Two of the Petition is titled, "The Indian citizens are to-day without a remedy at law for the invasion of their constitutional rights." The majority of its six pages are devoted to unjust property rights and unfair Indian litigation policy. Here the Petition strongly criticizes Congressional dictation of Indian litigation policy, which is rooted in the Act of March 3, 1871, the

Abolishment of treaties and recognition of Indian tribes as sovereign states. Sections of the Part Two are difficult to understand, but fortunately, Vine Deloria Jr.'s essay, "The Evolution in Federal Indian Policy Making," sheds light on Indian White relations and the federal policy period that he dates from 1871 to 1934. He writes,

Beginning in 1871 and continuing until 1934 a good deal of the federal trust in resolving the problems of Indian property and political status was blunted by the intrusion into the theoretical policy framework by individual congressmen who believed they had a good idea to force the Indians to conform themselves to congressional beliefs.⁴⁵

Concerning the economics of White-Indian relations, the Petition also called Congress out for,

ignoring the constitutional right of the Indians to just compensation, by refusing to provide a legal remedy and compelling the Indians to depend upon special jurisdictional acts, Congress enables the guardian Government to take Indian property and pay therefore what it chooses. We do not think that this is just.⁴⁶

Four years at GWU Law School afforded Raymond Bonnin an inside view of the law. It enabled him to see through the master plan of what Commissioner Francis Leupp called in his book, The Indian and His Problem "wholly a matter of administration" of Indian lives.⁴⁷

Part Three, "The Constitutional rights of the Indian Citizen are denied and ignored by the guardian government," calls for "complete reformation of the Indian system."⁴⁸ In this section, the Petition cites case law from 1919-1924. Congress is reminded in the Petition, "a guardianship is a trust; and a political, no more than a private individual guardian, can convert the trust property, whatever control may be exercised over the wards and their property."⁴⁹ Even where legal rights were established in court, the Petition points out three cases where the Government set aside the remedies of the law.⁵⁰

Part Four, entitled, "The social and economic situation of the Indian Citizen of the United States" begins with a pre-New World relationship between Indians and the land base. It opens clearly in Gertrude's style of composition. "It has been shown what are the legal and practical discriminations existing against the Indian citizens of the United States. We now propose to point out to the Senate their social and economic grievances."⁵¹ Here the Petition attempts to explain to Congress, the ideology of the group concept for Indian people, who are likened to "natural communists." The Petition also points out incongruities revolving around Congressional plenary

authority and control and tribal regulation of its own domestic affairs. It states,

Not only then has the law of the United States affirmatively tended to preserve the Indian social unit of the tribe, but the aboriginal economic order, as well, so that instead of transforming Indian nature it has perpetuated it in all its fundamental characteristics.⁵²

This document is filled with examples of inconsistencies in Indian policy and instances of the failure of assimilationist policy to eradicate Indianness. Gertrude Bonnin believed it was possible to live an assimilated lifestyle in American society and maintain her Indian identity, tribal connections, and "Indian Nationalism." The latter concept is explained in depth within the Petition, as the philosophy of Shawnee leader Tecumseh, for whom tribal lands were inextricably linked to Indian identity.⁵³

Another example from Part Four criticizes the reservation system:

Justifiable as the adoption of that system may have been, it was not conceived by its originator that the reservations provided by Congress were to be utilized as permanent prisons for a race on which to keep it incarcerated forever.⁵⁴

The Petition does more than inform and find fault; it also poses many questions for Congress to think about, such as:

When the government overthrew the aboriginal economic order in which the Indian tribes

were self sufficient, and enclosed the tribes in dessert reservations, did it not owe them more than to hand them a hoe and a plough and leave them?...Unless this generation is trained to meet the responsibilities of the life enforced upon it, how is the next to be rendered more competent?...The limits of time and space and patience forbid a recital of all the defects of the existing system of the United States with respect to its Indian wards, but in answer to those who would continue, are the tribal Indians to be herded like the remaining few buffalo on reservations forever, not even speaking the language of the nation in the ranks of which they are called upon to shed their blood? Are they to go on breasting the current modern progress in the age of steam power and electricity equipped only with an aboriginal paddle and canoe? If not, what plan has Congress for the eventual emancipation of our race?⁵⁵

In the seven-page conclusion to the Petition, The National Council of American Indians placed itself in a position of responsibility to both the Senate and Indian citizens.

The Council has but one purpose: the organization of a constructive effort to better the Red Race and make its members better citizens of the United States...Our race is entitled to the redress of its grievances, and relief from its present intolerable situation. [It] is not charity it requires, nor the overhasty distribution of its estate, but adequate education, practical guidance in the utilization and enjoyment of its property, personal liberty commensurate with the dignity of free people, and the fair and efficient administration of their estate by the guardian-trustee thereof, and a clarification of the multiplicity of laws dealing with them and their property.⁵⁶

This Petition set the tone by which the National Council of American Indians entered the national political arena in 1926. Granted the First Amendment did entitle the National Council to speak, but it did not ensure that the Senate would hear the Council when it asked, "Will the government go on talking two ways, and tell our people when they call on it for the fulfillment of its pledges that it meant one thing to the Indians and another to others?"⁵⁷

Jennings C. Wise points out in his 1931 work, The Red Man in the New World Drama: a Politico-legal Study with a Pageantry of American Indian History that, "Congress simply ignored the threat contained in this petition." Wise was referring to the National Council's demand for recognition for Indian people, when he quoted the following from the Petition:

A time there was when the protest of our race against injustice was voiced in the war cries that rose from the primeval forest. No less audibly shall this protest resound through the hills and vales of our Fatherland, echoing the far-carrying appeals of justice and reason, never to be silenced until the pledge of the Nation, made to us by the Great Grandfather, and sealed by our blood on the fields of France, is redeemed.⁵⁸

As it turns out, the Senate was listening and an investigative committee was formed to look into the

allegations made by the Council. Captain Raymond T. Bonnín was hired as an investigative agent and Senate liaison to tribes. This position took him and Gertrude on extended trips through Indian country from June through November 1926 and the summer months of the following two years. Representing the Senate for three years afforded Captain and Mrs. Bonnín status when they returned to Indian country. The Bonníns repeated this pattern of leaving the Washington D.C. area during the hot weather months almost every year they lived in the Stone House, with the exception of 1930 and 1932.

Gertrude's Plan for an Indian Women's Orchestra

Gertrude and Raymond's personal and political lives are often fused during the years they lived in the Stone House. As important as this partnership was, Gertrude had other things going on besides researching and writing for the National Council of American Indians. She kept her calendar full with appearances and lectures at a variety of women's clubs and organizations including the National Women's Socialist Party and the Women's Arts Council. Gertrude's talks reflected elements of Sioux culture as she explained her "costume" while also appealing to white,

middle-class women reformers' concerns for health, education, welfare, and citizenship.

On the first trip back to Arlington, Virginia, after several months of visiting Indian reservations, the Bonnins stopped in Chicago, where Gertrude had a speaking engagement. Gertrude's talk was based on her own personal observations of returned female students from off-reservation federal boarding schools and listening to reservation residents in the summer and early fall months of 1926. Off reservation opportunities for young, educated, Indian women became Gertrude's next platform and she presented her plan to the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs in Chicago in November 1926.

Gertrude Bonnin called for clubwomen to assist in providing the next level of opportunity for young women coming out of these schools. First, she encouraged relocation support with assistance for further training and employment. Referencing the late Richard Henry Pratt's successful "Outing System" from Carlisle Indian School, Gertrude suggested to clubwomen they consider boarding a young Indian woman, looking to better herself. Her argument appealed to a woman's sense of self-worth that accompanies the acquisition of knowledge and participation in the workforce. She told her audience,

When these girls are through with their schooling in the non-reservation schools they are ready for something better if given a chance to mingle with the white people instead of going back to their segregated Indian reservation homes, where there is nothing by way of progress, which so many of them long for.⁵⁹

She gave rationale for careers as stenographers, dressmakers, and milliners. Gertrude attributed generalized Indian feminine qualities in her argument for nursing careers: "There are those who would make fine nurses if given the opportunity to enter hospitals for training. They are adapted to it because of their naturally quiet, patient and sympathetic ways."⁶⁰

Gertrude was also reviving her dream of being a professional musician with her suggestion that Chicago could recruit and maintain an all-Indian girl orchestra.⁶¹ As exemplified by her own life, Gertrude equated writing and performing music with work. She told the clubwomen, "My idea would be to bring these girls to our city and help them to become independent and to be of service to mankind."⁶²

Seven months after her appearance in Chicago, Gertrude wrote to Chicago clubwoman Mrs. Fowler, chairperson of the GFWC's National Indian Welfare Committee. Gertrude began, "Dear sister, Tavia," the Federation's "endorsement of the Senate Resolution to Investigate the Indian Bureau is a

grand victory.”⁶³ Gertrude closes this letter to her friend of six years by expressing she was slighted by Matthew Sniffen, President of the Indian Rights Association (IRA), with whom she worked as research agents in Oklahoma in 1924. Sniffen failed to include Gertrude’s name in the IRA newsletter, Indian Truth, when he reprinted the Indians mentioned in the 1927 edition of Who’s Who in the Nation’s Capital. Gertrude notes that Sniffen was “grossly indifferent, especially as I was the only (Indian) “woman” whose name appears in Who’s Who.”⁶⁴ Gertrude was too busy with Indian work to make issue of it and rationalized that “the I.R.A. leans toward the Indian Bureau; and very likely regards me as too radical.”⁶⁵

Gertrude Boninn on Indian Welfare

Two years later, returning to Arlington from the last of three consecutive summer and fall “field investigations” with Raymond, Gertrude wasted no time filling the remainder of 1928 with speaking engagements. In her own words, “I have been carried almost breathless in a whirl of Indian programs.”⁶⁶ Along with Reverend Henry Roe Cloud of Wichita, Kansas, Gertrude Bonnin was one of two American Indians invited to speak at a national conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey in December 1928. The Indian Rights Association

organized this conference to garner support for the recently released Meriam Report. Authorized by the Secretary of Interior Herbert Work, The Problem of Indian Administration was prepared by Lewis Meriam and published by the Institute for Government Research, commonly known as the Brookings Institution. The Meriam Report was years in the making, and the contents of its 800 pages rocked reform circles at the time. Francis Paul Prucha called the Meriam Report a "monumental work, which set forth the economic and social conditions of the Indians and presented detailed recommendations for solutions to the problems discovered."⁶⁷

On December 15, 1928, Gertrude delivered the last major invited speech of her career as an American Indian activist at the Meriam Report conference session "Indian Welfare." Transcribed in the IRA papers, numbering over twenty typed pages, Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin provided the reformers in attendance, including President Coolidge, with an Indian woman's perspective on health, education, welfare, and politics. She wrote,

Positively, no one on earth can honestly challenge the American Indian's loyalty to the Government of the United States, though this Government has waged more wars upon its Indian wards than any other nation against its own subordinate peoples.⁶⁸

Gertrude openly criticized the Indian Bureau for misleading Congress and for being filled with

nepotism. Her explicit examples were those in line with women's reform issues. Gertrude chose to talk about children's welfare in government-run schools, the maggots in their meat, rodents in their grains, and the tainted milk they are given to drink. She charged,

Both Congress and the American people are willfully misled about the actual conditions of Indian want and hopeless destitution. There was a time, long ago, when Indians shared their food with the hungry, but that day is past. Now all Indians are too poor. They have nothing to divide. There is starvation. These atrocious misuses of huge Federal machinery against the Indian wards are sugar coated to fool the American public...Oh, how long shall this cruel practice continue?⁶⁹

Gertrude also called for a thorough "housecleaning of the Indian Service," in other words replacing "inefficient employees."⁷⁰

The Meriam Report marked a turning point in American Indian reform. While major legislation was still six years away, reformers were starting to see a hint of light coming from the efforts and contributions they made toward social and political justice for American Indians. Although Indian reformers continued working on various levels into the 1930s, the networking and alliances of volunteer organizations, which peaked in the 1920s was never

repeated, in part because people were busy surviving during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Shortly after the 1928 conference, Gertrude wrote a letter that contained confidential information about her recent participation at the IRA conference. Gertrude began the letter,

Very dear friend, Mrs. Cawley, This organization [IRA] has been more fearless in the past but of later years, it has become so servile to the Bureaucratic powers that be, they have been practically useless! as far as the Indian is concerned. However, now they are bracing up bit. I was not invited to speak at first, only at the last moment, through friends of mine, was it brought about.⁷¹

Gertrude admitted to her friend the "one purpose" behind her talk was to show the fallacy of the Indian Bureau and to "insist on new personnel, and a court review of the guardian government's handling of Indian tribal funds, and natural resources estimated at one and half billion dollars."⁷²

Gertrude Bonnin on the Indian Question

The thirty-fifth annual conference of the Friends of the Indian was held at Lake Mohonk, New York on October 16-18, 1929. Captain Raymond T. Bonnin was a member of the 1929 conference executive committee and Gertrude and Raymond were among a handful of Indians present at Lake

Mohonk that year. "Mrs. Gertrude Bonnín" delivered an impromptu address on "The Indian Side of the Question" after the conference hostess, Mrs. Daniel Smiley, questioned why the participants were not hearing from any real Indians on matters that pertained to them.⁷³ Introduced as representing the American Indian Defense Association, Gertrude Bonnín quickly pointed out that she was serving as President of a new Indian organization, the National Council of American Indians.

She addressed the audience without papers in front of her and her talk was transcribed by hand and typed into the conference minutes.⁷⁴ Mrs. Bonnín's presence on the program had not been pre-arranged, although her opening statement about the National Council reads as though it was well-rehearsed ahead of time. She told the audience the National Council was an Indian organization, based on American citizenship.

Local branches are in various places officered by Indian people themselves. They have a little listening office in Washington, from which are issued, in very simplified English, reports of various acts of Congress and the bills, which affect the Indian people and their properties.⁷⁵

During this address and her speech at the IRA conference the year before, Gertrude made a point of telling her audiences that she did not learn English in

government-run schools. In both instances, she did not mention White's Indiana Manual Labor Training Institute, but she did mention Earlham College and credited the Society of Friends. She humbly thanked them for bettering her life.

Gertrude continued, according to Louis Jones, without notes or script, to "clearly and concisely reveal true facts of Indian home life."⁷⁶ She spoke as she would to any other audience, from the heart of an Indian woman: "the purpose of our organization is to *help people help themselves*. We have been searching around how we shall preserve our home, how we shall preserve our home ties, how we shall keep the father and mother and children together in their homes."⁷⁷ Gertrude continued in the vein of Americanization reform efforts:

The Indian has his property; he still has land; he still has a little home, whether it be a square house or a teepee. Right there we can teach them the doctrine of the preservation of the American home. Home is home, whatever it may be, and the children's love for their parents and the parents' love for the children bring a heart tie superior to anything the missionary can do for us.⁷⁸

Never one to simply complain or criticize, Gertrude as usual, had a plan, which she presented at the Lake Mohonk conference.

I have thought of the reorganization plan to which all friends of the Indian are looking

now, in comparing the Indian Bureau plans with the plans of the Army, shall not we lay stress and emphasis on that liaison officer, the contact officer that we may contact the human side of the Indian problem? There is so much property to be handled and so much money to be accounted for; [this] has taken the major attention [from] the human side. Shall we not then think it possible to bring the contact officer who shall make contacts with the little homes? There are human souls there. Oh, that Justice could be radiated by the men who occupy the positions of superintendents...key men in the whole service in the field! If superintendents were men that radiate brotherly love to Indian people, there would be no problem of discipline.⁷⁹

Gertrude did eventually bring her talk around to specific suggestions to translate "good will" into "acts and reality." She continued,

The government functions through laws. Who makes these laws? Men make these laws. Citizens of America make these laws, and the laws are the system through which we carry out the ideas of this government to the people. So I want to suggest here that we become interested in the laws that affect the Indian people. There are many antiquated and obsolete laws on our statute books. It would be well I think, and a real aid to our Commissioner if we would become interested in looking over these laws and cancel the obsolete and unnecessary laws. In their place, suggest and cause to be enacted laws that shall meet constructive plans. That is a real necessity. It is an important thing to consider the laws.⁸⁰

Indian Country Politics

In 1925, Raymond Bonnin was part of the elected Yankton Sioux delegation to Washington D.C. and served as translator at the White House for other Sioux tribal delegations that same year. His position as a Special Investigator for the Senate sub-committee on Indian Affairs took him and Gertrude to many reservations in Indian country during the summer and fall months of the years 1926-1928. These "extensive" visits, according to Gertrude, "thoroughly acquainted [her] with the conditions of Indians."⁸¹

Although Gertrude and Raymond visited Indian reservations in the Southwest and collected "brightly colored rugs and blankets" which they displayed in the Stone House, Gertrude stated she was, "best acquainted with the Sioux of North and South Dakota, the Oklahoma tribes, the Utes of Utah, and the California Indians."⁸² Gertrude believed all the tribes "suffered from mal-administration of their efforts by a greedy and heartless bureaucracy."⁸³ She wrote in 1928,

The outstanding wrongs throughout the entire Indian reservations of the United states are: Starvation, imprisonment, lack of proper medical care for the sick, wasting Indian property under Bureau control, withholding Indian tribal and individual funds, misappropriation of these funds, starving school children, whipping, killing,

and breaking child labor laws by placing heavy institutional work upon young boys and girls.⁸⁴

While on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation visiting and interviewing Indians for six weeks in the summer of 1928, the Bonnins' presence, especially Gertrude's, was misinterpreted by administrators. Superintendent E. D. Mossman did not believe Gertrude and Raymond "were the sort of people to make research investigations."⁸⁵ Mossman sought to have Gertrude Bonnin banned from coming on to the reservation. He used as evidence of Gertrude's disruptive behavior, responses to a questionnaire sent to Standing Rock sub-agents regarding Gertrude and Captain Bonnin's visits. A sampling of the questionnaire headed, "Activities of the Princess" follows:

No. days in your district.
No. meetings held and where.
What class people talked to.
Who took them about.
What they said and to whom.
Attitude.
Did they talk to you or call on you?
What effect did it have on the Indians?
What was said of Agency Supt. and other officials and government.
How much time did Indians take from work?
Amount of damage to crops through neglect and failure to seed.⁸⁶

Even though the Bonnins' visit "came at a fairly opportune time, after the Indians had most of their crops and gardens in," Mossman went so far as to blame that year's crop

failure at Standing Rock, on the fact that people prepared a feast for "the princess" and her husband "the Captain."⁸⁷ Mossman "calculated that her visit...cost those Indians \$15,000 in time lost from the care of their crops and from damage to the crops through neglect."⁸⁸ He also said of the two weeks Gertrude spent at Fort Yates, North Dakota,

At the time the Princess was here...there was so much running about, we could hardly do any work at all. The immediate and direct loss, however, is nothing compared to the injury done to our program and the change of attitude in the Indians toward the government.⁸⁹

In his report to Commissioner Burke, Mossman reflects the strong opinion of the Dakota white community in response Gertrude's push for a monument to honor Sitting Bull at Little Eagle, where she reportedly "stirred up a hornet's nest." Of the proposed monument Mossman wrote, "Should it ever be put up there will be trouble, because the men and relatives of the loyal men who lost their lives capturing Sitting Bull have threatened to tear it down if it is put up."⁹⁰ Despite concerted effort, Mossman was unsuccessful in seeking to ban Gertrude Bonnin from the Standing Rock reservation.

In 1931, Gertrude once again found herself embroiled in controversy, this time on her home reservation, Yankton. Both Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin were convinced that they

could get Yankton Agency Superintendent Hickman replaced by the Bureau office in Washington. They believed that they had enough influence to do so.⁹¹ It is here that the gap between full-bloods, who stayed on the reservation and did what the federal government ordered through the agent, and the educated generation, who left the reservation, becomes very apparent. Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin were among the first generation of college-educated Indians who stood in opposition to their elders' blind acceptance of the reservation agent and the Indian Bureau, in part because they simply had broader life experiences. As Yankton residents put their faith in the superintendent, they also seemed to tolerate or ignore the circumvention of traditional ways by the Indian Bureau, or the hand that fed them.⁹²

Despite diligent efforts, the Bonnins did not garner enough support to force the current superintendent to be removed from his position, because not enough of the reservation Yanktons accepted, or perhaps understood, what it was Gertrude and Raymond were trying to accomplish. Gertrude and Raymond also grossly underestimated the system itself that supported the superintendent in question. Superintendent Hickman wrote to Mrs. Gertrude Bonnin in September of 1931,

In order that the Indians may return to their homes and return to their work and otherwise return to normal living, you are hereby requested to desist from holding further meeting this fall and winter upon this reservation without the approval of this office and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs...Failure to comply with this request will force me to take action which I hope will not be necessary.⁹³

The Bonnins' efforts were realized two years later when the Yankton Agency was subsumed by the Rosebud Agency and the Yankton superintendent position was eliminated. Shortly afterwards, enrolled Yankton reservation residents were being pressured to adopt a tribal constitution, well before the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 was passed into law.⁹⁴ This is not dissimilar to the way some Indian reservation lands, including Yankton, were allotted before the Dawes Act was voted into law in 1887.

Homemade Lemonade

As mentioned earlier, in 1934, the National Council of America Indians was forced to move its office to the Bonnin residence in Arlington, Virginia. It was simply not financially possible to rent at another location. Gertrude's speaking engagements had practically ceased and John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, recently gave a luke-warm recommendation to the Secretary of Interior to approve Raymond Bonnin to contract his legal services

(except litigation) to tribes.⁹⁵ This limited the amount of money Raymond could earn because every contract he entered into with Indian tribes had to be approved by Secretary of Interior Ickes after moving forward from Commissioner Collier's office.⁹⁶

At age fifty-eight, Gertrude was tired from all the road trips to the reservations, and studying and writing reports. It was time to stay home. Her familial duties now included helping her daughter-in-law and raising her two oldest grandsons.⁹⁷ Gertrude gave the impression through sporadic notes and letters that she was glad to work from the Stone House.⁹⁸

The Washington D. C. Metropolitan Area Directories for the 1930s list Captain Raymond T. Bonnin of Arlington, Virginia, as a Lawyer and Executive Secretary of the National Council of American Indians. Gertrude Bonnin had her own entry as President of the National Council of American Indians.⁹⁹ From 1935 to 1937, Gertrude took to writing in a small notebook that served as her journal. For the most part, the entries were impersonal and brief, such as self-reminders to get the lemons to make lemonade for whichever Indian delegation was visiting Washington at the time. It is not difficult to imagine Gertrude serving lemonade in tall glasses on the expansive porch while the

men enjoyed a smoke and talked about the Indian New Deal.¹⁰⁰ That the personal and political were inseparable for Gertrude continued to be reinforced during this last phase of her life, even though she was "retired."

She no longer was called upon to offer information to Congress. The Collier administration refused to pay her to be an official liaison between Indians and Congress and tribes were simply not in a position to pay anyone except their legal representation. Some of her later letters reveal strong sentiment against the system that fostered and ignored greed and graft in Indian country. Once a staunch supporter of Bureau reform, she wrote, "Bureaucrats are the most despicable insects that crawl upon the face of the earth. It is a vain hope to hold that a bureaucracy of mosquitoes would ever remove itself from pestering its victims, Indians or others."¹⁰¹

Following in his parents footsteps as leaders, Oran Curray, Chairman of the Uintah-Ouray Ute Tribal Business Committee, was giving back to the man and woman who raised him as their own son while they lived in Utah. Like any other American Indian tribe, the Uintah-Ouray Utes needed to seek permission from the Secretary of Interior through the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to enter into any kind of legally binding contract, and the approval for

expenditures (of their own money) to cover legal fees. And Raymond Bonnin wanted a contract; he needed to make a living. More importantly, he needed to be recognized for his worth. Raymond was allowed to enter into such a contract as legal agent for the Ute Tribe of the Uintah-Ouray Reservation, provided he did not attempt to represent them in litigation or file any papers regarding claims. Raymond Bonnin became the legal agent of the Ute Tribe for three years beginning in 1935.¹⁰²

"Gertie and Ray" are still remembered by Yankton elders.¹⁰³ Gertrude, often outspoken as a mature woman, had a big heart. Like Struck by the Ree, who made the controversial decision not to join his Santee cousins in war in 1862, Gertrude's motives were sometimes questioned. This is especially true when she stood against the majority of the Yankton tribe with her activism against peyote in 1918, and the Bonnin's attempt to subvert the Yankton reservation agent in 1931, and their campaign against tribal government reorganization in 1933.¹⁰⁴

Gertrude Bonnin lived to the best of her ability wherever she was. Surrounded by Presbyterians, educated by Quakers, influenced by Mormons and Catholics, Gertrude Bonnin never lost the *Ihanktonwan* values of her ancestors. She believed, as an educated Indian, it was her duty to

serve other Indian people. Descendant of Struck by the Ree, Yankton scholar Leonard Bruguier, talked about how Yanktons have not forgotten that Gertie loved to play the piano; she commanded the room whenever she played. At Yankton gatherings, stories of Gertie and Ray Bonnin are still told today.

Gertrude's spirit passed from the Stone House she lived in for twelve years. She had been ill for close to a year with digestive problems and chills after a severe case of "influenza" the winter of 1937.¹⁰⁵ Gertrude simply went to sleep one night in January 1938 and never woke up. Raymond took her to Georgetown University Hospital where she died the next day having been diagnosed with pneumonia. An autopsy revealed in addition to her systems shutting down, at some point in her life she had mononucleosis, probably during her college days. The report lists Gertrude's occupation as "housewife." She was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. One of Raymond's GWU law school associates, Ernest Wilkinson arranged for Gertrude's funeral at the Mormon temple in Washington D. C.¹⁰⁶ Delivering her eulogy, John Collier praised Gertrude Bonnin's writing and oratory skills. He considered her "the representative Indian woman in public life." He continued,

she was thoroughly and intensely Indian,
while at the same time her culture in the

White man's way was wide and deep...She had an immense knowledge of Indian facts and Indian problems. The Sioux and all Indians have lost a real leader.¹⁰⁷

Fitting closure to her active and useful life comes to us from Hazel Hertzberg, who noticed Zitkala-Sa's name in a New York City pow wow program held a few months after Gertrude Bonnin died. Her memory and legacy were honored in a Memorial dance at the biannual pow wow held by the Indian Confederation of America, a pan-Indian group based in New York City.¹⁰⁸ In fulfillment of her destiny, Zitkala-Sa learned to be a good interpreter for her people, by speaking with a "straight tongue." She had a profound sense of social justice and respect for humanity that was instilled upon her as a child. Her legacy extends far, spanning 200 years of Yankton American history.

Epilogue

Like Gertrude, Raymond also wore many hats: born a three-quarter blood Yankton Sioux, he became a tailor at Haskell, a clerk for the Indian Service, a quarter master in the U. S. Army, an "Indian lawyer," a father, grandfather, and grandson. Within two years of Gertrude's death, Raymond married a neighbor woman named Emma, who cared for him in his last two years.¹⁰⁹ After Raymond's death on September 24, 1942, he was laid to rest next to his life

partner, the woman who was Zitkala-Sa and Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, "friend to the Sioux."¹¹⁰ The fact that Raymond's dates are not yet engraved in the Bonnin headstone speaks to his unfinished history.¹¹¹

After Raymond died, the Stone House stood empty for quite some time afterwards, save a few papers left behind in the Bonnin study. To this day, those papers are part of the unusual stone house tucked in an historic neighborhood in Arlington, Virginia, where local lore in Lyon Park tells of the Indian lady who used to tell stories.

¹ The neighborhood of Lyon Park was officially named in 1929; Lyon Park file, Virginia Room, Arlington County Public Library.

² "Virginia Couple Devotes Lives to Indians" The Washington Post Magazine December 31, 1933 (Bonnin collection, BYU)

³ To distinguish between the existing NCAI (National Congress of American Indians, founded in 1945), and the National Council of American Indians, the latter is referred to in this document as the National Council or the Council, which is how Gertrude referred to the organization when not using the full name; in a 1935 letter to Elaine Goodale Eastman, Gertrude used "N.C.A.I."

⁴ "Virginia Couple" The Washington Post Magazine December 31, 1933 (Bonnin collection, BYU)

⁵ Gertrude Bonnin, autobiographical essay c. 1933, Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁶ The most complete collection of the National Council of American Indians documents is located in The Bonnin Collection in Special collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU. National Council of American Indians papers are also filed among the Indian Rights Association (IRA) papers and the John Collier Papers, both on microfilm.

⁷ Gertrude Bonnin described the structure of the organization in a development letter to Vera Connelly [September 24 1928] (Bonnin Collection, BYU)

⁸ Abraham Calico to Gertrude Bonnin [14 June 1926]; Gertrude Bonnin to Abraham Calico 19 June 1926 (Bonnin Collection, BYU); Gertrude Bonnin to Elaine Goodale Eastman [8 March 1935]; Gertrude also referred to herself as an enrolled Indian in a letter to Fr. Ketcham in 1910.

⁹ Captain R. T. Bonninn's enrollment card, George Washington University, Registrar's Office, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰ Captain Raymond T. Bonninn is listed as a lawyer in the Washington D.C. area directories, 1930-1934, Arlington County Public Library. On March 6, 1935, representatives of the Uintah, Whiteriver, and Uncompahgre Bands of Ute Indians authorized "Captain R. T. Bonninn, our claim attorney, and his wife, Mrs. Gertrude Bonninn...to represent us on tribal matters before Congress and various departments of the Government;" John Collier papers, Newberry Library.

¹¹ Ernest Wilkinson in particular, who Ray Bonninn worked for in the 1930s. Wilkinson's law firm handled many Indian cases, recommended by the Bonnins, and eventually administered the Bonninn estate. Wilkinson later became President of Brigham Young University.

¹² 1927 photographs of the National Council of American Indians can be found in the Corbis/Bettman Collection.

¹³ Gertrude Bonninn "What It Means to Be An Indian Today" Friends' Intelligencer First Month 19, 1929, Bonninn Collection, BYU

¹⁴ "Mrs. Bonninn Is First Speaker" Baltimore News May 15, 1929

¹⁵ Gertrude Bonninn "What It Means to Be An Indian Today" (47)

¹⁶ John Collier served as executive secretary from 1924 until being appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933.

¹⁷ These dates are based on existing copies located in the Bonninn Collection at BYU and the John Collier Papers.

¹⁸ Gertrude Bonninn "Indian News Letter" February 22, 1932

¹⁹ "Indian News Letter" February 22, 1932

²⁰ "Indian News Letter" January 25, 1933 (2)

²¹ "Indian News Letter" January 25, 1933 (1); Gertrude attributed the last sentence to the Institute for Government Research 1928 survey (Meriam Report).

²² "Washington Observations" The Star Evening Newspaper March 19, 1928 (Bonninn Collection, BYU)

²³ "Indian News Letter" January 25, 1933 (2); the last newsletter available is the April-May 1933 issue. Correspondence from the National Council is sparse after 1934 and ceases after 1936.

²⁴ Deborah Welch, "Zitkala-Sa: An American Indian Leader, 1876-1938" PhD dissertation, University of Wyoming, 1985 (201)

²⁵ Hazel Hertzberg The Search for an Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971 (207); see especially, "Transition in the Twenties" (179-209)

²⁶ National Council of American Indians Newsletter February 8, 1929 (2)

²⁷ quote from an "Indian News Letter" July 10, 1930 cited in Hertzberg Search for an Indian Identity 207

²⁸ Gertrude Bonninn "How the National Council came into being and some of the things it is trying to do through organization" c.1928, (Bonninn Collection, BYU)

²⁹ Gertrude Bonninn to Vera Connolly, [24 September 1928] (Bonninn Collection, BYU)

³⁰ Bonninn "How the National Council came into being" c.1928 Bonninn papers BYU; this history and explanation of the National Council of American Indians, reads like it was used to solicit donations, "I have to do all my typing, having no clerical assistance."

³¹ The first two versions of the Council's stationary bore the seal of the AFL-CIO printer's union. A third version (dated 1936), of which one copy was found in the BCIM records, does not bear the union seal.

³² Gertrude Bonninn "National Council" Bonninn Collection, BYU

³³ Gertrude Bonninn "National Council" Bonninn Collection, BYU

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- ³⁴ Gertrude Bonnin "Information Service for Indian Citizen voters on Scattered Indian Reservations" tri-fold pamphlet c. 1927; receipt of \$100 donation from Miss R. C. Boardman of Huntington, New York was dated November 1, 1927, Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ³⁵ Hertzberg Search for an Indian Identity 208
- ³⁶ Hertzberg Search for an Indian Identity 208
- ³⁷ Gertrude Bonnin "National Council" Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ³⁸ Gertrude Bonnin "National Council" Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ³⁹ "Petition of the National Council of American Indians to the Senate of the United States of America assembled, under amendment I of the Constitution" Congressional Record Sixty-ninth Congress, First Session April 24, 1926; A carbon copy of the original forty-three page petition exists in the Bonnin Collection at BYU; Deborah Welch mentions the petition but to date, it has not been critically discussed to my knowledge, outside of Jennings Wise.
- ⁴⁰ Francis Paul Prucha Documents of the United States Indian Policy 3
- ⁴¹ National Council of American Indians "Petition to the United States Senate" 1926 (5)
- ⁴² National Council "Petition to the United States Senate" 1926 (6)
- ⁴³ Vine Deloria Jr. Spirit and Reason: the Vine Deloria Jr. Reader Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1999 (191-192)
- ⁴⁴ National Council "Petition to the United States Senate" (11-12)
- ⁴⁵ Vine Deloria Jr. "The Evolution in Federal Indian Policy Making" Vine Deloria Jr. ed. American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992 (1985) 247
- ⁴⁶ National Council "Petition to the Senate" (15)
- ⁴⁷ Francis Leupp 1910, cited in Deloria Spirit and Reason 193
- ⁴⁸ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 19, 23
- ⁴⁹ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 19; This may have been the way the Council was interpreting guardianship and trust policy for their argument.
- ⁵⁰ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 20-22
- ⁵¹ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 24
- ⁵² National Council "Petition to the Senate" 26
- ⁵³ as interpreted by the authors of the "Petition" 28-29
- ⁵⁴ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 32
- ⁵⁵ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 33, 34
- ⁵⁶ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 36
- ⁵⁷ National Council "Petition to the Senate" 41
- ⁵⁸ "Petition of the National Council of American Indians to the Senate" printed in the Congressional Record April 24, 1926, at the request of the Honorable Thomas F. Bayard. Cited in Jennings C. Wise, The Red Man in the New World Drama: a Politico-legal Study with a Pageantry of American Indian History revised with an introduction by Vine Deloria Jr. New York: Macmillan Co., 1971 (1931) 352
- ⁵⁹ Gertrude Bonnin "Dear Friends" November 1926 Bonnin papers, BYU
- ⁶⁰ Gertrude Bonnin "Dear Friends" November 1926
- ⁶¹ Gertrude Bonnin "Dear Friends" November 1926; it is not known if this plan ever made to "resolution and discussion" at the IFWC meeting.
- ⁶² Gertrude Bonnin "Dear Friends" November, 1926
- ⁶³ Gertrude Bonnin to Mrs. Fowler 18 June 1927 Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ⁶⁴ Bonnin to Mrs. Fowler [18 June 1927]
- ⁶⁵ Bonnin to Mrs. Fowler [18 June 1927]
- ⁶⁶ Gertrude Bonnin to Mrs. Cawley [28 December 1928]
- ⁶⁷ Prucha Documents of United States Indian Policy 219

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- ⁶⁸ Gertrude Bonnin address before the National Indian Rights Association convention December 15, 1928, IRA papers (160-181)
- ⁶⁹ Gertrude Bonnin address, IRA convention December 15, 1928 (163-164)
- ⁷⁰ Gertrude Bonnin address, 167
- ⁷¹ Gertrude Bonnin to Mrs. Crawley [28 December 1928]; this letter is the only reference available to Mrs. Cawley.
- ⁷² Gertrude Bonnin to Mrs. Crawley 28 December, 1928; I have not been able to track down Gertrude's source for estimating the 1928 value of natural resources in Indian country, although my best guess it stems from figures that emerged during the Oklahoma guardianship scandals in combination with the "field investigation" she and Raymond undertook, which included other mineral-rich Indian lands outside of Oklahoma.
- ⁷³ Louis Thomas Jones Aboriginal American Oratory: The Tradition of Eloquence Among the Indians of the United States Los Angeles: Southwest Museum, 1965 (118-120)
- ⁷⁴ Gertrude Boninn "The Indian Side of the Question" Report of the Thirty-fifth Lake Mohonk Conference on the Indian, October 16-18, 1929, Mohonk Lake, New York 1930, Third Session (92-95)
- ⁷⁵ Gertrude Boninn "The Indian Side of the Question" 92
- ⁷⁶ Jones Aboriginal American Oratory (119)
- ⁷⁷ Gertrude Boninn "The Indian Side of the Question" 92; emphasis was part of the transcription. Since this speech was not pre-written, emphasis reflects Gertrude Bonnin's vocal inflection of the National Council's motto.
- ⁷⁸ Gertrude Boninn "The Indian Side of the Question" 92
- ⁷⁹ Gertrude Boninn "The Indian Side of the Question" 93
- ⁸⁰ Gertrude Boninn "The Indian Side of the Question" 93-94
- ⁸¹ Gertrude Bonnin to Vera L. Connolly [24 September 1928] 2, Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ⁸² Blanch Syfret McNight "Feminine Descendant" Washington Evening Star December 10, 1936 (1); Bonnin to Connolly [24 September 1928] 3
- ⁸³ Gertrude Bonnin to Connolly [24 September 1928] 3
- ⁸⁴ Gertrude Bonnin to Connolly [24 September 1928] 3
- ⁸⁵ E. D. Mossman to Hon. Charles H. Burke 1 August, 1928 (1), Gertrude Bonnin file (121), Decimal Correspondence File, Standing Rock Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, RG 75, NA-CPR
- ⁸⁶ "Activities of Princess" Gertrude Bonnin file (121), Decimal Correspondence File, Standing Rock Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, RG 75, NA-CPR
- ⁸⁷ E. D. Mossman to Hon. Charles H. Burke 1 August 1928, Gertrude Bonnin file (121), Decimal Correspondence File, Standing Rock Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, RG 75, NA-CPR
- ⁸⁸ Mossman to Burke 1 August, 1928 (5)
- ⁸⁹ Mossman to Burke 1 August, 1928 (5)
- ⁹⁰ Mossman to Hon. Charles H. Burke 1 August, 1928 (4)
- ⁹¹ According to Leonard Bruguier, the 1930s were a particularly bad time at Yankton, with factionalism dividing the tribe along blood-lines and residency status, notes from personal conversations January 2002.
- ⁹² Bruguier stated this rift over the Bureau in 1931 drove a wedge through local Yankton politics.
- ⁹³ C. C. Hickman to Gertrude Bonnin [30 September 1931], Bonnin Collection, BYU
- ⁹⁴ The Wheeler-Howard Act (Indian Reorganization Act) of 1934 reversed the policy of allotment and encouraged tribal organization. Section 17 "the Secretary of Interior may, upon petition by at least one-third of adult Indians, issue a charter of incorporation to such tribe." See Prucha, Documents 222-225.

⁹⁵ Bonnin file, John Collier Papers, Newberry Library

⁹⁶ In 1934, Raymond turned down an offer to become the superintendent at the Mescalero Apache Agency in New Mexico; he explained to Commissioner Collier he would lose money on his house and could not afford moving expenses. No offer was extended to Gertrude for anything from the Collier administration. Information John Collier Papers, Newberry Library

⁹⁷ Ray Bonnin to "Once" nd, Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁹⁸ author's notes on Gertrude's journal entries (np) (c.1935) Bonnin Collection, BYU

⁹⁹ Directories in the Arlington County Library-Virginia Room

¹⁰⁰ journal kept by Gertrude Bonnin c. mid-1930s, Bonnin Collection, BYU; She also mentions washing the steps when visitors were about to come on government business.

¹⁰¹ Gertrude Bonnin loose notebook page c.1935-1937 Bonnin papers, BYU

¹⁰² Correspondence between Captain Raymond Bonnin and John Collier; Collier expressed regrets that Bonnin did not take the Bar exam; also correspondence regarding R. T. Bonnin between Collier and Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes is located in the Bonnin file of the John Collier Papers (1934-35), Newberry Library.

¹⁰³ Leonard Bruguier January 2002; Ray Bonnin's great-niece Hazel Ashes to Doreen Rappaport (1996), recounted by Rappaport to author November 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Flood, Remember Your Relatives 4; Charter Correspondence files 1304, Yankton Agency; Rosebud Agency RG 75; NARA-CPR

¹⁰⁵ "clinical history" section of autopsy report for Gertrude Bonnin, Georgetown University Hospital, January 26, 1938, Washington D.C., Bonnin Collection, BYU

¹⁰⁶ Wilkinson formed his own law firm in 1940 and Raymond worked for him. His firm won a \$32 million settlement against the United States for the Ute tribe in 1950. Raymond Bonnin's share went to his estate which Wilkinson's firm administered. Wilkinson went on to become President of Brigham Young University (1949-1975); notes from Harold B. Lee Library, BYU

¹⁰⁷ draft of eulogy for Gertrude Bonnin, Bonnin file, John Collier Papers, Newberry Library; cited here from the English Section Sina Sapa Wocekin Tnenanpaha (Catholic Sioux Herald) March 15, 1938 (4)

¹⁰⁸ Hertzberg Search for an Indian Identity (230)

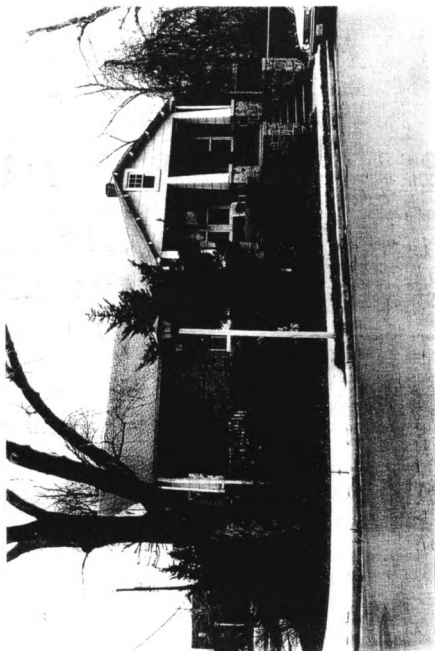
¹⁰⁹ David Whittaker, Catherine Uddal, and Emily Sorensen, unpublished guide (draft) to the Gertrude and Raymond Bonnin Collection, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, March 1996 (9)

¹¹⁰ inscription on the Bonnin headstone, Arlington National Cemetery

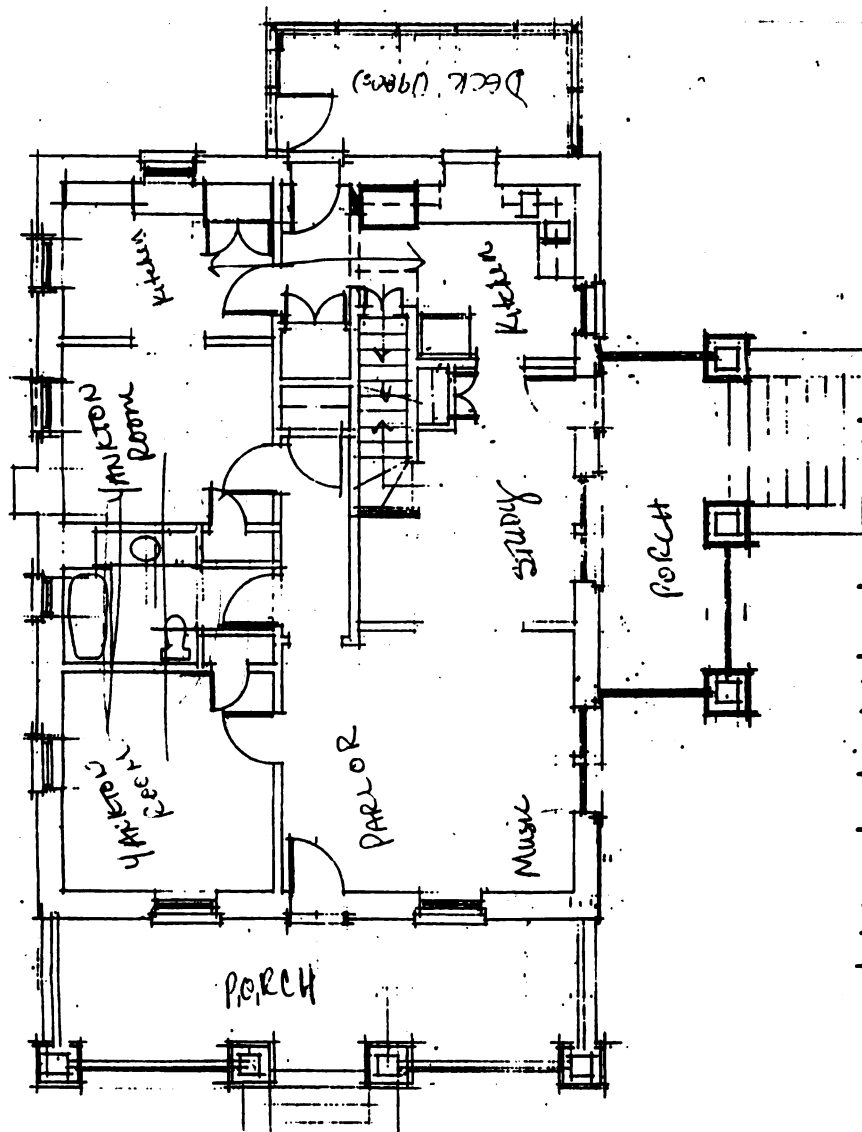
¹¹¹ Sixty years after being laid to rest next to his wife of thirty-six years, Captain Raymond T. Bonnin was added to the list of American Indian Veteran gravesites visited on Memorial Day by a Washington d.C. area American Indian organization.

ILLUSTRATIONS

I.1 The Stone House, Arlington, Virginia c. 1985
(courtesy of Gary Putnam)



I.2 courtesy of Gary and Kit Putnam



FIRST FLOOR PLAN - EXISTING

1/8" = 1'-0" "The Stone House" Arlington, VA

APRIL 1980

I.3 Gertrude Bonnin 1936 (Washington Evening Star)

Washington Evening
Star
Dec 10, 1936

Giving Heart to Cause

J. Collier
papers
Bonnin
file

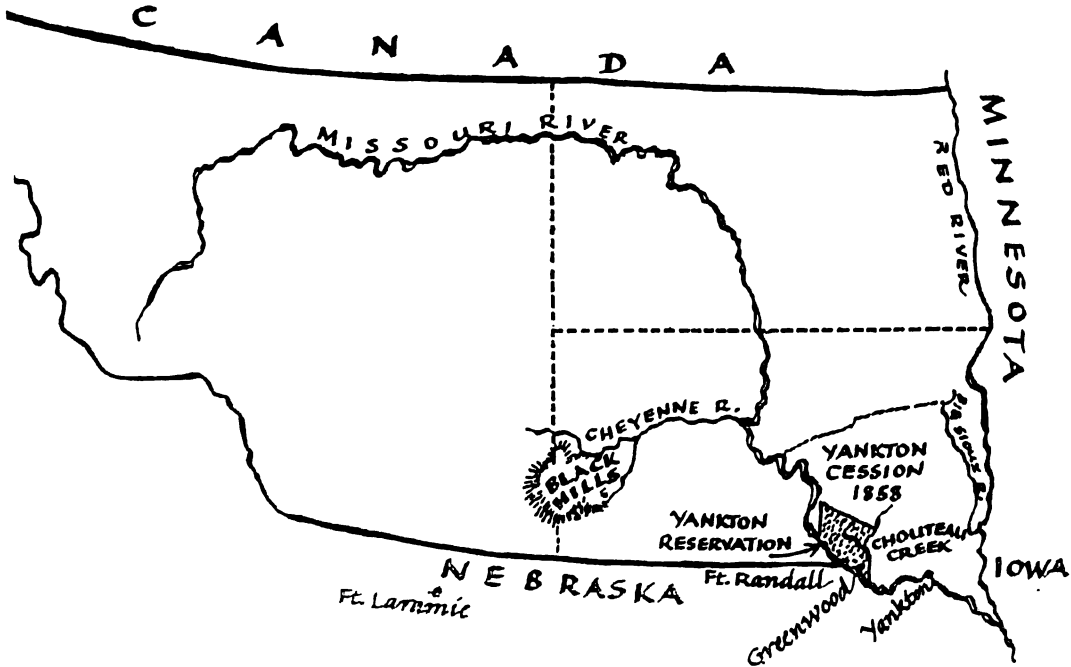
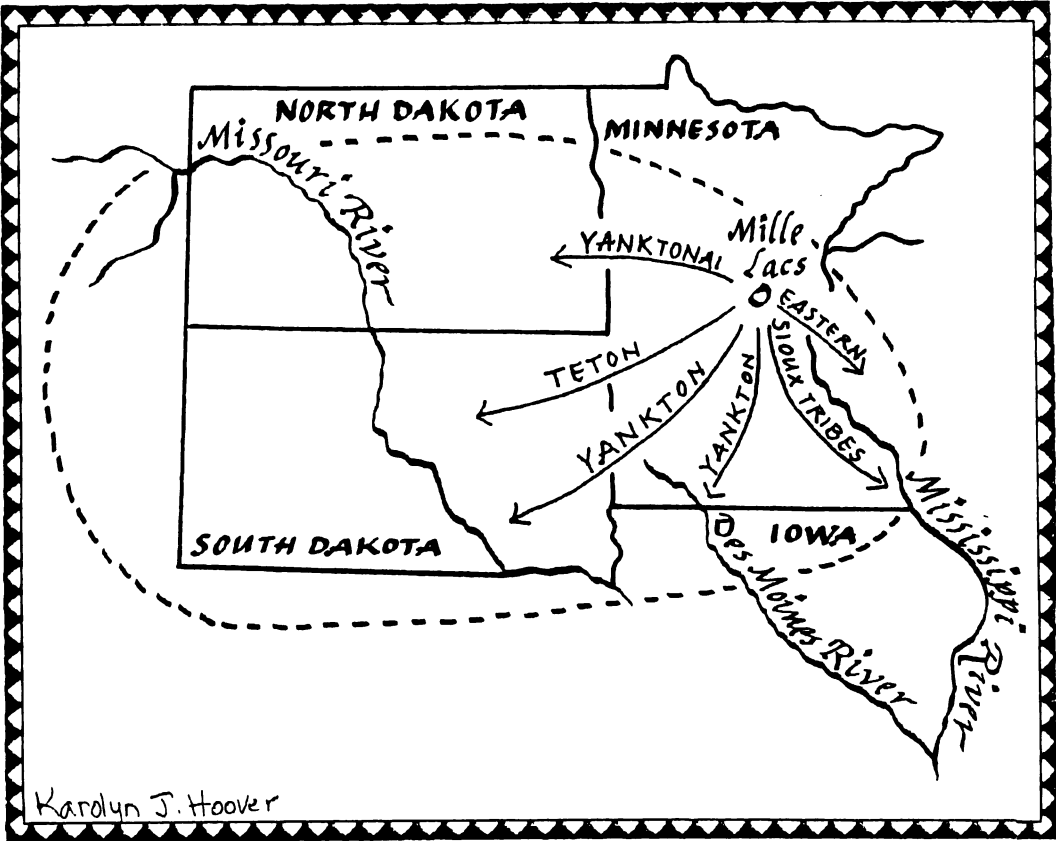


MRS. RAYMOND T. BONNIN.
(Zitkala-Sa.)

2.1 Padaniapapi (Struck by the Ree) c.1858
 2.2 Padaniapapi (Struck by the Ree) c.1859
 (South Dakota State Historical Society)



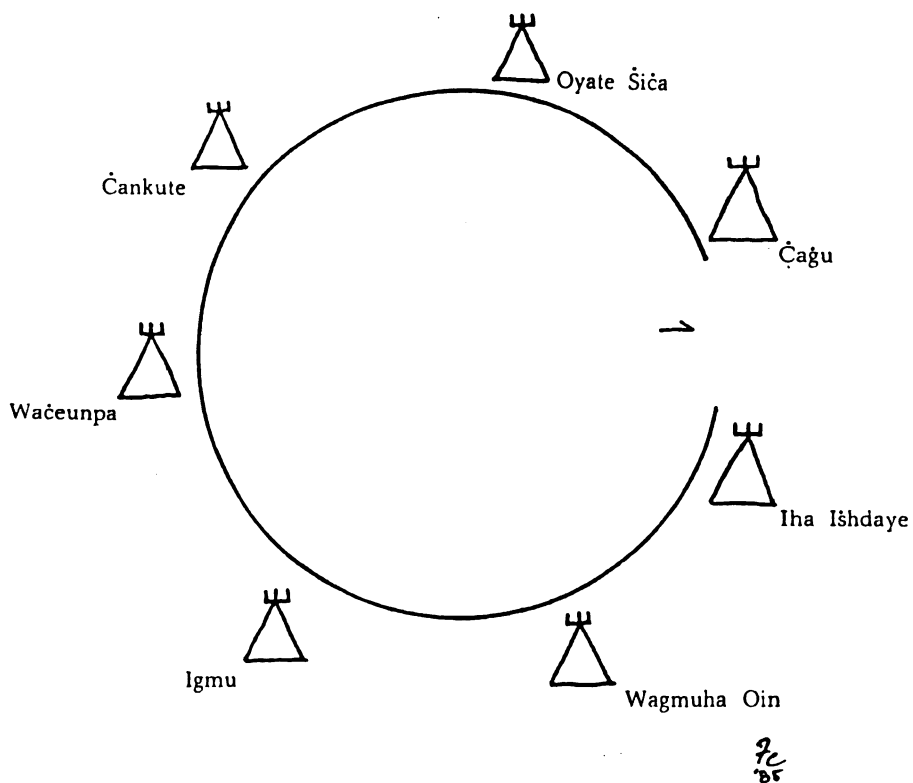
2.3 and 2.4 reprinted from Hoover *The Yankton Sioux*



2.5 Ihantonwan Band Circle c.1859
(reprinted from Flood and Bernie *Remember your Relatives*)

The following chart was designed from information given by Heñaka Mani (Walking Elk). Yankton elders tell us that some of these Bands were led by men who were appointed leaders by the Government. By the early 1880s, Bands began to form into districts and names were changed.

Iha Išhdaye – Mouth Greasers
Wagmuha Oin – Pumpkin Rind Earrings – Medicine Cow
Igmu – Cat (people) – Smutty Bear
Wačəunpa – Roasters or The Ones That Cook
Čankute – Shooters At Trees
Oyate Šiča – Bad Nation – Mad Bull
Čaġu – Lungs – Struck By The Ree



- 2.6 Yankton Delegation (Stanley J. Morrow) c.1870s
 2.7 Yankton Camp c.1870 (Hoover The Yankton Sioux)



PLATE 22 Chief of the Yankton Delegation with their agents and other government personnel. Taken by Stanley J. Morrow from the High in the front row. Note the eagle feather headdress and the red and black decorative work by this man, after the distinctive digging designs worn by him and his fellows.

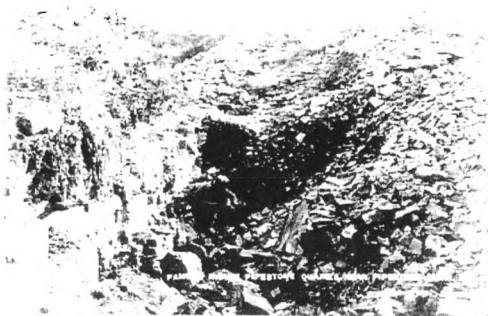


Yankton Camp c. 1870



2.8 "Red Pipestone Quarry" c. 1836 (George Catlin)

2.9 Pipestone Quarry c. 1911 (Pipestone National Museum)



2.10 One of fourteen DeCora illustrations in Zitkala-Sa's
Old Indian Legends (from "The Toad and the Boy")

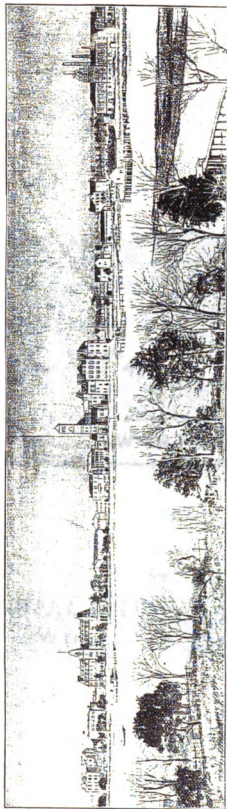


A little boy stopped his play among the grasses
Illustration by Angel DeCora (Hinook-Mahiwi-Kilinaka)
From Old Indian Legends retold by Zitkala-Sa (1901)

3.1 View of Hampton Industrial School from across the river,
from Helen Ludlow Ten Years Work for the Indians

Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, Hampton. Va.

Devoted to the Negro and Indian Races.



"FOR THE INDIAN, LABOR MUST BE.—FOR THE NEGRO, LABOR MUST BE FREE." (captioned.)

3.2 Joshua White's Manual labor Training School c. 1886

Gertie Simmons front row, third from left

3.3 Haskell Industrial Institute view from Haskell

farm lands c. 1903

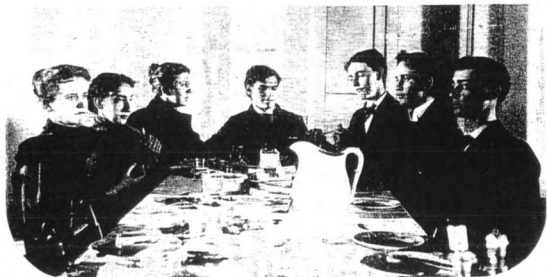
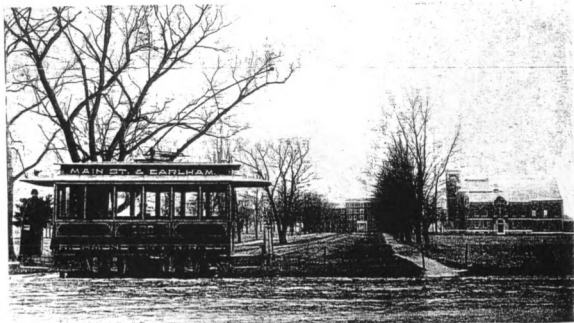


In 1886 Superintendent Bales had this picture taken to send to each of the Indian agencies represented at White's.



3.4 Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana c. 1890
(from Thornburg *Earlham: The Story of the College*)

3.5 Earlham College dining room c. 1894-95
(from Thornburg *Earlham: The Story of the College*)



A table in old Earlham Hall dining room in the days of "opposites." 1894-95. Left to right: Martha Shoemaker, Hettie Hunt, Anna Birdsall, Elbert Russell (then the Governor), Charles A. Reeve (trustee 1925-49), Edwin P. Haworth, James Freshour.

4.1 Captain R. H. Pratt, Superintendent of Indian
Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, c. 1898
(reprinted from Tatum, *Our Red Brothers*)



4.2 The Lieutenant Richard Pratt family with Fort Marion prisoners listed as 1. Buzzard 2. Onkoeh 3. Ngako 4. Medicine Water 5. Beako 6. Bear Shield 7. Commesurah 8. Lean Wolf 9. Rising Bull 10. Zotom c. 1878 (courtesy National Park Service)

4.3 "Indian Prisoners Teaching Archery Lessons" Harper's Weekly May 11, 1878



*Buzzard 2. Onkoeh 3. Ngako 4. Medicine Water 5. Beako
6. Bear Shield 7. Commesurah 8. Lean Wolf 9. Rising Bull 10. Zotom*



4.4 cover *United States Indian School 1895*
(original tinted in red, white and blue)



Cover of picture book published at Carlisle Indian School, 1895
featuring photographs of Chauncy Yellow Robe "before" and "after"

4.5 "Faculty and Officers of Our School" photograph taken on front steps of the administration building, Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania (*The Indian Helper* December 1898); original edition was tinted red and headed "Merry Christmas Happy New Year"



FACULTY & OFFICERS OF OUR SCHOOL

Carlisle Indian School faculty 1898; Miss Simmons is seated front row, third from the left.

4.6 This engraving appeared as the frontispiece in William Appes' *Eulogy to King Philip* 1836, (artist unknown). It depicts the killing of Metacom (King Philip) in 1676. (Courtesy American Antiquarian Society)



4.7 The Susan Longstreth Literary Society of the Carlisle Indian School c. 1898 (Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, Pennsylvania)



THE SUSAN LONGSTRETH LITERARY SOCIETY OF THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL,
CARLISLE, PA.

This society, bearing the name of one of the first and most honored friends of the School, has existed for more than ten years. Including, as it does, the best character and talent from some 300 girls, with a comfortable and tastefully decorated room for its meetings, it is an influence for good, mentally and morally, which cannot well be measured. All the societies emulate each other in furnishing the School most pleasing entertainments.

4.8 "Zitkala-sa" (Joseph Keiley) 1898; Housed in the National Portrait Gallery of The Smithsonian Institution

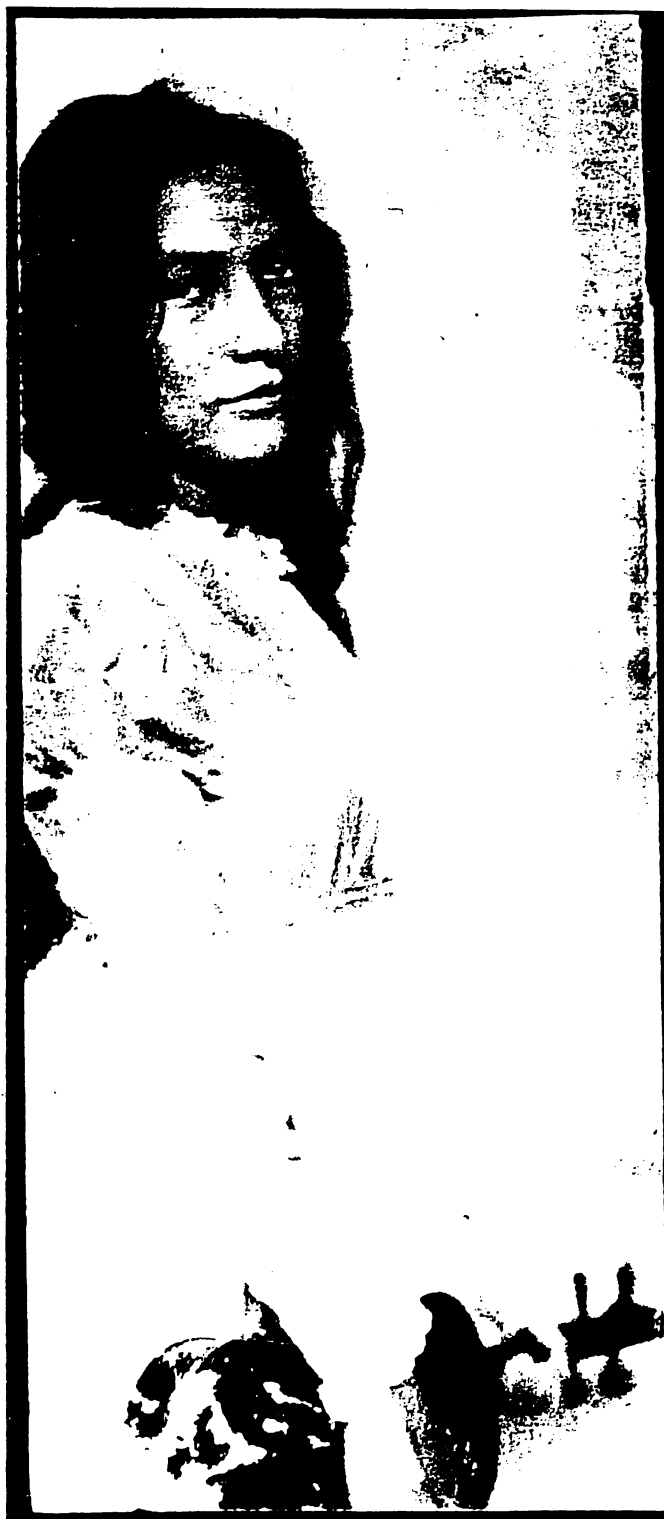


Zitkala-Sa c. 1898

4.9 "Sioux Girl Holding Violin" (Gertrude Käsebier) 1898;
Musuem of Natural History, The Smithsonian Institution
(69.236.105)



4.10 "Zit-Ka-La-Sa" (Gertrude Käsebier) 1898;
Musuem of Natural History, The Smithsonian Institution
(69.236.109)



4.11 "Zit-Ka-La-Sa" (Gertrude Käsebier) 1898;
Musuem of Natural History, The Smithsonian Institution
(69.236.108)



4.12 "Zit-Ka-La-Sa" (with book) (Gertrude Käsebier) 1898;
Gertrude Käsebier Collection, The Smithsonian Institution
(69.236.107)



4.13 "Sioux Girl shading Her Eyes" (Gertrude Käsebier) 1898;
Gertrude Käsebier Collection, The Smithsonian Institution
(69.236.103)



4.14 "Joe Black Fox"(Gertrude Käsebier) c. 1898;
Museum of Modern Art (gift of Mina Käsebier Turner)



4.15 "American Indian Portrait" Joe Black Fox
(Gertrude Käsebier) c. 1898; Museum of Modern Art
(gift of Mina Käsebier Turner)



4.16 (left) Thomas Marshall c. 1898 (courtesy of Cumberland County Historical Society (CCHS))
 4.17 (right) Carlos Montezuma M.D. c. 1898 (CCHS)

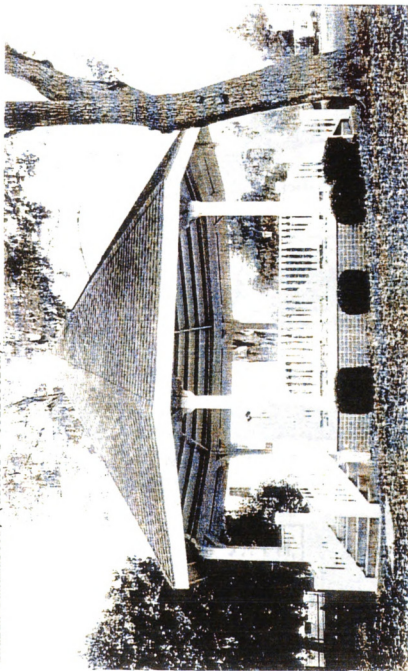


Thomas Marshall c. 1898
 (1873-1899)



Carlos Montezuma c. 1898
 (1867-1923)

4.18 The Wheelock Bandstand, rebuilt in 1980 at the site of the original 1867 Bandstand of the Calvary Depot and later the Carlisle Indian School. Named in honor of Dennison Wheelock, Class of 1890, Carlisle's first Indian Bandmaster, (author's collection).



5.1 William Hanson Collection c. 1908, BYU reprinted from Hanson, *Sun Dance Land*

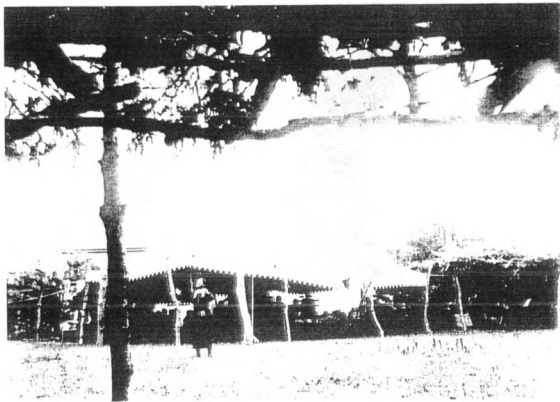


Raymond Bonnin (left) and Ute friends.

5.2-5.3 BCIM Records, Marquette University
(photographer unknown)



Catholic Sioux Congress, Pine Ridge, South Dakota 1920
(Bureau Catholic Indian Missions, Marquette University)



Gertrude Bonnin, Catholic Sioux Congress, Pine Ridge, South Dakota 1920
(Bureau Catholic Indian Missions, Marquette University)

5.4 BCIM Records, Marquette University
(photographer unknown)

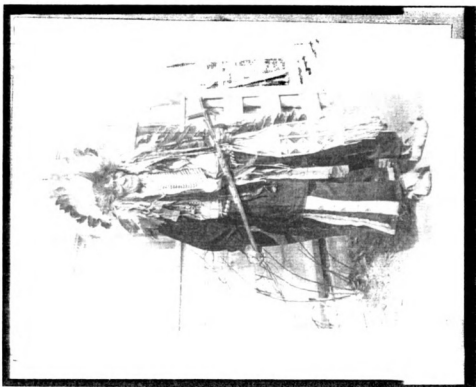


Gertrude Bonnin listening to unidentified man. Pine Ridge, South Dakota 1920
(Bureau Catholic Indian Missions, Marquette University)

5.5 "The Sun Dance" Opera Company Post Card, Vernal, Utah 1913,
(WHC) courtesy of Pat Albers



5.6 (left) Old Sioux: 5.7 (right) Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin)
Vernal, Utah 1913, (WHC, BYU)



SUNDANCE

(Wa-chi-pi)



Wm. F. Hanson, M.S.

Sketch by Quinanch (Ute) 1913

William Hanson Papers, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU

5.8 "The Sun Dance" backdrop sketch, 1913 (WHC, BYU)

5.9 (left) "The Sun Dance" poster BYU 1935
 5.10 (right) William Hanson and Zitkala-Sa
 Vernal, Utah 1913, (WHC, BYU)

The Indian Opera
 A beautiful story of the Red Man, delight-
 fully told in song and music

'THE SUN DANCE'

By Mrs. R. T. Boutin and Mr. Wm. F. Hanson

Will be given in the

Provo Opera House

TONIGHT ONLY

by The

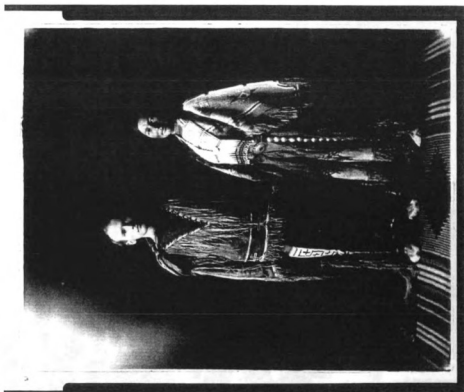
B. V. UNIVERSITY MUSIC SCHOOL

A C. U. M. B. star

Superb Scenery: Everything New
 By P. J. E. H. Eximond

See some of the beautiful costumes
 in the Commercial bank window

Tickets on Sale - - Wednesday at 2 p. m.



6.1 Society of American Indians (SAI) 1916, *American Indian Magazine*, Gertrude Bonnin is standing first row, far right, holding her hat; General Richard Pratt is second row, far right

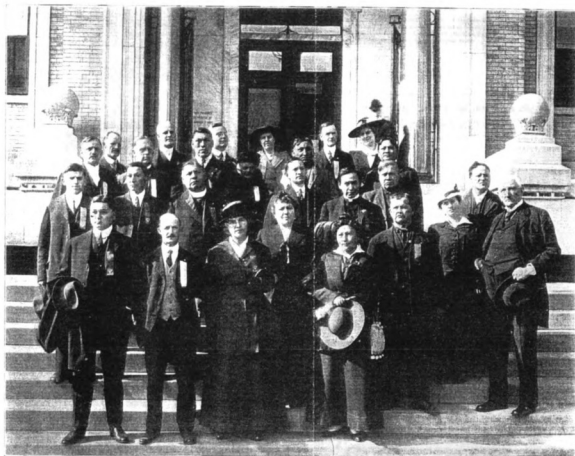


Plate 7

A group of members of the Sixth Conference on the steps of the Carnegie Library,
Cedar Rapids, Iowa, September 29, 1916

6.2 Signed frontispiece and cover of Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories*, 1921 (Special Collections, Michigan State University)



ZITKALA-SA (Gertrude Bonnin)
A Dakota Sioux Indian

American Indian Stories

BY

ZITKALA-SA (*Gertrude Bonnin*)

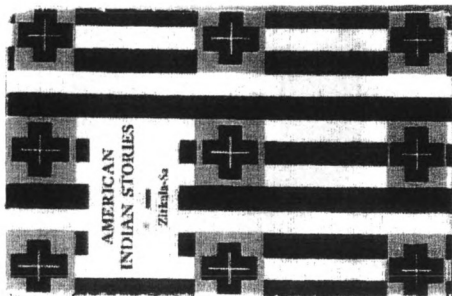
Dakota Sioux Indian

Lecturer; Author of "Old Indian Legends," "Americanized: The First American," and other stories; Member of the Women's National Foundation, League of American Pen-Women, and the Washington Salon

*"There is no great; there is no small; in the
mind that causeth all"*

*Zitkala-Sa
(Gertrude Bonnin)*

Washington
Hayworth Publishing House
1921



cover, 1921 edition *American Indian Stories*

6.3 (left) Gertrude Bonnin *American Indian Magazine* 1917
6.4 (right) Captain R. T. Bonnin *American Indian Magazine* 1919



6.5 Gertrude Bonnin's "Appeal" to GFWC in 1921

Excerpts from Gertrude Bonnin's "Appeal to the Women"
General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) Council meeting
Salt Lake City, Utah, printed in *General Federation News* June 1921

The Great Spirit knows my heart is full... As an educated woman I have tried as interpreter to make America, which is so generous to all other races of the world, understand the longings of her own people, the first Americans, to become citizens of this great republic...

At present they are but prisoners of the state, without citizenship rights, ruled by superintendents who are given almost unlimited powers over them. They are kept in ignorance instead of being trained to useful labor. Our dear friends here have asked you to enjoin the Indian Department in the federation. Ourselves have tried to do this work in company with the stain upon our country in the treatment of my people may be wiped out...

You have enfranchised the black and are now actively waging a campaign of Americanization among the foreign born...

The gospel of humanitarianism, like charity, must begin at home. Americanize the first American! Give them freedom to hold open forums for the expression of their thoughts, to do their own thinking, to exercise their own judgment, to manage their own business, and finally, to become citizens of this republic whose constitution entitles each individual to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We the American Indians, insist upon recognition of the fact that we are really normal and quite worthwhile human beings. We want American citizenship for every Indian born within the territorial limits of the United States...

We want a democracy wheel whose hub shall be an organization of progressive educated Indian citizens and whose rim shall be the Constitution of your American Government—a wheel whose segments shall become alive with growing community interests and thrift activities of the Indians themselves. Indians proved their loyalty to your country by the unequalled volunteer service in your army in the World War.

But whatever a plea for our human rights is made, a despotic-grown bureaucracy, known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with a \$14,000,000 hub and a rim of autocratic discretionary powers, between which are the segments suppressing the energies of the Indian people—issues contrary arguments through its huge machinery best known to itself. It silences our friends by picturing to them the Indians "utter lack of business training" and how easily they would fall "victims of the wiles of unscrupulous white men."

It is true that Indians lack business training. Therefore I could suggest business schools for the Indians, together with a voice in their own affairs, that they may have an opportunity to overcome their ignorance and strengthen their character. I could suggest that they be allowed to make strategic more stringent laws to maintain their own white man and further, that the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which through ninety years has steadily enlarged itself, regardless of the diminishing Indian population, be relieved of its practically unlimited autocratic supervision of an orderly people now kept prisoners on small remnants of land not shown on our maps in a prolonged wardship, never intended to be permanent, but assumed by the government as an emergency measure and not compatible with the idea of American freedom and American ideals, and contrary to the very constitution itself of the "land of the free."

Gertrude Bonnin
Salt Lake City, June 1921

6.6-6.7 (below and bottom left) Apartment buildings where the Bonnins resided in Washington D. C. from 1917-1926 (author's collection)

6.8 (bottom right) George Washington University Law School, Washington D.C. 1925



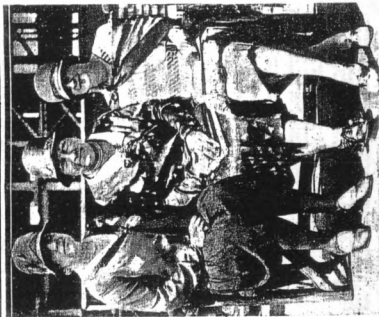
(left) 1833 Mintwood NW
Washington D.C.
Bonnin residence, 1917-1920

(below left) 1830 California NW
Washington D.C.
Bonnin residence 1921-1926

(below right) George Washington
Law School 1921-1925
(formerly the Justice Building)



Sitting Bull's Granddaughter Here
BALTIMORE NEWS - MAY 15, 1929



MRS. EILEEN SEAMAN, Mrs. T. B. Bunnin, Mrs. Ralph Bowditch and Mrs. Ralph Bowditch today on Indian affairs and charged the Indians today as a victim of a "warrior's vengeance". She is shown with Mrs. Bunnin, Mrs. Bowditch, chairman and Mrs. Ralph Bowditch, who was named today for fourth district director of the League.



This is to certify that:
 _____ is an associate member in good standing of
 _____ Lodge
 _____ 19____
 Secretary.

ETIKALA SA (Genus Bonn)

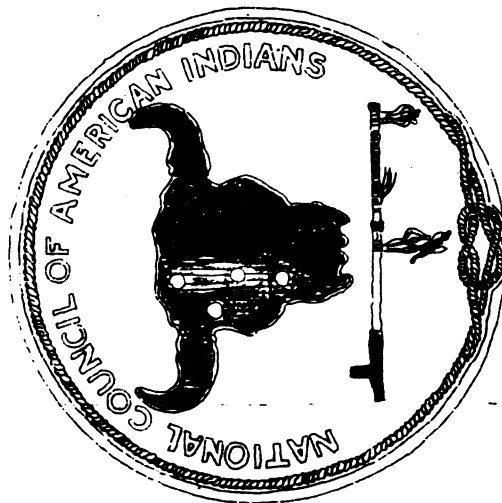
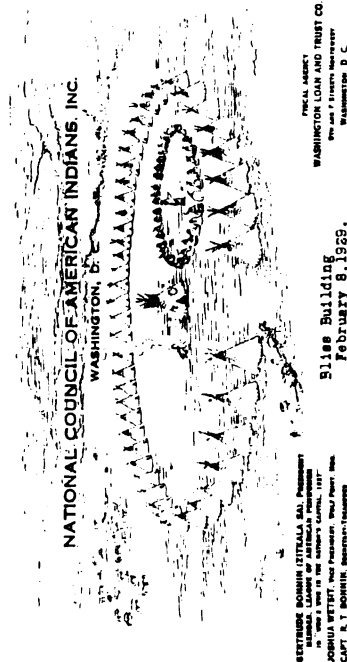
**NATIONAL COUNCIL
of AMERICAN INDIANS**
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON, D. C.



This is to certify that _____
 IS A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING _____
 OF _____ LOOSE _____
 AT _____ IN _____
 MEMBERSHIP DUES PAID TO _____
 \$ _____
 DATED _____



7.4-7.5 National Council of American Indians Newsletters (left) 1929,
(right) 1933 (Bonnin Collection, BYU)



Two winters ago an Indian initiate now 88 years young bestowed upon me the honor of being elected President and Secretary of the National Council of American Indians. In token of appreciation of their public work, I have written this letter to you, my friends, in the hope that it may be of some help to you. Continue your good work. These words spoken, I am never to be forgot. These symbols furnish us a proud emblem, our National Council of American Indians, the only national organization of American Indians today.

Our esteemed artist friend and member has contributed the design of our emblem which we all deeply cherish. May blessings follow him for his kindness to us.

We shall endeavor to have membership plus made at a reasonable rate, and those members who desire them may send their orders to National Headquarters, 37 Bliss Bldg., Washington, D.C.

Yours for our human unity,
Charles Bonnini
President, National Council of
American Indians, Inc.

N.L. # 2
/35 - R.4/5

EXTENDING BORDERS UTILITIES AND PROPERTY
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF AMERICAN INDIANS, INC.
WASHINGTON, D.C.
February 8, 1929.
Bliss Building
WASHINGTON, D.C.

White Swan Lodge, N.C.A.I.,
Late Andes, South Dakota.

My dear Kinsmen;

Yesterday, February 7, 1929, our Yankton Bill, S. 2792
reinvesting title to certain lands in the Yankton Sioux Tribe of
Indians became a signed Act of Congress.

Let's have three cheers!

This may not seem to be anything important but never-the-less
it is an epoch making accomplishment. For any Indian or Indian
tribe to get his money or hold tight to his land is a miracle these
days. As you know, the Indian Bureau was against our Bill; so was the
Budget Bureau but Senator McMaster and Congressman Christensen
put it through.

In this short session of Congress, Senators and Representatives
are crowded and rushed with countless Bills pending. You can ima-
gine the hosts of people after them, snatching them under with tele-
grams and letters; and sitting in their office, waiting for personal
interviews until it is no easy thing to reach our members of Congress.

Both Capt. Bourin and I had to be daily in this jam, insisting,
insisting, and INSISTING that the Yankton Bills be put through.
Sometimes, we even felt we were pests to our own Senator and Congress-
man from South Dakota, for we pushed in upon them (like others do)
when they were already busily engaged with numerous other duties.

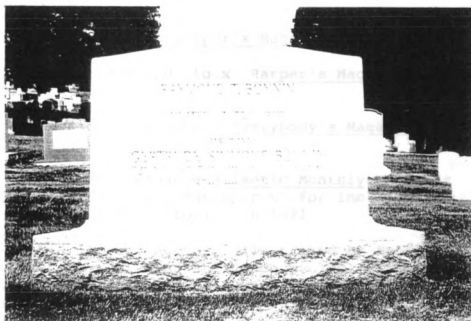
And NOW the dream of a permanent home-place for the Yanktons is
a signed Act of Congress.

Let no Yankton ever try to break it into allotments, which is bound
to result in losing it, piece by piece, either selling, mortgaging or
taken for unpaid taxes, till the Yanktons be homeless again. Never do I
KEEP IT WHOLE AS ONE PIECE ALWAYS.

7.6-7.7 Front and back of the Bonnin gravesite headstone;
 "Raymond T. Bonnin, United States Army, his wife Gertrude
 Simmons Bonnin "Zitkala-Sa" of the Sioux Indians, 1876-1938"



Arlington National Cemetery
 Captain R.T. Bonnin 1880-1942
 (photos author's collection)



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Gertrude Simmons "Side by Side," The Earlhamite March 15,
1896 (177-79)

_____ "Ballad" The Earlhamite January 9, 1897

_____ "Iris of Life" The Earlhamite November 1, 1898

Published writings by Zitkala-Sa

Zitkala-Sa wrote stories (1900-1902) from both personal memory of Yankton childhood and a collective Dakota memory. Published in national magazines, the following seven stories were also included in American Indian Stories, published by Hayworth Publishing House in 1921. They are the most popular, frequently anthologized pieces of Zitkala-Sa's writing.

Zitkala-Sa "Impressions of an Indian Childhood" Atlantic Monthly January 1900

_____ "The School Days of an Indian Girl" Atlantic Monthly February 1900

_____ "An Indian Teacher Among Indians" Atlantic Monthly March 1900

_____ "The Trial Path" Harper's Magazine March 1901

_____ "The Soft-Hearted Sioux" Harper's Magazine October 1901

_____ "A Warrior's Daughter" Everybody's Magazine April 1902

_____ "Why I am a Pagan," Atlantic Monthly December 1902; renamed "The Great Spirit" for inclusion in American Indian Stories in 1921

Zitkala-Sa Old Indian Legends, illustrated by Angel De Cora, Boston: Ginn and Company, 1901 (reprinted 1921, 1929); foreword by Agnes Picotte, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; to this, an

introduction by P. Jane Hafen was added for the 2004 edition, renamed Iktomi and the Ducks & Other Sioux Stories

_____ "A Protest Against the Abolition of the Indian Dance" Carlisle Indian School paper, Red Man and Helper August 22, 1902

Published writings by Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin)

Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin) collaborated with William Hanson on "The Sun Dance" Opera, Provo, Utah, copyright 1913. Gertrude collaborated on the Indian melodies and is solely responsible for the lyrics of one ballad, "To a Star." The operetta's libretto was published in 2001 by the University of Nebraska Press along with previously unpublished poetry in a collection edited by P. Jane Hafen entitled Dreams and Thunder: Stories, Poems, and "The Sun Dance Opera."

Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin) published editorials, essays, fiction, and political poetry between 1916-1921. She also wrote many speeches during this time with variations on the major themes of peyote, citizenship, reservation conditions, and self-determination. Poetry tended to be signed "Zitkala-Sa" while editorials were signed "Gertrude Bonnin." The majority of her writing from 1916-1919 appeared in The American Indian Magazine (AIM); it follows in chronological order.

Zitkala-Sa "The Indian's Awakening" AIM January-March 1916:

Gertrude Bonnin "A Year's Experience in Community Service Work Among the Ute Tribe of Indians" AIM Oct-Dec 1916

Z. S. "The Red Man's America" AIM January-March 1917

Gertrude Bonnin "Chipeta, Widow of Chief Ouray, with a Word about a Deal In Blankets" AIM July-Sept 1917

Zitkala-Sa "A Sioux Woman's Love For Her Grandchild" AIM October-December 1917; this sonnet is about, in Zitkala-Sa's words, an event leading up to the battle known erroneously as "Custer's Massacre."

Gertrude Bonnin "Indian Gifts to Civilized Man" AIM

July-September 1918 [Editorial Comment on the Indian Bureau]

_____ "Secretary's Report in Brief" AIM July-September 1918

_____ "Letter to the Chiefs and Headmen of the Tribes" AIM Winter 1919; Gertrude wrote against allotment and advised adults to learn English

_____ "America, Home of the Red Man" AIM Winter 1919

_____ "The Coronation of Chief Powhatan Retold" AIM Winter 1919

_____ "Editorial Comment" AIM Winter 1919

_____ Review of Charles Eastman's Indian Heroes and Great Chieftans AIM Winter 1919

_____ "The Black Hills Council" AIM Spring 1919
(advocating self-determination)

_____ "Sounds From an Anvil" AIM Spring 1919

_____ "The Ute Grazing Land" AIM Spring 1919

_____ "Editorial Comment" AIM Spring 1919

_____ "Hope in the Returned Indian Soldier" AIM Summer 1919

_____ "An Indian Praying On the Hilltop" (prayer to the Great Spirit) AIM Summer 1919

_____ "An Indian Citizenship Campaign" AIM Summer 1919

_____ "Gifts of Angel De Cora Dietz" AIM Summer 1919
(Gertrude's eulogy to her friend of twenty years)

Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin) "Americanize the First American" Edict Magazine December 1921 (Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs' monthly publication); released simultaneously, this essay was the final selection included in her second book, American Indian Stories published in Washington, D.C. by Hayworth Publishing House in both cloth and paperback editions.

The original cover, with red and black Sioux crosses, was called "the blanket book," a picture of which appears in the appendix. In addition to this essay and the six stories previously published (1900-1902), American Indian Stories contained two new pieces of fiction, "A Dream of Her Grandfather" and "The Widespread Enigma Concerning the Blue-Star Woman."

Gertrude Bonnin "A Dacotah Ode to Washington" Proceedings held in Washington Monument in Washington D.C. upon the Dedication of the Memorial Stone Placed at that Monument by the State of South Dakota on June 22, 1922 Washington, D.C. GPO, 1922

Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala-Sa) "Lost Treaties of the California Indians" St. Paul: Brotherhood of Races, c.1923-25; this tri-fold pamphlet was originally published by Gertrude Bonnin in The Bulletin (nd), a daily San Francisco newspaper (1895-1928).

Gertrude Bonnin, Charles H. Fabens, and Matthew K. Sniffen Oklahoma's Poor Rich Indians: An Orgy of Graft and Exploitation of the Five Civilized Tribes--Legalized Robbery, Philadelphia: Indian Rights Association, 1924

Gertrude Bonnin "Uncle Sam, the Patent Fee Indians and the States and Counties" c. 1925 (unpublished essay, Bonnin Collection, BYU)

Gertrude Bonnin "Representative William Williamson and the Indians" Washington D.C.: National Council of American Indians, 1926 (14-page, union-printed booklet includes "An Open Letter to any Sioux Indian" and legislative and jurisdictional documents with Bonnin's commentary.

Gertrude Bonnin "What It Means to Be An Indian Today" Friends' Intelligencer January 19, 1929 (46-47)

Gertrude Bonnin "The Indian's Side of the Question" Report of the Thirty-fifth Lake Mohonk Conference on the Indian, October 16, 17 and 18, 1929 Mohonk Lake, NY: Mohonk Conference of the Indian, 1930 (92-95); This is the last known publication of Bonnin's writing during her lifetime.

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Rio Grande Press of New Mexico reprinted American Indian Stories with a publisher's preface by Robert B. McCoy in 1976. McCoy's inclusion of "Stanza 71" from The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam as the frontispiece, is the foundation for early scholars to link Gertrude Bonnin with mysticism.

The University of Nebraska Press reprinted the 1921 edition of American Indian Stories in 1985 and 1990 with new covers. Both of these editions featured the same literary introduction by Dexter Fisher, previously published in 1979. Nebraska Press reissued American Indian Stories in 2003 with a new introduction entitled, "Zitkala-Sa: The Representative Indian" by Susan Rose Dominguez.

Appearing in 2003 was the Penguin Books publication of a collection of writings by Zitkala-Sa and Gertrude Bonnin entitled, Zitkala-Sa: American Indian Stories, Legends, and Other Writings, edited with an introduction by Cathy N. Davidson and Ada Norris. This edition reprinted all of American Indian Stories and Old Indian Legends in addition to pieces from American Indian Magazine, and selected poetry and essays. Included is a series of four articles on California Indians Gertrude Bonnin wrote between 1922 and 1924, previously published in California Catholic bulletins. An example of one of several biographical errors, Davidson and Norris mistakenly place Gertrude's Yankton homeland within the Great Sioux Nation.

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