“DRAWN INTO UNKNOWN LANDS”: FRONTIER TRAVEL

AND POSSIBILITY IN EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE

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“DRAWN INTO UNKNOWN LANDS”: FRONTIER TRAVEL

AND POSSIBILITY IN EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE

Derrick Loren Spradlin

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

"DRAWN INTO UNKNOWN LANDS": FRONTIER TRAVEL AND POSSIBILITY IN EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE

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This dissertation explores the symbolic meanings contained in literary depictions of journeys to the American frontier written during the late 1700s and early 1800s. I argue that these depictions work to create and advance the multifaceted concept of the American frontier—what exactly the frontier is, what possibilities are available to the frontier traveler, what role the frontier plays in the life of the nation, and what cultural values are and are not compatible with life on the frontier. While an author's description of a journey to the frontier writes these aspects of the frontier, the frontier itself affects a traveler's preconceived notions about it and thus influences the written text. Individual and collective possibilities regarding warfare, westward expansion, history, religion, and community are explored in texts of different genres and written in different times and places in order to better understand the scope of the different ways that British colonists and citizens of the young United States thought about the frontier.

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INTRODUCTION

President George W. Bush, Lewis and Clark, and the Possibilities of the American Frontier

On January 14, 2004 at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration headquarters in Washington, DC, United States President George W. Bush presented his plans for the future of the nation's space exploration program. Coming just less than a year after the in-flight loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia on February 1, 2003 grounded America's manned space vehicles, the President's ambitious proposal for NASA included returning American astronauts to the moon by the year 2020 and using that lunar mission to gain the know-how to send humans to explore Mars. During his speech, President Bush paralleled NASA's voyages into space with the voyage into the North American west performed by the Lewis and Clark expedition from 1804 to 1806. He stated:

> Two centuries ago, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark left St. Louis to explore the new lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase. They made that journey in the spirit of discovery, to learn the potential of vast new territory, and to chart a way for others to follow.
>
> America has ventured forth into space for the same reasons. We have undertaken space travel because the desire to explore and

> understand is part of our character. And that quest has brought tangible benefits that improve our lives in countless ways. (par. 7-8)

With these words, President Bush succinctly demonstrates how the image of a journey into the American west can hold great promise and possibility. He continues with the imagery, declaring, “Mankind is drawn to the heavens for the same reason we were once drawn into unknown lands and across the open sea. We choose to explore space because doing so improves our lives, and lifts our national spirit. So let us continue the journey” (par. 25). His mere mention of the feat of Lewis and Clark conjures up for his audience mental pictures two hundred years in the making, images of determined, buckskin-clad American explorers traversing mighty rivers, vast plains, and snow-peaked mountains.

In fact, if there is one journey to America’s west prevalent in the minds of Americans, it would certainly be that of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 2004 spurred numerous celebrations of the journey, in addition to countless popular and scholarly books released on the expedition in the years leading up to the bicentennial. For example, the U.S. Mint began its Westward Journey Nickel Series, which included four new designs for the nickel—all of the Lewis and Clark expedition—for release in 2004 and 2005; this is the first change for the U.S. nickel in six decades. Federal promotion of the expedition does not end there. Lewis and Clark can also be found on $0.37 stamps issued in 2004, and from 2004 through 2006 *Lewis & Clark: The National Bicentennial Exhibition* will make stops in museums in St. Louis, Philadelphia, Denver, Portland, and Washington, DC. Available at Toys R Us stores is the Lewis and Clark family board game, manufactured

by American Historical Games, LLC. Finally, National Geographic Films released in large format film and showed to wide acclaim in IMAX theaters *Lewis & Clark: Great Journey West*. Cultural manifestations of Lewis and Clark seem unlimited. Those manifestations included here in no way constitute an exhaustive list but are simply representative of the many kinds of ways the Lewis and Clark expedition is currently finding its way into American culture. Fascination with Lewis and Clark, though, is not at all new to the twenty-first century. Indeed, the expedition caught the attention of the nation as soon as word of its return from the Pacific coast spread around the country. Concerning the popularity of the written account of the expedition, James H. Maguire proposes "that *The Journals of Lewis and Clark* are the headwaters of western American literature in the same way that William Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation* is one of the fountainheads of American literature" (68). From money to toys to museums to the source of a genre of American literature, the Lewis and Clark expedition is deeply rooted in the minds of many Americans as the picture of the American west. Thus, President Bush chose shrewdly to include Lewis and Clark in his NASA speech, for, as Henry Nash Smith writes, "The importance of the Lewis and Clark expedition lay on the level of imagination: it was drama, it was the enactment of a myth that embodied the future" (17). What better image for the President to use to spark the nation's interest in manned missions to Mars?

This image exudes national pride, momentous achievement, and "undaunted courage" (to borrow the Thomas Jefferson-penned phrase that popular historian Stephen Ambrose selected as the title for his recent best-selling book about Lewis and Clark). Moreover, the linguistic context within which President Bush places the Lewis and

Clark image indicates exactly what qualities he intends the image to convey. He speaks of "the spirit of discovery," of "potential," of the "desire to explore," of national "character," of "tangible benefits," and of "national spirit." He uses vibrant and optimistic verb phrases like "explore" (twice), "ventured forth," "improve our lives" (twice), and "lifts our national spirit." These are the words and phrases that complement President Bush's allusion to Lewis and Clark, an allusion calculated to secure support for the Mars plan by exciting in the audience feelings of nationalistic grandeur. In the same way that the Lewis and Clark expedition across the continent and to the Pacific Ocean and back punctuated President Thomas Jefferson's acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase territory, so too do President Bush's comments insinuate that NASA's exploration of Mars will ensure America's acquisition of the planet, or at least the "tangible benefits" available there. NASA astronauts as Lewis and Clark-era explorers are images potent with cultural associations with America's western heritage, images used for strategic political purposes.

The undertaking of sending Americans to Mars is one fraught with budgetary, scientific, and technological concerns, as President Bush's critics and political enemies were quick to point out even before he gave his speech once word of his space plan was leaked to the press; however, foregoing a reference to other Americans whose accomplishments would be found on any short list of great moments in flight—the Wright brothers (celebrating their own achievement's centennial in 2003), Charles Lindbergh, Chuck Yeager, John Glenn, Neil Armstrong—or another map-changing explorer like Columbus or Magellan, President Bush chose to encapsulate the boundless potentials of the Mars mission undertaking through an allusion to the Lewis and Clark

expedition. As the head of state, as the representative figure of national political power, his comments carry weight insofar as they work to endorse and promote an official position on the history of the west; his words become the state-sponsored image of Lewis and Clark for the country and the world, yet this version of the expedition and this version of the possibilities it conjures up is not the only version. For instance, the same historic, factual Lewis and Clark expedition that President Bush finds available for his speech about a mission to Mars is likewise available to environmentalist Daniel B. Botkin, yet the two take the same subject and assign to it vastly different symbolic value. In *Our Natural History*, Botkin, like President Bush, celebrates the achievement of Lewis and Clark, calling it "America's greatest odyssey" (xvii). However, while President Bush can deploy Lewis and Clark to promote manned space missions to Mars, a project criticized by not a few environmentalists because of projected fuel consumption, mercenary exploitation of Mars's pristine, untouched natural resources, and other factors adverse to the agendas of conservation groups, Botkin can use the same allusion to argue that

> In reliving Lewis and Clark's experiences, we can see the mirror of nature in the snows of the Rockies and in the waters of the Missouri and the Columbia. In those reflections we can better understand where people fit into this puzzle of nature and how we can solve our environmental problems in a way that suits our humanity as well as the needs of other living things. We can come to know our natural history. (xviii-xix)

While the goals of the two men—going to Mars and better understanding our natural environment—are not fundamentally at odds with each other, they reveal how the same frontier voyage can be used as a platform for the promotion of two quite different enterprises. Through the canonization of the Lewis and Clark expedition over the past two centuries, it has become the convenient icon for the idea of frontier and frontier travel. It contains the endless possibilities existing in the frontier itself. Thus, it is not awkward or inappropriate for both President Bush and Daniel Botkin to appeal to it for symbolic value.

This symbolic value of lands to the west had always been part of the appeal to Europeans of settling in North America and to Americans for settling to the west. Lands to the west, in essence, were vital to the beginnings of the presence of Europeans in America as well as to the beginnings and growth of the United States. In the Proclamation of 1763, Britain forbade the sale of lands on the western side of the Appalachian Mountains to individuals. The government took this measure after the end of the Seven Years' War in order to ease tense relations with western Indian tribes and to maintain rule more easily over the colonists. This geographical limitation on the British Americans contributed to the frustrations that instigated the Declaration of Independence. Likewise, the British parliament's Quebec Act of 1774, one of the acts labeled by the colonies as the Intolerable Acts, extended the boundary of Quebec south to the Ohio River, negating western land claims of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Connecticut. Though the Quebec Act did not anger colonists as much as the Port Act or the Massachusetts Government Act, it was nevertheless one more frustration with parliament. The Intolerable Acts led to the First Continental Congress later in the same

year, and the Revolution soon erupted. A few decades later, in a move that clearly demonstrates, once again, the perceived connection between the immense western lands of the continent and the inception and continuity of the United States, President Jefferson bought the Louisiana territory from France in 1803, doubling the physical size of the country and stretching it far to the west. President Jefferson's monumental purchase and the subsequent monumental expedition of Lewis and Clark represented at the time, as it has since, the vast possibilities of the U.S. nation.

While Lewis and Clark may be the most recognizable and most readily used instance of frontier travel, the same complex system of possibility exists in others. When President Bush effectively turns the attention of his audience westward to the historical frontier journey of Lewis and Clark in order to focus its attention upon the heavens above and Mars and measurable, "tangible benefits" to American society, he is tapping into a long tradition of imagining a journey into America's western regions as one containing immense possibility. America's frontier has always cast a spell over the imaginations of European immigrants, British colonists, and citizens of the early U.S. and later generations of Americans who made frontiersmen Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Kit Carson, and George Custer into legends. The west and the possibilities offered by that immense region have spurred individuals to venture westward and have abounded with value for writers and others, like President Bush, who find them handy symbols.

Travel in the frontier comes to organize a wide array of opportunities and limitations that present themselves to the traveler during the journey, and each travel narrative contributes to the warehouse of possibilities associated by culture with that

travel. As is oftentimes true of travel writing, the traveler in a foreign land is faced with the task of defining himself and the others he there encounters. Out beyond the bounds of "civilized" society, notions of both individual and national identity can be challenged and questioned during this process of definition. In unfamiliar territory, away from the hegemony of the familiar and of society's institutions, national, cultural, or personal possibilities are revealed to the traveler. These possibilities differ from traveler to traveler. Because of this, different accounts of the same frontier travel—like the Lewis and Clark expedition for President Bush and Daniel Botkin—can convey widely varied meanings, and because of this the same type of possibility can be identified in accounts of widely different frontier travelers.

Published accounts of frontier travel involve an intricate back-and-forth relationship between preconceptions about the wilderness, reasons for journeying there, the journey out and back itself, and the writing of that voyage. With an unending number of variables presented by these elements, there is great fluidity from one text to the next in the representation of frontier travel. The title of this dissertation, "Drawn into Unknown Lands," points to the composite nature of the frontier travel narrative. First, travelers are drawn or compelled for various reasons out into the wilderness. Second, travelers are drawn or portrayed by authors, either autobiographically, fictionally, or through second-hand accounts, in a frontier setting. In these instances, being drawn into the frontier is a highly distinctive and singular occurrence. Each text of frontier travel, then, presents a unique frontier, and the aspects of the frontier that a text includes become the defining features of "the frontier" according to that text. Thus, the goal of this dissertation is not to address all the possible ways in which people

thought about the opportunities and tangible benefits available in the wilderness. Indeed, such a goal would be impossible to accomplish. Countless texts exist from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that describe the frontier, journeys to the frontier, and life on the frontier. Instead of attempting to account for each and every frontier travel narrative written in this era, this dissertation concerns itself with the range and scope of the different ways people thought of the frontier. To those ends, the texts selected for each chapter should point conglomerately to that range and scope, for the texts are disparate regarding genre, time and place of composition, specific frontier region traversed and described, and impetus for travel; furthermore, these are, in many cases, forgotten texts that reveal an underrepresented notion of the frontier.

To better understand what the country's western lands meant to Americans and to help provide a fuller picture of, to use Frederick Jackson Turner's classic phrase, the significance of the frontier in American history, this dissertation will study how texts from the United States' late colonial and early national periods picture travel to the frontier, and it will study the political, social, religious, and personal implications contained in these pictures. I argue that frontier travel and written descriptions of frontier journeys form and promote the ideals and possibilities symbolized by America's vast lands to the west. That is, the ways in which these texts depict frontier travel work to suggest and institutionalize a writer's desired traits and features of the frontier. In this process of determining the possibilities available on the frontier, these depictions of frontier travel define and project collective and individual values and identities of the United States and its citizens. The literary figure of the frontier traveler

becomes a means to comment on the possibilities and strategies for the survival and development of the nation and of the individual living in the limitless new nation.

Sometimes, as is the case with President Bush's comments, these possibilities and tangible benefits of frontier travel are nationalistic in scope. In these instances, a text's depiction of frontier travel can reveal thoughts about the ability of Anglo-American culture—as defined by individual authors—to survive out beyond the bounds of civilized culture as well as strategies for how westward expansion should happen. Edward Watts and David Rachels, in their anthology of trans-Appalachian literature, stress this subjective aspect of depictions of the frontier and the national implications of this subjectivity. "Then as now," they write, "the struggle to represent the west is, at heart, a struggle over what kind of nation was extending itself westward" (xv). The frontier written by an author does more than provide a picture of the frontier; it also provides a picture of the cultures making inroads into the area, the cultures that make the area frontier. Either through the story of the frontier journey, the adventures that a traveler has, or through comments made about the frontier journey, an author reveals thoughts about the growth of Anglo-American culture further and further into the interior of the country. While the possibility contained in frontier travel is at times nationalistic, so too do possibilities for personal achievement or identity appear in these texts. In other words, the benefits to be had by the frontier traveler may have nothing at all to do with the affairs of nations but instead may be of an entirely private sort of benefit or may be a benefit particular to the individual traveler.

For the purposes of this dissertation, the very definition of "frontier" must be settled upon. In recent decades, scholars of the North American frontier have moved

away from an outdated approach that studied the frontier simply as the area across which manifest destiny led westerly European-descended Americans and that defined "frontier" based on population density of white Americans and the proximity of a region to the line of westward progression of white settlement.[1] Gregory H. Nobles, for example, proposes that a new academic perspective on the frontier is necessary, one that strives to be far less myopic and that privileges the history and actions of no one culture over another. He writes that the acknowledgement and study of the different reasons that different peoples had for being on the frontier

> should not reduce them to a simple dichotomy. Rather, historians should use the tension between them to destroy old dichotomies in studying the frontier. First, we can no longer define the struggle over the frontier solely in terms of Indian-white conflict, in which an "intrusive" society overwhelmed an "indigenous" one. … Second, historians cannot define this conflict among whites only in terms of "east" versus "west" or even "center" versus "periphery." (669)

A binary scenario of one group of people fighting against another group of people for control of the land is insufficient. It neglects the subtleties involved in why people act and think as they do, and it reduces all individuals into a single-minded collective.

[1] Questioning the particulars of what scholars of the American frontier actually study is hardly new, of course. In 1946, Carlton J. H. Hayes wrote: "I wonder, however, if the time has not come when our historians might profitably broaden their conception of the frontier and extend their researches and writing into a wider field. For granting that the frontier has been a major factor in the historical conditioning and development of what is distinctive in the United States, a large and now, I believe, most pertinent question remains about the American frontier. It is a frontier of what?" (200). Hayes, Carlton J. H. "The American Frontier—Frontier of What?" *The American Historical Review* 51 (1946): 199-216. For more frontier historiography, see also the following: Paul, Rodman W., and Michael P. Malone. "Tradition and Challenge in Western Historiography." *The Western Historical Quarterly* 16 (1985): 27-53. Ridge, Martin. "Frederick Jackson Turner, Ray Allen Billington, and American Frontier History." *The Western Historical Quarterly* 19 (1988): 4-20.

Watts and Rachels concur with Nobles that "the invasion, occupation, colonization, and settlement of the first American west was a very complex process that cannot be limited to the paradigms of either triumphalism or its rejection" (xv-xvi). What is necessary is an understanding of localized encounters, tensions, struggles, collaborations, and conflicts that occur in frontier areas and a refusal to appeal to generalizations in analyzing these occurrences.[2]

In an effort to radically redefine patriarchal, Anglo-American biased versions of "frontier," Gloria Anzaldúa uses the Spanish word "la Frontera" to defamiliarize the concept for her audience and then proceeds to use, in English, the term "Borderlands" to discuss it. Writing about living on the boundary between Mexico and the southwestern United States, Anzaldúa defines what she calls the Borderlands as space where the individual is affected and pulled and pushed in different directions by clashing cultures. Nor is this type of Borderland specific to any geographic setting, frontier-like or not.

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[2] Similar rethinking of academic approach to the American frontier can also bee seen in the following: Johnson, David A. "American Culture and the American Frontier: Introduction." *American Quarterly* 33 (1981): 479-81. Johnson's text introduces a special issue of *American Quarterly* on the relationship between American culture and the American frontier. Thompson, Leonard, and Howard Lamar, eds. *The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1982. Bailyn, Bernard. *The Peopling of British North America: An Introduction*. New York: Knopf, 1986. Merrell, James H. *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, 1989. Krupat, Arnold. *The Voice in the Margin: Native American Literature and the Canon*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1989. Aron, Stephen. *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996. Though they almost exclusively define the West as the region west of the Mississippi or west of the hundredth meridian, members of the New Western History school of thought are also of interest here: Limerick, Patricia Nelson, Clyde A. Milner, and Charles E. Rankin, eds. *Trails: Toward a New Western History*. Lawrence: UP of Kansas, 1991. Limerick's essay in *Trails* presents the definition of New Western History. White, Richard. *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West*. Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1991. Milner, Clyde A., ed. *A New Significance: Re-envisioning the History of the American West*. New York: Oxford UP, 1996. Faragher, John. *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: The Significance of the Frontier and Other Essays*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1998. Hine, Robert, and John Faragher. *The American West: A New Interpretive History*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2000.

"The psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands," she writes,

> are not particular to the Southwest. In fact, the Borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy. (n.p.)

For Anzaldúa, geography only matters insofar as it becomes the staging ground for the coming together of cultures. On this ground, an individual faces, or is forced into, innumerable possibilities for identity formation. The space, however, is not pleasant. "It's not a comfortable place to live in, this place of contradictions. Hatred, anger and exploitation are the prominent features of this landscape," she states (n.p.). Nonetheless, in this commingling of antagonistic cultures, new possibilities of identity are formed; for Anzaldúa and her peers, the Chicano Spanish language has emerged as a new form of expression and communication, a development that could not have happened outside of the specific Borderland in which Anzaldúa lives.

Following Anzaldúa's lead, Annette Kolodny provides a compelling definition of "frontier." She writes, "in my reformulation the term 'frontier' comes to mean what we in the Southwest call *la frontera*, or the borderlands, that liminal landscape of changing meanings on which distinct human cultures first encounter one another's 'otherness' and appropriate, accommodate, or domesticate it through language" (17). Kolodny's definition is especially insightful when speaking of the frontier as more than a mere geographical area, for it takes into account not only the overt conflict, encounter,

or clash of cultures brought upon by the presence of both in the same area but also the systematic practice that each party engages in to define the newly encountered culture in its own terms, the ways the other differs from itself, and how, thus articulated, this knowledge can subjugate the newly encountered culture or defend against its efforts to subjugate.

Principal to all of these definitions of "frontier" is the encounter and interaction between peoples. The strangeness and unfamiliarity of those people encountered corresponds to and feeds off of the strangeness and unfamiliarity of the land itself. Likewise, the anxieties and possible dangers presented by the landscape itself and the people encountered there are informed by each other. Thus, the physical location of a geographical space is central to that space being frontier, yet shaped by Nobles, Watts and Rachels, Anzaldúa, and Kolodny, the term "frontier" entails far more than a geographic area, far more than a space delimited by the distance of white Americans from population centers to the east and their nearness to the homelands of Native American tribes. "Frontier," the encounter with what is just beyond the borders of familiarity and outside of personal comfort zones, can occur in a place despite whether or not that place is near or far from civilization, along the east coast or in the far west, or unmapped by or daily traversed by people, provided that the individual for whom the space is frontier encounters there a situation, a person or people, or a landscape outside of the formative control of the individual's home culture. Geography, in other words,

does play a central role in the frontier-like nature of a space, but far more than mere placement on a map goes into making the space frontier-like.[3]

Expanding upon this notion, Eric Heyne deduces that "the frontier, once treated as an objective term of geographical classification (or as an archetype that was then often reified), is increasingly being understood as a trope" (4). His term "trope" helps explain this elemental feature of "frontier," for it involves not only the acknowledgement that "frontier" is far more than just a geographical region; "frontier" stands as a concept nebulous and shifting, and for writers addressing a frontier traveler's encounter with the unfamiliar, "frontier" is unendingly pliable. As that which separates the familiar and defined from the utterly unknown and alien, "frontier" need not be limited by actual geography. Once again President Bush's speech provides an illustration, this time of the variability of "frontier," for his allusion to Lewis and Clark seems to posit the planet Mars as at least an equivalent to if not an actual extension of the American frontier. The vastness and intangible nature of what exactly "frontier" is works to contribute to the notion of limitless possibility contained in the great and breathtaking region that has always been to the west in America. As a trope, or, a rhetorical tool allowing for a word like frontier to be used to conjure up all the cultural meanings associated with it, the frontier allows President Bush to draw this connection between Mars and the Lewis and Clark frontier.

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[3] For a thoughtful conception of American frontier space see McLure, Helen. "The Wild, Wild Web: The Mythic American West and the Electronic Frontier." *The Western Historical Quarterly* 31 (2000): 457-76. McLure proposes that "the electronic frontier encompasses many of the dualities and tensions of the American West. Like the western frontier, the e-frontier is vitally significant to American economic and strategic interests that were manifested first in continental (and now wired) expansion; yet the cyber frontier also appeals on a popular level to many romantic, nostalgic western myths about endless horizons, unlimited opportunity, and untrammeled freedom" (457-8).

By using these insights and new definitions about the frontier, this dissertation aims to offer new narratives of the American frontier. In other words, to further the effort to complicate and rethink the scholarly study of the American frontier, this dissertation approaches the American frontier using the lenses crafted by the theories discussed in this introduction. Furthermore, in its hopes of offering new narratives of the American frontier, this dissertation includes readings of some lesser known texts and narratives of the American frontier, instead of focusing primarily on the most popular and dominant narratives of the frontier, the figures and events that have traditionally been celebrated in the popular imagination and in the study of frontier.[4]

Vital to all of the texts studied here is the element of travel into the unfamiliar or unknown,. A key feature of travel writing is the description by the traveler of foreign people and places he or she encounters and how these compare to more familiar people and places. Concerning the description of nature by American travelers, Beth Lueck writes, "Determined to demonstrate the superiority of their nation, sometimes by arguing for the superiority of its landscape beauty, American travel writers could easily turn a picturesque or sublime scene into a metaphor for national supremacy" (14). Although within Lueck's framework the author creates a frontier in the narrative and imposes his or her own definitions of national values on that frontier, inversely, the author's notion of the nation is invariably impacted by the frontier through which he or she travels, the actual people and landscapes encountered on the journey. As Mary Louise Pratt states, "While the imperial metropolis tends to understand itself as

[4] This approach is comparable to that taken by Mary Louise Pratt. Pratt rethinks the event of European-Native American encounter and then evaluates narratives of this encounter based on her new understanding of these "contact zones." See: Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

determining the periphery … it habitually blinds itself to the ways in which the periphery determines the metropolis" (6). The voyage does not move only in one direction because despite any preconceived notions about the frontier or the nation, the voyager changes through the act of voyaging by perceiving, contemplating, and interacting with the environment and its inhabitants. Within this complex process of comparison and description, the travel writer attempts, through the narrative, to forge a place in the geographical space for himself or herself and for all other people and landscapes encountered there.

Acting as a categorizer of peoples and places, as John Gillies writes, "the voyager controls the boundaries. It is the voyager's function to manage the exotic: which may mean either bringing it safely within the pale or excluding it entirely" (101). Quite often, though, managing the exotic is not an either/or process. What is alien or exotic affects the traveler and the qualities by which the self and the Other are defined by the traveler; consequently the exotic, itself altered through the filter of the traveler, finds a way into what Pratt calls the metropolis. Casey Blanton proposes that "what travel books are 'about' is the interplay between observer and observed, between a traveler's own philosophical biases and preconceptions and the tests those ideas and prejudices endure as a result of the journey" (5). "Interplay" proves to be a judicious term here, for the exotic, unfamiliar interior of the North American continent encountered in the texts studied here both shapes and is shaped by the figure of the frontier traveler and the written account of the traveler's trip through the interior.[5] Thus,

[5] Regarding this kind of interplay, Susan Rhoades Neel writes, "What we need is a history that has at its heart this simple but enduring truth: nature has shaped us as surely as we have it. With every turn of the

in his statement about the construction of place by writers, Simon Schama proposes that "landscape is the work of the mind" (7). But the process works both ways; landscape is not only a work of the mind but also works upon the mind. In fact, not a few of the travelers in these works carry with them onto the frontier hearty nationalist attitudes; however, in the moments during which their wistful ruminations upon the landscape reveal explicitly this nationalism, the musings themselves have been inspired and critically influenced by what the traveler is seeing. Through this process does the periphery work to determine the metropolis, as Pratt states.

In this dissertation, then, the term "frontier" denotes a trope for possibility accessible through encountering and defining the unknown in a locale upon which definitions and distinctions of peoples and values are fluid and variable. It is the unfixed, vast, and wild unknown that acts for the frontier traveler as a distant arena where both personal and nationalist potentialities are put to the test. Prior to traveling there and while on the frontier, an individual comes into contact with something or someone unknown to him or her and determines the potential dangers, values, and opportunities available to him or her within the framework of the contact. Because of this, the same frontier can support widely divergent assertions and principles. In this way, the frontier has always held great significance for Americans, for it can continually be used and reused as a master narrative for the country and as a space central to identities of individuals and society at large. Travel to this perennially shifting western frontier holds the promise of actualizing these limitless possibilities.

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season, touch of the hand, or gaze into the vast blue sky, nature and culture together have made this place called West" (488). Neel, Susan Rhoades. "A Place of Extremes: Nature, History, and the American West." *The Westren Historical Quarterly* 25 (1994): 488-505. See also Cronon, William. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative." *Journal of American History* 78 (1992): 1347-76.

Each chapter of this dissertation examines different ways that frontier travel accounts write different possibilities represented by and available in America's interior during the late colonial and early national periods. The texts studied are not necessarily travel narratives, strictly defined; instead, if not a travel narrative, each text contains a moment or moments of travel through frontier spaces. Because the concern of this dissertation is the symbolic value and cultural significance of these moments, the chapters are arranged thematically and not chronologically according to when the texts they examine were written.

The first two chapters cover late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century frontier travels that create possibilities that are nationalistic in scope, such as President Bush's use of the Lewis and Clark expedition. With nationalistic functions, the accounts of travel in these first two chapters display how frontier travel can work to expand the hegemony of the traveler's home culture, the power and influence of that culture to define, determine, and normalize values and social behavior. Coming in the first chapter is a look at how travelers' gazes upon the frontier's landscapes and peoples presents the possibility for westward expansion and the promotion of nationalism. The gaze of the frontier traveler does so by wielding authority through writing over Native Americans and the landscape and influencing the perspective upon both of the audience of the travel account. In this process, though the traveler's written description of his or her gaze upon the frontier proves to be a forceful device as it writes it and its inhabitants, the frontier itself and the peoples living there also shape the traveler's gaze and the written account of the gaze.

The second chapter takes for its topic the legend of the discovery of North America in 1170 AD by Prince Madoc of Wales and the legend of his white, Welsh-speaking Indian hybrid descendants. A gaze similar to that described in the first chapter is turned by Madoc texts backward in time and legitimizes empire and advocates for westward expansion by the nation through positioning Madoc and his descendants as markers out in the west of Anglo-Americans' connection and entitlement to the continent's interior. Travel, both by Madoc himself and by explorers who encounter his progeny, makes the legend and its nationalistic objectives available to eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans.

While these opening chapters treat frontier travel accounts that operate for nationalistic purposes, chapters three and four take for their subjects frontier travels that give rise to possibility on a more individualized scale, even while sharing traits with the travels found in the first two chapters. If these first two chapters detail how frontier travel can increase the geographical and cultural control of the continent by Anglo-American society and government, then the next two chapters show how frontier travel creates new possibilities by freeing individuals from the hegemony of society. With this freedom comes the development of identities uniquely connected to the wilderness and the individual's journey therein; moreover, this freedom presents travelers opportunities to comment on and define the concept of "nation" from their positions on the non-dominant side of the frontier.

Chapter three of this dissertation takes a look at the role of frontier travel in the development of the religious lives of individuals considered "other" by American culture and at the implications of underclass and ethnic minorities weighing in on the

fundamental nationalist trope of Christianity from their frontier positions. In Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*, in the event of Christian worship known as the camp meeting, and in the spiritual incidents surrounding the frontier travels of William Apess and John Marrant, travel into America's interior brings about new, distinctive forms of Christianity that complement or coincide with newly developed, distinctive elements of the physical bodies of these travelers. Their bodies become markers of their frontier, spiritual experiences. "Frontier" unknowns, contingencies, and possibilities for religion and nation culminate and find physical form in the frontier bodies of these travelers.

Finally, chapter four examines further transgressive aspects of frontier travel, namely how several figures marginalized from mainstream culture respond to being out on the frontier, far away from the societal institutions that determine what is and is not accepted behavior. Frontier travel makes available to these individuals a region where identity can be formed apart from societal norms and pressures, a region where a sense of belonging is possible for the marginalized. If chapter one explores how gazing upon the frontier acts to normalize and promote expansionist, nationalistic elements of travel, then this chapter inquires about what happens when the frontier alters the gazing traveler, about what happens when the gazer is seduced by the possibilities of frontier danger, identity, and impropriety. Written accounts of the frontier travels of these "misfits" create frontiers for audiences that lend themselves to self-determination by an individual and that, as a part of this formula, are places where values and conduct are fundamentally different from those of the population centers along the east coast.

CHAPTER ONE

"Coloured Glasses": National Expansion and the Gaze of the Frontier Traveler

In *Facing East from Indian Country*, Daniel K. Richter makes use of an academic approach to early America that, as the book's title indicates, accounts for American history from the perspective of Native Americans who saw Europeans approaching from the east. It is an approach that ethnohistorians have been employing in recent decades to tell the story of America from the points of view of Native Americans. Richter writes that his book is "as much about *how* we might develop eastward-facing stories of the past as about the stories themselves" (9). As it pieces together these eastward-facing stories, Richter's text is challenging and insightful, and yet it begs the question: How exactly are westward-facing narratives developed? That is, what precisely is the perspective that Richter's approach counters? This chapter aims to answer this question. It aims to analyze exactly how facing west and gazing across the continent works for nationalist purposes.

Michel Foucault's term "gaze" will assist in answering this question. According to Foucault, the gaze signifies what occurs during these moments of viewing and remarking upon, moments during which far more than merely viewing and remarking happen. Foucault writes in his study of discipline, power, and the prison that the

objective of the gaze is "not for power itself, nor for the immediate salvation of a threatened society: its aim is to strengthen the social forces—to increase production, to develop the economy, spread education, raise the level of public morality; to increase and multiply" (208). A potent relationship is instituted between the viewer and the object being viewed. As they stand atop a summit or on some other physical feature and look with formative eyes upon unfamiliar frontier territory, travelers gain an element of control over the land. Their gazes become methods through which these travelers "manage the exotic," to use a phrase by Gillies, for in these moments when the landscape grabs their attention they manipulate that landscape by seeing and describing it. In these texts, the traveler's gaze upon the frontier becomes a method for the successful cultural and geographical expansion of the United States into the west. That is, through the gaze the frontier traveler exerts control over hostile Indians and untamed nature, which negates these as impediments to the growth of the nation.

So-Min Cheong and Marc L. Miller, in their reading of Michel Foucault's theory of the gaze, explain that such power is transmitted through the gaze because through it the gazer "transmits distinctions" (383). This ability becomes especially acute for travelers writing from the privileged position of having the means to travel to foreign places, the tools of writing, and the resulting authority to define the Other for their audiences who know little or nothing about the places and people being described. Thus, Margaret Hunt states, "one of the main aims of any travel narrative is to instruct readers on how to go about apprehending an unfamiliar place and population, to supply a mental framework and a set of practical directions for confronting the unknown and unfamiliar" (347). Travel narratives instruct in this way by transmitting distinctions, an

action that involves the traveler assuming and exercising dominion over the exotic, an act accomplished through the all-knowing, all-determining gaze.

Such is the aim of the frontier gaze illustrated in the works included in this chapter. While these works are rather different in terms of time and space, in each the gaze increases and spreads U.S. culture onto the wilderness, and it provides a solution to the issue of Indian presence in that wilderness. The disparity in the types of works included in this chapter points to the pervasiveness of viewing the frontier through such a gaze. Also, while describing the authoritative frontier gaze of the traveler, these travel narratives fix a similar, formative gaze of their audiences upon the western regions of the continent. They accomplish this, first, by presenting the traveler as symbolic of the nation. His gaze, therefore, becomes the basic gaze of the nation. Second, through the readers' act of reading the written word, these works allow the frontier gaze to insinuate itself to their readers. The travelers' acts of viewing the land and the Indians residing there, along with the textual commentary coinciding with these acts, offer readers a mental point of view to be directed toward the frontier. Instituting the Foucauldian gaze through the written word, in essence, helps to extend in the reader's mind's eye the boundary of the United States further westward into Indian country.

In what follows, this chapter will examine the practice of the frontier gaze instituted by travelers with two different kinds of motivations for the gaze: travelers engaged in conflicts with Indians and travelers enjoying leisure trips to the frontier. First will be texts in which travelers use the gaze to help solve the issue of what to do with Indians in the west who could slow or prevent western settlements from developing. These texts are Zebulon Pike's journal of leading the 1806 western

expedition along the Arkansas River and through the area surrounding what is now Pike's Peak, Robert Rogers's relation of his military experience during the French and Indian War, Jackson Johonnet's account of General St. Clair's disastrous 1791 campaign against frontier Indian tribes, and James Kirke Paulding's 1818 poem, *The Backwoodsman*, a story of a family's emigration from New York to the Ohio River region west of the Appalachians. The second grouping of texts contrasts the first because the travelers are not on military or government-sponsored trips but on journeys undertaken for pleasure. Interestingly though, these travelers exercise gazes that, like those of the first group, work to manage the frontier so that it becomes suitable for settlement. The texts in this group are John Pope's 1792 account of his circuitous journey from Virginia down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and back home and William Dunlap's 1828 play, *A Trip to Niagara*.

The Frontier Gazes of Indian Fighters

An example of this frontier gaze is found in the writings of U.S. Army officer Zebulon Montgomery Pike. After leading an expedition up the Mississippi River to Minnesota the previous year, in 1806 Pike was sent to explore the region west of the Mississippi River through which the Arkansas River flows by the commander of the Army of the West, General John Wilkinson. Unbeknownst at the time to Pike, his mission was part of Wilkinson and former Vice President Aaron Burr's conspiracy to create a new nation out of U.S. lands in the west. Burr's ensuing trial for treason cleared Pike of any wrongdoing, despite questions about his mistaken meander into Spanish New Mexico. Fraught with physical hardships and suffering, the ingloriously planned journey took Pike and his company through modern-day Kansas, Colorado, and New

Mexico, where they were captured by Spanish troops and taken to Mexico before being freed to return to the United States.

Even if he wasn't aware of Burr's conspiracy plot, Pike clearly saw himself as part of a nationalist expansionist project. In a brief passage written on October 7, 1806, Pike figures himself as a symbolic envoy of the United States, and he actuates the subjugating power of the gaze towards the frontier and its Indians. After spending a tense week trading for horses while at the same time under the threat of an attack by the Spanish-allied Pawnees, Pike's party moves on from the area without any fighting. After passing a Pawnee village, Pike wrote the following in the journal he kept during his trip:

> When I was once on the summit of the hill which overlooks the village, I felt my mind relieved from a heavy burden; yet all the evil I wished the Pawnees was that I might be the instrument, in the hands of our government, to open their ears and eyes with a strong hand, to convince them of our power. (419)

Pike, on a fact-gathering expedition commissioned by the military, was thus literally an agent of the state on the frontier; however, his pensive imagery of becoming a device wielded by the state suggests a figurative sense to his representing the country. With these lines, then, Pike portrays himself, the frontier traveler, as not only a military envoy of the United States to the Pawnees, but also as the embodiment of the national character; he is an instrument acting in accordance with the desires of his country. Through this metaphorical language, Pike positions his own journey as emblematic of

the westward journey of the United States across the continent, for he carries national possibilities within himself into the unknown.

Pike makes clear the interlinked nature of national gain and his western trek. For example, he refers to his objectives as "the *national* projects intended to be accomplished by the expedition" (427; my italics). Also, when he enacts a contingency plan for written records to make it back to the east even if he does not, he does so that, as he writes, "we might not have made the tour without some benefit to our country" (432). Elsewhere, when theorizing about the lack of wooded areas in the region, Pike states, "I would not think I had done my country justice did I not give birth to what few lights my examination of those internal deserts has enabled me to acquire" (524). He positions all of his decisions and actions as done for the good of his country. Even if such declarations were not motivated purely by patriotism—if Pike added or amended them as his journal was prepared for publication in order to separate himself from the Burr conspiracy—they nonetheless associate, within the narrative, Pike's expedition with that which will be beneficial to the United States, namely, the westward expansion of the country. His gaze upon the land is ordered by his aspiration to augment his country.

Pike's frontier gaze relies for power not only on physical achievement on the frontier but also on language, on the written travel narrative that describes his actions and thoughts, that details, in other words, his gaze. As the advance scout whose voyage symbolizes the capability of the nation to expand into the west, Pike does more than simply travel the frontier proclaiming his national fervor; he offers a method for conquering the region that is available to a lone traveler. Through the description of his

desire to be an agent of the state, from his summit Pike turns the military and diplomatic gaze of his audience towards the west and the western Indian tribes. Looking down upon the Pawnees, Pike visualizes himself not as a messenger or laborer of the state but as the "strong hand" of the government that will subdue them, the actual hand of justice and authority. With this gaze, the frontier traveler exists figuratively and actually as a willing emissary of the nation, whose work and behavior revolve around what benefits the nation. Overpowering western Indian tribes like the Pawnees allows Pike to make ready the region for future American settlers, businessmen, and soldiers—people from whose work the nation will benefit. An aspect of Pike's subjugation of the Indians is his act of viewing them and the landscape through his frontier gaze and through his desire to be an instrument of the U.S. government and of U.S. culture.

While Pike's comments on the Pawnees reveal the substance of his gaze, the scope of the gaze applies to the land itself as well as to the Indians. During another moment in which Pike looks out from a summit, his gaze acts as a method for the control of the landscape:

> About ten o'clock rose [that is, I surmounted] the highest summit of the [Noonan] mountain, when the unbounded spaces of the prairie again presented themselves to my view; and from some distant peaks I immediately recognized it to be the outlet of the Arkansaw, which we had left nearly one month since. This was a great mortification; but at the same time I consoled myself with the knowledge I had acquired the sources of the La Platte and Arkansaw rivers … which scarcely any person but a madman would ever purposefully attempt to trace further

> than the entrance of those mountains which had hitherto secured their sources from the scrutinizing eye of civilized man. (479; editor's brackets)

Regarding yet another of Pike's numerous descriptions of a view from a summit, Bruce Greenfield writes that the explorer's "sweeping vision suggests control of what is seen" (107). Pike's Noonan mountain summit exhibits this sweeping, controlling vision that Greenfield mentions. In the passage, Pike asserts control over the land simply by viewing it. Despite the frustration of wasting a month walking cluelessly in circles, once Pike identifies the sources of the Arkansas and La Platte Rivers, then the United States, represented by Pike, has symbolically obtained the landscape by disallowing it to withhold knowledge of itself. No mills were yet built, no farmers were yet working the soil, and no steamboats were yet sailing around these extreme ends of the two waterways, but such projects, those linked with the expansion of the United States, were one small step closer to happening because of Pike's act of viewing. If his gaze upon the Pawnees organizes how Americans are to see and thus defeat the Indians, then his gaze upon the headwaters of the Arkansas and La Platte Rivers organizes how Americans are to begin to attain the west for their country. They may do so not with settlements or forts or roads but by first surveying the west as instruments of the nation and thus acquiring it with "the scrutinizing eye of civilized man."

Just as Zebulon Pike looks down from a summit at the Pawnee village and formulates a national viewpoint towards the Indians, so too does Robert Rogers, a British American colonist and soldier, in October, 1759 climb a tree to appraise the Indian village of St. Francis and in so doing formulate an ethic of frontier violence for

the British and the adversarial Indians. In his gaze upon the St. Francis Indians, Rogers is able to distinguish between identical acts of violence based solely on who is enacting and who is receiving the violence; his gaze enables him to judge both the acts of violence and the person or persons responsible for the acts in a manner that privileges the British Americans over the Native Americans. The passage itself reads rather harmlessly. He states: “I came in sight of the Indian town St. Francis in the evening, which I discovered from a tree that I climbed at about three miles distance” (105). The image of Rogers perched in a tree gazing down upon the Native American village provides a visible display of the Foucauldian gaze enacted. Rogers can view St. Francis and see the Indians there as savage, brutal murderers; he also can strategize his own upcoming act of war against the village, one that includes horrific killings. Rogers’s gaze permits him to make a clear distinction between his violence against St. Francis Indians and the violence of St. Francis Indians against British Americans, even if those moments of violence are alike.

Killing Indians, surviving in the wilderness, and killing Indians as an element of surviving in the wilderness receive extensive commentary in the *Journals of Major Robert Rogers*, published in London in 1765. Born in 1731 in the frontier Massachusetts town of Methuen, Rogers was placed in charge of a company of soldiers during the French and Indian War. These soldiers became known as Rogers’s Rangers, for Rogers formed his soldiers into a group of guerilla-style wilderness fighters that played a vital role during the war in the British campaigns in the Lake George and Lake Champlain region. Recruiting colonists from frontier areas and employing military tactics far more effective for wilderness fighting than those of the British troops’ Old

World style of fighting, Rogers and his Rangers were able to successfully spy upon and combat French and Indian forces on the Northwest colonial frontier. The *Journals* describe military campaigns of the Rangers from 1755 to 1761.

A man of neither status nor wealth before the outbreak of the war, Rogers gained fame on both sides of the Atlantic due to popular accounts of his military exploits written during the war. Published after the Treaty of Paris in 1763 ended the conflict and while Rogers was in London attempting to exploit his fame, John R. Cuneo writes in his summary of the contemporary critical reaction to Rogers's text that "the *Journals* had been designed to attract public attention to Rogers" (175). For this very reason the historical accuracy of the *Journals* was questioned by some critics at the time. In addition to the *Journals*, Rogers also published in London *A Concise Account of North America*, which sold well, and a play, *Ponteach*. Because of the self-promotion aspect of the publication of these texts, probably none of them should be considered as an authoritative text on the military history of the French and Indian War. What is noteworthy, however, is how Rogers writes about violence against Native Americans while traveling in the wilderness, which is the subject matter of his *Journals*, and how the manner in which he perceives the landscape and the Native Americans living there act to justify and promote military actions that will enhance the British holdings in North America.

Violence both against Indians and by Indians maintained a constant presence in the minds of British colonists. In his seminal study of the American frontier, Richard Slotkin theorizes that

> The first colonists saw in America an opportunity to regenerate their fortunes, their spirits, and the power of their church and nation; but the means to that regeneration ultimately became the means of violence, and the myth of regeneration through violence became the structuring metaphor of the American experience. (5)

European settlers committed acts of violence on the American frontier against the landscape itself and against other Europeans, but primarily against Native Americans. According to Slotkin, this violence on the frontier became, in the minds of the European colonists, the only way to secure a foothold in the New World for the culture they brought from across the Atlantic. Though many friendships and alliances were formed between different European and Native American individuals, communities, and governments, many colonists learned to think of violence against Native Americans as integral to the colonial experience. At the same time, ever-present in the colonial mindset was the distinction between the colonists, themselves, and the Indians. The desire to "regenerate" European culture in America, as Slotkin discusses it, implies this felt difference between colonial and Indian cultures. Simply put, British colonists thought of themselves as different and distinct from the Indians in every aspect of life, which included a difference in how the two cultures waged war, a difference in their acts of violence; there was savage-like violence and non-savage-like violence. Rogers's gaze—his formulation of how to view and judge Native Americans and British Americans and the violent actions of both groups—works to maintain this distinction.

Colin G. Calloway, though, proposes that an easy distinction between a Native American method of warfare and a British American method of warfare simply does not

exist. From the first conflicts between Native American peoples and Europeans, both groups learned from the other, and the tactics of one influenced the other. Each had to respond to methods of fighting employed by the other, and each incorporated into its stratagems the successful tactics of the other. According to Calloway,

> The "Indian way of war" was not something that had been handed down without change across generations. Indians passed on to the colonists lessons they themselves had learned from conflicts with Europeans and from wars fought with European guns. (93)

Interestingly, a text written in the 1760s that describes fighting against Indians engages in an imagining of a dissimilarity between actions and peoples that closely mimic each other. Robert Rogers, in his account of the French and Indian War, uses means associated by the British with savagery to achieve dominance in the wilderness over his Indian antagonists. Regardless of his own acts of violence, Rogers seems unflinchingly to make the distinction between Native American and British colonial fighting practices. The formula that appears in Rogers and that this study addresses is as follows: first, a violent action is committed by the Indians against the British colonists; second, Rogers condemns this violent action by the Indians; third, Rogers and his Rangers mimic this violent action in their retaliation against the Indians; finally, Rogers imagines, in his text, a clear distinction between the two acts of violence. That is, in Rogers, savagery, when used by the civilized, British individual in the wilderness in order to subjugate the savages, loses the classification of savagery. The slaughters of men, women, and children become virtuous acts. This formula found in Rogers acts as an example of how language and writing can assist in overpowering an enemy. Rogers

and his Rangers, this chapter proposes, could win the west for British America through this kind of language. A study of Rogers's text, though, reveals just how fine a line exists between the concepts of "civilized" and "savage," for in the text's mediations of the geographical and cultural limits of civilized and uncivilized the wilderness traveler become simultaneously like and unlike the Indian Other despite any imagined distinctions. What is significant about the Rogers text is his inclusion of the logical contradiction of explicitly describing and condemning violent, murderous acts and then explicitly describing and heroizing the very same violent, murderous acts. What facilitates and acts as a precursor to Rogers's creation of this formula is the establishment of the proper gaze through which to view the Indians on the frontier and the violence performed against them, a gaze that Rogers establishes while scouting out the Indian community. His physical viewing of the Indians, as with the physical viewings of landscapes in Pike's writings, illustrates the mental point of view that should be directed toward the frontier by those in urban areas of the east.

In his Introduction to the *Journals*, Rogers offers his justification for the writing of the volume. His reasons involve the virtue of preserving British culture. He writes:

> And should the troubles in America be renewed and the savages repeat those scenes of barbarity they so often have acted on the British subjects, which there is great reason to believe will happen, I flatter myself that such as are immediately concerned may reap some advantage from these pages. (iii)

Rogers, his Rangers, and "these pages" represent the capability of a civilized people to defeat savagery. His Introduction fits into Slotkin's thesis of regeneration through

violence, for violence, and a specific form of violence—wilderness warfare—that Rogers knows well, becomes the means through which Rogers and the British colonies can sustain in America their way of life. The type of violence from which the colonists "may reap some advantage" is the same type of violence with which "the savages repeat those scenes of barbarity" mentioned by Rogers. Rogers's familiarity with fighting tactics associated with Indians is the reason he is put in charge of the company of men that becomes the Rangers. Still in the Introduction, he states that, after arrival at Fort Edward, "Here I waited upon the General [William Johnson] to whom I was recommended as a person well acquainted with the haunts and passes of the enemy and the Indian method of fighting" (v). Knowledge of the Indian method of fighting and proficiency in mimicking this method distinguish Rogers among his countrymen and place him in the role of defender of the borders between the Christian British colonists and the allied forces of the pagan Indians and papist French.

Roberts's acts of violence are justified and are to be expected since he is a soldier in a time of war. Thus, in and of itself, killing Indian allies of the French during a formal war between Britain and France should not be considered savage. What sets apart Rogers from other British military leaders is his use of Indian methods of warfare. So adept is Rogers at wilderness fighting that he provides in the *Journals* a list of "rules or plan of discipline, which, on various occasions, I had found by experience to be necessary and advantageous" (43). These twenty-eight "rules to be observed in the Ranging service" (51) instruct how to most effectively and safely march, fight, retreat, and scout in the wilderness. For example, rule seven states that "If you are obliged to receive the enemy's fire, fall, or squat down, till it is over, then rise and discharge at

them" (45). And number fifteen suggests, "At first dawn of day, awake your whole detachment; that being the time when the savages choose to fall upon their enemies, you should by all means be in readiness to receive them" (48). Rogers's wilderness tactics included in his rules were novel to most western Europeans and contrasted sharply with the method of fighting that had been used in Europe for over a century and which the British army had mastered. Howard H. Peckham writes that the methods of frontier fighting used by Rogers "perplexed the orthodox British" from the time of the French and Indian War through the American Revolutionary War (vii). Through these means that, as Calloway describes, involve incorporating elements of Indian culture into British culture, Rogers achieves success and influence through his Indian battles.

Rogers adapted to his geographical setting and adopted methods of warfare associated with Indians, and he did so with great success. In the minds of Rogers's superiors, the success of the Rangers against England's foes overshadow the unconventional methods made use of by the Rangers to achieve those successes. Indeed, Rogers includes in his *Journals* numerous letters from his superior officers thanking him, instructing him to enlarge his company of Rangers, and ordering him to engage upon audacious and physically strenuous yet strategically important missions. General James Abercromby, for instance, writes to Rogers:

> Having the greatest confidence in your loyalty, courage and skill in this kind of service, I do, my virtue of the power and authority to me given by his Majesty, hereby constitute and appoint you to be Major of the Rangers in his Majesty's service. (75)

Rogers does not, though, rely on approval from higher-ups for success. After listing his rules for Ranger warfare, Rogers states that, above all, to effectively fight Indians and to survive the wilderness experience, an individual "should keep in mind a maxim never to be departed from by a commander, viz. to preserve a firmness and presence of mind on every occasion" (51). Here Rogers implicitly associates sound reasoning with his unorthodox fighting tactics. As this statement reveals, regardless of his means, the end Rogers fights for is the victory of the civilized mind over that of the savage.

In the segment of the *Journals* in which Rogers presents his account of the Ranger assault on the Indian village of St. Francis, he reveals his unquestioned acceptance of acting like the savages in order to defeat the savages while, at the same time, maintaining distinctiveness from the savages. Rogers writes that the St. Francis Indians

> had for near a century past harrassed the frontiers of New England, killing people of all ages and sexes in a most barbarous manner, at a time when they did not in the least suspect them; and to my own knowledge, in six years time, carried into captivity, and killed, on the before mentioned frontiers, 400 persons. (111)

In September of 1759, Rogers receives orders from General Amherst to, in Rogers's words, "chastise these savages with some severity" (104). Amherst writes to Rogers to

> Remember the barbarities that have been committed by the enemy's [France's] Indian scoundrels on every occasion, where they had an opportunity of showing their infamous cruelties on the King's subjects, which they have done without mercy. Take your revenge, but don't

> forget that tho' those villains have dastardly and promiscuously murdered the women and children of all ages, it is my orders that no women or children are killed or hurt. (105)

The orders call for revenge against the scoundrels, but it must be an orderly and restrained revenge. The dastardly murders of women and children spur Amherst to give Rogers the order to attack the St. Francis Indians, for these murderers must be punished for their barbarous actions. Ordering Rogers to refrain from killing women and children prevents Rogers from becoming guilty of the same crimes the St. Francis Indians have committed. It prevents any blurring of the line between civilized and savage—but only if Rogers obeys Amherst's order.

In his text, Rogers's account of his assault on the town sounds eerily similar to his summary of the crimes committed by the St. Francis Indians. After an arduous, multi-day trek, Rogers climbs a tree to scout out the St. Francis village, an action which proves to be symbolic of his controlling gaze upon the frontier and the Native Americans. With his reconnoitering done, or, in other words, with his gaze upon St. Francis practiced and firmly set, Rogers and his Rangers annihilate the town and its inhabitants. "At half hour before sunrise," Rogers writes,

> I surprised the town when they were all fast asleep, on the right, left, and center, which was done with so much alacrity by both the officers and men that the enemy had not time to recover themselves, or take arms for their own defense, till they were chiefly destroyed. (106)

The Rangers set fire to the town, and

> The fire consumed many of the Indians who had concealed themselves in the cellars and lofts of theirs houses. About seven o'clock in the morning the affair was completely over, in which time we had killed at least two hundred Indians, and taken twenty of their women and children prisoners. (106-7)

Based on Rogers's description of the attack, the likelihood is slim that no women or children were killed. If only twenty women and children were captured, then either a large number fled and escaped the Rangers (an unlikely scenario), or many were killed by fighting and by fire. Rogers apparently failed to observe Amherst's charge not to kill women and children. Just as the St. Francis Indians, as Rogers tells the history, killed roughly 400 New Englanders "of all ages and sexes in a most barbarous manner, at a time when they did not in the least suspect them," so too does Rogers kill 200 Indians of all ages and sexes as they slept, unsuspecting of what was soon to befall them. Many of these died by burning in the fires the Rangers set, certainly a cruel manner in which to die. The actions of Rogers and his Rangers during their assault on St. Francis mirror the previous actions of the St. Francis Indians against New England frontier residents. By ignoring part of Amherst's order and by utilizing the same tactics utilized by Indians, Rogers, it appears, becomes, in this instant and in this wilderness, every bit as savage as he believes the Indians to be. However, regardless of the many women and children who were savagely killed, in the *Journals* Rogers makes no mention of disobeying orders or of any reprimand he receives for his actions. Instead, because Rogers's actions at St. Francis and at numerous other battles described in the *Journals* result in a victory of the British military over the forces of the French and Indians, and because his actions

represent a victory of civilized British culture over that of the uncivilized savages, his killings are worthy of praise. There exists in the *Journals*, then, an uninterrogated allowance for being savage in order to defeat the savage. Indeed, Rogers's employment of the Indian method of fighting while in the wilderness, the employment of savage methods by a civilized individual to fight savages, transforms those methods into virtues. His frontier gaze causes him to see that his own acts of violence are different than Indian savagery, even though the factual details of them included in his *Journals* make them seem quite similar.

In the text, then, savage-like violence is wrong; however, when Rogers, himself, acts in such a way this action becomes virtuous. The sole difference between the violent actions of the Indians and of the Rangers is simply who performs the action. The violent acts, themselves, are identical. Because the only actual difference between these killings is who does the killing, the distinction made by Rogers between the civilized killing of Indians and the savage killing of colonists proves to be completely invented. In this light, Rogers's *Journals* demonstrates the looseness of terms like "civilized" and "savage."

Robert Rogers travels beyond the margins of British culture's geographical dominance, acting as protector of the boundaries between civilized and uncivilized, Christian and heathen, familiar and foreign, white and Indian. While Rogers, as guardian of these boundaries, works to prevent any physical, bodily intermingling between those two, his mastery of the Indian method of fighting, his incorporation of that method into the routine of his Rangers, and his advocacy that future British Americans know and utilize that method point to a clear appropriation of Indian culture

into British culture. The British knew the Indians as savage in part because of their "savage" method of fighting; it is this trait of the Indians, a trait central to the British idea of "Indian," that Rogers's *Journals* acts to bring into the consciousness of British Americans. His "rules" instruct British soldiers and colonists how to travel, hide, fight, survive, and spy like Indians, how, in other words, to mimic Indians. Never troubled by this, he presents his mediation between the civilized and savage as the model for sustaining British culture in eighteenth-century America. As representative of British culture in America thrust into the savage wilderness of North America, Rogers's narrative depicts the playing out of his attempts—of the attempts of British American culture—to survive and to thrive in that wilderness. War takes him into the geographical space where he must mimic Native Americans in order to survive and to protect British colonies from future attacks by the Native Americans.

Hence, war, violence itself, allows for the imagining of a distinction between contemptible, savage violence and dignified, civilized violence. Significantly, Rogers's text does not ignore or omit the violence of the Rangers. Instead, the text refigures that violence as distinct from the violence of the Indians. The proper gaze, like that of Rogers towards St. Francis, a gaze that permits the gazer to distinguish readily between comparable moments of extreme violence, allows for this refiguring. As the British colonization of America proceeds, as Native American peoples and cultural institutions are transplanted by British peoples and cultural institutions, this ethic of fighting permits the reassignment of depraved violence (killings by Indians) into virtuous achievement (killings of Indians), an achievement which removes from the continent the Indians and their depraved violence and, because the achievement is virtuous and

not wicked, justifies that removal. Rogers's *Journals*, however, also allows for the debunking of the flimsy distinction between savage and civilized violence, for, ultimately, colonists' killings done while traveling in the wilderness are revealed by the colonial travel narrative to be a mere mimicking of the Indian killings also described in the narrative.

A similar frontier gaze occurs in *The Remarkable Adventures of Jackson Johonnet, of Massachusetts*. The Indian battles that raged in the Northwest Territory following the Revolutionary War provide the backdrop for the piece. Published in 1793, Johonnet's first-hand account tells of his Indian captivity and his part in the action at U.S. General Arthur St. Clair's devastating defeat at the hands of the Miami and Shawnee Indians in November, 1791. After leaving his rural home to make his fortune and after a couple bowls of punch courtesy of a recruiting officer in Boston, Johonnet joins the army and soon finds himself on the western frontier of the Ohio River valley region. His party is promptly ambushed by a band of Kickapoo Indians, and Johonnet is among the soldiers captured and forced on a long, grueling march through the wilderness. Much of Johonnet's narrative describes what he terms "Indian rage and hellish barbarity" (5) of the Kickapoos during his captivity as they brutally kill and scalp their prisoners.

Johonnet makes a daring and valiant escape and, after fighting more Indians in the woods and rescuing other captured soldiers, eventually makes his way back to Fort Jefferson, which was built in October, 1791 for use as a forward post during St. Clair's western military undertaking. Fort Jefferson is located near present day Greenville, Ohio. Interestingly, in his narrative, Johonnet states that Fort Jefferson is "within a few

miles of the spot where Braddock's defeat took place" (11), referring to British General Edward Braddock's 1755 defeat during the Seven Years War. However, Braddock's defeat occurred on the Monongahela River near Fort Pitt, in present day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which is roughly the width of the state of Ohio away from the site of Fort Jefferson. Despite this nearly three hundred mile discrepancy, Johonnet continues:

> I walked over the ground where the action [of Braddock's defeat] happened, a few days after our arrival at Fort Jefferson, and viewed it very attentively; having a companion with me who was able to describe the different positions of the English army on that very unhappy day. In many places we observed human bones strewed on the ground, which remained unconsumed, and excited melancholy sensations … Alas! how little did I think at the time of viewing these things, that an army of Americans, nearly equal in number to general Braddock's, was destined in a few days to experience a similar defeat, and fly across this melancholy spot. (11)

This odd embellishment acts as an important clue to the strategy of Johonnet's text. Besides his questionable geography, Johonnet connects St. Clair's loss to Braddock's by naming it a "similar defeat" of an army "nearly equal in number" to the previous army. Moreover, just as he views the Braddock locale very attentively, so too does Johonnet influence his readers, by way of his narrative, to view the place very attentively, though not as the site of a 1755 battle but as the site of St. Clair's 1791 defeat, through which Johonnet lives. Here, at the confluence in his narrative of the two sites of Braddock's defeat and Fort Jefferson, Johonnet initiates a frontier gaze that

instructs his audience how to regard western expansion and deal with Indians in the west. Should his audience take their clue from Johonnet, then they will see these battle sites through the lens of his narrative, which venerates those who have died trying to eradicate Indians from the land and which urges similar efforts and sacrifices from them, his audience.

After a week at Fort Jefferson, Johonnet is off again with the army on St. Clair 's fateful campaign against a Miami Indian village along the Wabash River. On the morning after St. Clair's force arrives within the vicinity of its intended target, the Indians surprisingly attack. Johonnet and others fight bravely and stage a bold yet unsuccessful bayonet charge, but their foes devastate the unprepared army. A retreat is sounded, and Johonnet withdraws "amidst the yells of Indians, more dreadful to my ears than screams of hateful fiends to my ideas, amidst the groans of dying men, and the dreadful sight of bloody massacres on every side, perpetrated by the Indians on the unfortunate creatures they overtook, I endured a degree of torture no tongue can describe, or heart conceive" (14). He reaches Fort Jefferson the next morning, after a harrowing night. This report of "bloody massacres" hearkens back to the "horrid spectacle" of people who "had been murdered inhumanly and left weltering in their blood" (8) that he encounters more than once during his earlier ordeal with the Kickapoo Indians. With this episode, Johonnet's text creates an association between the merciless Indians who play a role in Johonnet's captivity during the first part of the narrative and the merciless Indians who bloodily defeat both Braddock and St. Clair. This association is significant to the text because through it Johonnet displays just how savage and unjustifiably murderous Indians—all Indians—really are, which, in turn,

suggests the need to maintain the proper gaze towards all Native Americans, a gaze he demonstrates for his audience.

Johonnet, himself, has viewed very attentively Braddock's field, and his narrative offers another field directly associated with Braddock's for attentive viewing by his readership. His end goal of such western gazing is to stir Americans to military action against the frontier Indians. Before the ill-fated Miami campaign, his own ruminations on the Kickapoo cruelties he witnessed "occasioned a firm resolution of doing my duty vigilantly, and selling my life in action as dear as possible" (12). To bring about such resolve is the aim of his account. Indeed, the last phrase of the text's full title directly indicates that Johonnet's remarkable adventures are put to paper "for the benefit of American youth" (1). On the same note, Johonnet states that, despite the hardships he has seen and experienced, he intends to continue to serve in the army against the Indians on the frontier, saying that

> if I die in the cause of my country, may the remembrance of my sufferings, escapes, perseverance through divine support and repeated mercies received, kindle a flame of heroism in the breast of many an American youth, and induce him, while he reads the sufferings of his unfortunate countrymen, to exert himself to defend the worthy inhabitants on the frontiers from the depredations of savages. (14-15)

The remembrance of his ordeals, of course, which he desires to kindle a nationalistic flame has become far more than the remembrance of merely one man and his actions, for Johonnet's ordeals have been linked by his account to the memorable and memorialized ordeals of Braddock and, more recently, St. Clair. He thus adds the

country's remembrances of the two generals and the noble deaths of the many soldiers who fell during the two battles to the thrust of his own story in order to inspire his audience to take action.

To further reinforce the aim of his narrative, Johonnet closes with the lines of a song written by one of his companions during his Kickapoo captivity, a companion who is killed while he and Johonnet rescue other Indian prisoners. The song implores Americans to join the fight against the Indians and spread a superior U.S. culture into the west. Such action will profit both Indians and whites. "Savage nations," the song states,

> shall learn by your conduct to rise
>
> Above the untractable state,
>
> Drop their customs of malice, and learn from the wise,
>
> To be civiliz'd, gentle and great. (16)

With the defeat of resistant Indians and the eager capitulation to American culture of the others, "the wilderness then shall bloom forth as the rose" (16), and frontier violence will cease. Civilizing the savages and ensuring peace in the west provide the means to the song's ultimate objective: westward expansion. The song, and Johonnet's text, ends by fantasizing that

> Our eagle shall then his wide pinions extend,
>
> To the ocean that rolls in the west,
>
> Dissention and discord be brought to an end,
>
> And the world be permitted to rest. (16)

The proper perception of the frontier will motivate Americans to attain this enlargement of the nation. Furthermore, for this frontier which is full of Indian cruelty and in desperate need of military intervention, Johonnet provides a model of the proper perception, one of close study and remembrance. Close study and remembrance, his insinuates, work as a necessary and effective regiment to keep the proper gaze directed at the western frontiers. Johonnet's gaze upon Braddock's field models this, and his text promotes similar gazing upon the land of St. Clair's defeat. This perception leads to action against the Indians. In this way Johonnet directs a militaristic and expansionist gaze of the United States toward the frontier.

The ability of civilized man to tame the west and its Indians also stands as a major theme of *The Backwoodsman*, a long poem by James Kirke Paulding. Written in 1818, *The Backwoodsman* relates the travels of a family from the Hudson River region as they migrate to lands beyond the Allegheny Mountains in hopes of attaining the promise of plenty that the virgin land in the west offers. Following the family from their departure from New York through their arduous journey west to their settlement along the Ohio River, through the growth of their wilderness settlement into a community, and through the Indian battles fought to preserve it, *The Backwoodsman* depicts the process of westward expansion. Paulding additionally indicates that the travel of the single family about which he writes relates to the progression to the west by the country at large by denoting Basil, the patriarch of the family and the protagonist of the poem, as a "true Yankee lad" (1.45). Basil, in other words, becomes an American everyman figure who

felt that he was free, and that one word [the word "free"],

In his proud heart, a noble spirit stirr'd,

Whose gallant thrilling through his pulses ran,

And made him feel, and know himself a man. (1.349-52)

In this role, Basil, with his optimistic efforts to carve out his living in the wilderness, embodies the potential for the United States and all its citizens to do the same, to transform the vast unsettled areas of the continent into an extension of the nation.

After leaving the urbanized areas of the east coast far behind and as the family summits the Alleghenies to enter the immense unknown of the American wilderness, Paulding writes a long passage detailing what Basil sees as he looks west. Visions of awe-inspiring and undomesticated nature dominate the scene:

One endless chaos spread before his eyes,

No vestige left of Earth or azure skies,

A boundless nothingness reign'd every where,

Hid the green fields, and silent all the air.

As look'd the trav'ller for the world below,

The lively morning breeze began to blow,

The magic curtain roll'd in mists away,

And a gay landscape laugh'd upon the day.

As light the fleeting vapours upward glide,

Like sheeted specters on the mountain side,

New objects open to his wondering view

Of various form, and combinations new,

> A rocky precipice, a waving wood,
>
> Deep winding dell, and foaming mountain flood,
>
> Each after each, with coy and sweet delay,
>
> Broke on his sight, as at young dawn of day,
>
> Bounded afar by peak aspiring bold,
>
> Like giant capt with helm of burnish'd gold. (2.379-96)

While the landscape appears in every way the antithesis of a cultivated locality, this very quality makes it—makes the entire trans-Allegheny area—suitable for settlement. Gordon Sayre writes about the perception of the American landscape during the early national period: "The wilderness spectacle invites an image of nature untouched by humans, but also suggests the means for industry, commerce, and commodification of that nature. The American sublime inspired Romantic idylls of mystery and awe, but also puffed up nationalist pride and invited schemes for mills, canals, and bridges" (160). Nature's unruliness seemingly cries out for improvement.

In fact, not long after Basil's family and a small company of like-minded pioneers settle in the wilderness, the area ceases to be wilderness. "Soon," the poem states, "like magic, in the late lone wild, / A little rustic village rose and smil'd" (3.239-40). And soon again cabins gave way to houses, and a school and church are built, and "To cultivated fields, the forest chang'd, / Where golden harvests wav'd, and cattle rang'd" (3.471-2). What the course of the poem indicates is that the viewing of unsettled western land as Basil views it from atop the Alleghenies will result in seeing the potential for a natural and assured process of development and not an untamed and intimidating wasteland. In *The Backwoodsman*, beholding the frontier from Basil's

position involves not merely seeing what lies beyond civilized regions but foreseeing what could be there—foreseeing what, according to Paulding's story, will be there.

Paulding does even more, though, to structure Basil's gaze from the Allegheny summit, for he compares Basil at this moment to Noah, as the Biblical hero looks out upon the world after his ark has settled on Mount Ararat.

> So when the wandering grandsire of our race
> On Ararat had found a resting place,
> At first a shoreless ocean met his eye,
> Mingling on every side with one blue sky;
> But as the waters, every passing day,
> Sunk in the earth, or roll'd in mists away,
> Gradual, the lofty hills, like islands peep,
> From the rough bosom of the boundless deep,
> Then the round hillocks and the meadows green,
> Each after each, in freshen'd bloom are seen,
> Till, at the last, a fair and finish'd whole
> Combin'd to win the gazing patriarch's soul. (2.397-408)

This allusion to Noah allows for the story of Basil's westward move to be the story of America's new beginning, and it strengthens the proposal that an ostensibly bleak landscape should be considered promising. Noah's story is one of the obliteration of the old and the establishment of the new; it is a story of second chances for humanity. Like the post-flood world of the Noah story, America's frontier presents downtrodden but noble individuals like Basil with the opportunity and place to start anew. This same

promise that had drawn people from Europe to America in the past would now beckon Americans in the east to the west. Despite the hardships involved in traveling to and settling in a harsh land, the land will, just as it does for Noah, emerge "a fair and finish'd whole" that will provide for the reestablishment of a family in new surroundings.

American pioneers, according to the poem, will receive the same providential protection that Noah received. On their way down the western side of the Alleghenies, Basil's family encounters a ferocious rain storm. With the previous direct reference to Noah, the parallel between two deadly water forces, the flood and the Allegheny thunder storm, becomes clear. Just as God provided Noah with directions to build the protective ark, so too does God provide Basil's family with a small enclave that keeps them in close quarters but safe from harm. Describing the destructive storm as a "threat'ning hurricane" (2.502), the poem asks and answers:

> Does that same Pow'r, whose voice in thunder roars,
> Whose breath, the whirlwind, might the waters pours,
> Still watch amid this hour of wild alarm,
> And shield the trembling wanderers from harm?
> Yes! there they sat like lambs within their fold,
> While all around the swelling waters roll'd,
> Making an island of the little space
> Where they had found their pleasant resting place. (2.511-18)

With only slight changes, this passage could describe how Noah's family was saved from the flood. If Basil's summit gaze indicates that the pioneer should view the west

with confidence in its ability to sustain and not threaten life and happiness, then the image of God intervening to protect the pioneer acts as extra insurance.

To prepare the land for settlement, to present the west as a place to stage new beginnings, Basil's gaze also empties the region of any opposing claims to it. The comparison of the gazes of Noah and Basil, as he summits the mountains, continues:

> Yet oft he [Noah] look'd, I ween, with anxious eye,
> In lingering hope somewhere, perchance, to spy,
> Within the silent world, some living thing,
> Crawling on earth, or moving on the wing,
> Or man, or beast---alas! Was neither there,
> Nothing that breath'd of life in earth or air;
> 'Twas a vast silent mansion rich and gay,
> Whose occupant was drown'd the other day;
> A church-yard, where the gayest flowers oft bloom
> Amid the melancholy of the tomb;
> A charnel house, where all the human race
> Had pil'd their bones in one wide resting place;
> Sadly he turn'd from such a sight of wo,
> And sadly sought the lifeless world below. (2.409-22)

Here, Paulding's Noah allusion clears the land of the American west of any indigenous peoples, for when Noah peers out from the ark as it sits atop Mount Ararat, there are, of course, no people to be seen. They all have perished in the flood, so Noah and his people, and by extension Basil and his people, have complete freedom to settle

anywhere they please and alter the landscape in any way they please. As Basil views the west from the mountain peak, there are no Indian competitors for the land. Later in the poem, Indians must be defeated by the community through fighting to clear them off the land, but this occurs only after a civilized society has been planted and after Basil fades from the spotlight of the poem and the community at large emerges as the primary character in the action. The community's existence has been made possible not only by Basil's physical efforts to plant, plow, and build but by his attitude toward the wilderness that he adopts from the top of the Alleghenies, an attitude that may instigate like-minded Americans to launch into the frontier. This is especially true if Paulding's audience accepted this reworked Noah story to be as instructive as the Biblical account of Noah was accepted to be. Basil's gaze acts as a paradigm for the nation's cultural and physical enlargement beyond any boundaries to the west.

Basil sees in the land an absence of Indians. Rogers sees in the land distinctions between savage and civilized actions that, in actuality, are similar. Johonnet sees in the land a call to arms to fight Indians. And Pike sees in the land an opportunity to be the nation's strong-armed ambassador to the Indians. To varying degrees, all four figures are positioned by the texts as representative of the American citizenship, so what they see when they look at the land offers to their readers a stance or viewpoint to take towards America's western frontiers and beyond. They exemplify for readers how to see the west as fit for national enlargement. In each, frontier travel engages in the project of westward expansion through the establishment of the proper westward gaze of the traveler. The gazes of these four travelers act to subjugate Native Americans that stand in the way of westward expansion by proposing how they should assessed and

treated by all Anglo-Americans. Gazing thus at the Native Americans proves to be as potent as taking up arms against them, for gazing at them as do these four frontier travelers positions them for all Anglo-Americans as the objects of detestation and justified violence Aside from the effectiveness of these texts' instructive qualities, aside from how many readers adopted for themselves the frontier gaze of a text, these works do illustrate how four individual writers gazed upon the North American frontier. In this sense, these texts, assist in piecing together how early national period Americans were thinking about westward expansion and about what to do with the Indians who could obstruct that expansion.

The Frontier Gazes of Leisure Travelers

While the gazes of Rogers, Johonnet, Pike, and Paulding exhibit strategies for the elimination of Indians as impediments to expansion, the gazes of other, less militaristic frontier travelers also display how viewing the continent through certain perspectives can aid in the westward progression of the nation. Though Indians are not the primary concerns of these travelers, their gazes upon the frontier work in similar fashion to those of the Indian fighters above. As such, though their gazes are directed at the landscape and not at Native Americans, their gazes are no less compelling for expansionist projects than those of the Indian fighters. Controlling the wild, unimproved land itself through the gaze positions it as ready for settlers, ready for the westward expansion of culture. Leisure travelers who appear in John Pope's account of his journey through America's South and in William Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara* and who, unlike the four previous travelers, are not engaged with Indians in an overt struggle for

control of the wilderness demonstrate that Anglo-Americans can manage the frontier through the appropriate gaze and offer examples of the benefits of such a gaze.

For sixteen months from 1790 to 1791, John Pope traveled from Richmond, Virginia to Pittsburgh, down the Ohio River valley through Kentucky, down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, over land through Creek country in what is now Alabama and Georgia to Charleston, and by boat to New York and Philadelphia before returning home and publishing in 1792 an account of his journey, *A Tour Through the Southern and Western Territories of the United States of North-America*. The prefatory "To the Public" segment that opens the text states that

> *Altho' he* [Pope] *knows many great and respectable Men, whose Friendship would please him, and whose Patronage would do him Honor; he prefers to obtain their Assentation to his Labors, as the voluntary Effusions of their own Hearts, than as the Tribute to his Flattery or Solicitation. Thus thinking, none will blame, thus acting, all will applaud, who are admirers of the native Independancy, which is the Birth-right of Man.—*
>
> *Inaccuracies will, in this Work, probably obtain, but let the Reader reflect, that it is the genuine Offspring of positive Observation, taken sometimes on Horseback, sometimes on a Stump, but always in Haste, amidst the* HURLY BURLY *of uninformed and generally Indian Companions*. (4)

In other words, this prefatory material positions Pope's tour as a journey to the frontier by the American trait of "native Independancy" and its encounter with the otherness of

the frontier: frontier environments, frontier institutions, frontier inhabitants, and other frontier travelers. Thus, in the text, the traveler's body becomes representative of America, of native Independancy. Also pictured here is the character of the frontier inhabitants that this native Independancy will encounter; they are "uninformed and generally Indian" folk who exist in the unflattering state of "HURLY BURLY." Since the traveler's body is the vehicle of culture in a foreign place and among foreign peoples, then in the interactions of the traveler with frontier others are the possibilities, prospects, and limitations for U.S. culture beyond its western borders. Defining the frontier as that geographical space that demarcates the boundaries between the known and the unknown, the space that separates familiar areas from those alien to the traveler, the frontier becomes for Pope the ground whereon the viability is played out of native Independancy, of the U.S. itself, to exist out on the frontier, out in this vast area of uncertainty.

Always a key feature of travel accounts to America's western areas, the landscape itself plays a role in Pope's formula for the nation and for the features of its citizenry. With his lines on the Walnut Hills region, Pope offers an example of how the proper gaze can subjugate the frontier. Describing the sight, which is just down the Mississippi River from the Yasous River (or the Yazoo River, which feeds into the Mississippi River near present-day Vicksburg, Mississippi) and which Spain considers the boundary line between American and Spanish lands, Pope writes: "Whoever undertakes a Description of the *Walnut* Hills, must have a fertile Imagination, be happy at Landscape Painting, and use Something like Romance, or he will fall infinitely short of that Eulogium which the Place so justly merits" (28). In Pope's illustration of Walnut

Hills, the superiority of the landscape is such that only someone with a superior mind can aptly capture it in words, someone with sufficient powers of imagination, with training in the appreciation of landscape painting, and with the wherewithal to understand the romantic ideal of the sublime, someone, that is, similar to Pope himself. This clever linguistic strategy allows America's superior landscape to engender superior American minds, which, through landscape description, engender the superior landscape, which engenders superior minds, and so forth. Pope's brief commentary on Walnut Hills and on the appropriate gaze upon it thus reveals itself as a powerful construction of the nation and of the means to impose U.S. cultural hegemony upon the region: by populating the region with the kind of person who is constructed in the commentary. The passage also reveals how the journey itself influences Pope's idea of the nation, for the aesthetic qualities of the Walnut Hills and their position as the geographical limit to U.S. territory spur Pope's nationalist imagination.

With the proper nationalistic gaze established, Pope also puts in place his formula of the traveler as representative of American values within the symbolic testing ground of the frontier. The traveler who deploys the gaze symbolically becomes, then, the nation itself gazing upon the frontier. With this set-up, Pope stresses the aspects of the proper gaze and the proper character traits of the traveler who is doing the gazing. Establishing certain frontier markers allows Pope to write the membership or citizenship of the nation by organizing who is and is not included in, to use Benedict Anderson's term, Pope's imagined community of the nation. The first of these occurs with Pope's commentary on Thomas Fooley, a Maryland man from a well-to-do family who ends up traveling with Pope from just outside of Pittsburgh into Kentucky. Pope

describes Fooley's ungainly physical characteristics and states that "the Deformities of his Conduct vie with those of his Person" (13). Fooley's lack of circumspection and lack of thrift lead Pope to relate how "at *Redstone* he [Fooley] disposed of his elegant Horse and Furniture for an old Brass Watch, which has the Property of being right once in every Twelve Hours: Notwithstanding this, Mr. *Fooley* is a Gentleman of Refinement, being both a Philosopher and Politician, with some Knowledge of Astrology and Palmistry" (13-4). A correlation between Fooley's body and mind happens again in Louisville when, after he again wastes all his money, he trades his quality clothes for a ridiculous-looking jerkin and hat. He quotes Sterne to Pope, saying that "'A Man's Body and his Mind, with reverence I speak it, are exactly like a Jerkin and a Jerkin's Lining—Rumple the one, you Rumple the other'" (20-1). Pope reprimands him for the unwise clothing exchange, writing, "As he had been a Fellow Traveller in a strange Land, I could not help remonstrating with him upon the Impropriety of his Conduct" (20). Sharing a moneyed, east coast background makes the two fellows, despite the gap that Pope indicates lies between their conduct, and in this "strange Land" of the Ohio River valley frontier, an individual of such a background should, Pope believes, act appropriately.

The parallel of the physical body and the soul of an individual becomes an idea that Pope revisits in his narrative. For instance, while on the Mississippi River, Pope meets Dr. O'Fallan, who "ardently pants for the Cultivation of this delicious Soil; but by Connoiseurs, it is shrewdly conjectured, that having pitched his Tent in the Grotto of Miss *Clarke*, his Ardency, like his Constitution, will turn into downright Frigidity" (29). Also, in a more flattering illustration of a woman, when visiting Alexander M'Gillivray

in Alabama, Pope writes that Mrs. M'Gillivray, an Indian, is "*Perfect in Body, and complete in Mind*" (48). Keeping in mind this notion of a link between body and mind clearly displays that, in this text, "the body" signifies more than mere physicality. The body of the traveler becomes the mind and soul, the very identity of the traveler. For Pope, his body becomes "native Independancy" itself; thus, his body's ability to survive and thrive on the frontier becomes the ability of "native Independancy," of America itself, to survive and thrive in the unknown. Likewise, with this formula of the body, Pope's descriptions of the physical make-up of others describe more than just their physical make-up. If Pope is "native Independancy," and if Pope and Fooley are fellow travelers, then Fooley is a fellow of Independancy. From the Fooley episode, then, Pope's text reveals that to belong in the imagined community of native Independancy and for that Independancy to endure and increase on the frontier, those acting on the frontier as agents of American culture, namely affluent citizens from the east coast, must physically appear, and therefore be, correct and appropriate representatives of American culture, which, Pope believes, is antithetical to how Thomas Fooley looks and acts.

Indeed, practicing proper conduct while within "*the* HURLY BURLY *of uninformed and generally Indian Companions*" proves to be the means by which the U.S. can successfully territorialize the frontier region. Repeatedly in his narrative Pope commemorates the noble leaders who hold sway over the frontier and with whom he visits. While some of this veneration may be simply instances of name-dropping for purposes of self-aggrandizement, such as his poem written to honor Hugh Henry Brackenridge's engagement or his refutation of some Kentuckians negative assertions

about General George Rogers Clarke, other acknowledgements of what Pope considers appropriate behavior are situated as promising tidings for national expansion. In Louisville, Pope points to "extreme Hospitality" as a method for recreating eastern society west of the Appalachians when he states that "the Stranger here may consider himself as at Home" (21).

The most celebrated host proves to be Alexander M'Gillivray, the half-Scottish half-Creek spokesman for the Creeks who in 1790 negotiated a treaty in New York between the Creeks and the state of Georgia. Pope notes that M'Gillivray "received me with Frankness and Civility" and that "he possesses an Atticism of Diction aided by a liberal Education, a great Fund of Wit and Humour, meliorated by perfect good Nature and Politeness" (48). Such conduct typifies an individual who unambiguously represents a successful effort to enact "civilized" practices and manners upon frontier Indian lands, for M'Gillivray capably oversees Creek lands. M'Gillivray, Pope writes, "from the concurrent Approbation which he hath merited and received from the whole Nation, may, with Propriety, be said to hold imperial Power, having many Kings and Princes subordinate to him" (5). The "Approbation" that M'Gillivray is receiving at the time of Pope's visit undoubtedly stems from his role in the negotiation of the treaty with Georgia. With these words Pope proposes that M'Gillivray himself, though an Indian, exists as a frontier marker of traits distinctly associated by Pope with nationalist possibilities.

Conversely, Pope readily disparages individuals like Fooley whom he views as markers of a failure to adhere to republican virtues. He sees in New Orleans a Catholic

street pageant, which he quickly belittles. When he sees an American participating in the festivity, though, his indignation becomes far greater:

> In this Procession, I observed a young *Kentuckean* who had been educated in all the Strictness of Presbyterianism, from which he had apostatized, and embraced Anababtism and Methodism, which he highly honoured, by using each Profession alternately, as Hypocrisy might suggest. He was presented with a waxen Candle, which he devotionally received; and, like the Knight of the woeful Countenance, joined the cheating and the cheated Throng. (38)

Behavior like this works adversely to Pope's nationalist dream of America and American culture sweeping west across the continent. When, in the beginning of his travel narrative, Pope raises the issue of "how far I have succeeded in the Exploration of those Countries" to which he travels (5), he is raising this very issue. Success in his exploration entails a consistent performance of American manners, something this Kentuckian utterly fails to do. The nation-building project, to be successful, must remain true at all times and in any environment to its code of conduct, represented by the trait of "native Independancy," a trait that translates into Pope's own attitudes and actions. Pope's gaze upon the Walnut Hills is the gaze of a traveler who possesses the proper traits of native Independancy.

By picturing for its audience just how well native Independancy can fare out on the frontier and how the gaze of native Independancy can control the frontier, Pope's *Tour* displays exactly how travel can be deployed for nationalist purposes and how the traveler can knowingly or unknowingly act as a powerful instrument of the state. With

its visualization of both the vast possibilities to the west for national culture and the types of Americans to take the nation into the west, Pope's *Tour* announces the young country's territorialization of the continent, announces a frontier onto which Independancy is currently and will continue in the future to expand, settle, and dominate.

Just as Pope describes the proper gaze, the proper traits for one to possess to transmit such a gaze, and the usefulness of doing so, so too does William Dunlap, in his 1828 play, *A Trip to Niagara; or, Travellers in America*, provide his audience with extended commentary on the significance of accurately seeing the landscape, people, and political structure of the United States.[6] The action of the light-hearted play follows two siblings from England on their leisure tour through America and ultimately to Niagara Falls. Mr. Wentworth uses the trip as an opportunity to explain why the United States is in every way inferior to England. Wentworth's sister, Amelia, on the other hand, enjoys every minute of her time in America and becomes frustrated with her brother's failure to recognize the impressive and inspiring features of the country. Also along on the lengthy trip from New York City to Niagara Falls is Mr. Bull, a friend of the Wentworths from England who has been traveling in America unawares to the Wentworths. Like Amelia, Bull has become an admirer of America during his time away from home. Unbeknownst to Wentworth, Bull and Amelia conspire to teach him the error of his ways, so Bull disguises himself alternately as a Frenchman and a Yankee to annoy, prod, and challenge his friend for the duration of the journey. Bull's

[6] The American landscape played a central role in the play, for the spectacle of elaborate panoramic sets of scenic American landscapes helped make the play a commercial success when it premiered at the Bowery Theater in New York in 1828.

motivation for his masquerade is his hope of winning the hand of Amelia in marriage, which she has agreed would be a fitting prize for the assignment. She eagerly consents to marry him at play's end, after he has successfully shown Wentworth his folly and influenced him to change his behavior.

An important theme that Dunlap develops throughout the play is that of how individuals view the world. For instance, upon meeting Amelia in New York, Mr. Bull queries her about her brother, asking her: "How does he like the country, now that he sees it?" Amelia replies by explaining that "He [Wentworth] *will* not see it. He teazes me to death by his obstinate determination to see nothing but through the coloured glasses of the book-makers of our own dear country. Never was poor nurse more tired of the patient committed to her charge, than I am." (11). She tells Bull, in other words, that Wentworth views America with a predetermined gaze that dictates to him that what he views is contemptible. In his pact with Amelia, Bull will be rewarded with her hand in marriage for changing the way Wentworth looks at the U.S. That is, he will be rewarded for properly adjusting Wentworth's gaze. This objective and development of Wentworth's gaze guides the plot of the play; it is what drives the action against the backdrop of a trip to Niagara Falls, an area that, during the first decades of the nineteenth century, was fast becoming an immensely popular tourist site for Americans and Europeans alike. In this sense and with Mr. Bull's success in his mission and subsequent acquisition of Amelia's consent to marry, the play, then, privileges the instructive action of correcting an inadequate gaze.

In the play, characters' preconceptions and biases about America and Americans affect their views and evaluations of the American landscape. Wentworth is described

in the play as “the man that grumbles at everything” (45). At every turn, he belittles America’s landscapes and people. Tellingly, Wentworth’s opinion of what he sees is informed by his attitude toward the intangible, ideological aspects of the culture in which that physical sight lies. During his tour, he states, “So, this is Buffalo! And I’m on the shores of Lake Erie! And what do I see after all. A town like other towns, water like other water, and people like other people—only made worse by democracy” (47). Regardless of its aesthetic value, Wentworth cannot help but let his disdain for democratic government influence his judgment of the place’s worth as a tourist site. This commingling of the seen and unseen continues in the play to affect what people see when they view America.

During the journey to Niagara, the perspectives of Amelia and Wentworth are contrasted several times as the two stand atop different vantage points within the New York frontier and look out upon the land. For example, upon their arrival at the Inn at Catskill-landing, the landlord tells the travelers cheerfully, “you may still be in time to see the sun rise from the front of the Mountain House. It is said to be the finest view in the world.” Wentworth responds, “It may be very well for this country,” implying that far better views exist in England, despite the view’s standing as the best in America (27). Later at the Mountain House, as Wentworth and Amelia witness the sunrise, she declares the sight sublime, and Wentworth answers with a response similar to what he has already said to the landlord, saying, “Humph! Well enough for this country.” Amelia retorts didactically to him, “See how beautifully the majestic Hudson, diminished by distance to the size of a rivulet, meanders through fields, forests, and meadows, which are reduced in appearance to garden flower-beds. You don’t enjoy the

prospect, brother" (30). The complaint against Wentworth made by characters in the play is not simply that he conducts himself like a grouchy curmudgeon; Wentworth's flaw is that his Old World allegiance—the biased "coloured glasses" through which Amelia complains he views America—prevents him from giving the United States a chance to make an agreeable impression on him. Bull and Amelia simply cannot tolerate such narrow-mindedness from someone faced with the magnificence of the young country.

Dunlap not only has his characters continually criticize Wentworth's gaze but also includes in his text's dialogue about viewing the country of the gazes of others, notably the gaze of Leather-Stocking, whom Dunlap lifts directly from the pages of James Fenimore Cooper's popular novels of the time. Upon Leather-Stocking's first appearance in the play, Dunlap credits Cooper for the character, for the stage directions state that his clothing is that "*as described in J. F. Cooper's Pioneers. On his head, a cap made of fox skin—hair gray—face sun burnt—check shirt—deer skin coat …buckskin breeches and leggins …A long rifle*" (31). In Dunlap's work, the character is the stereotypical frontiersman that Cooper's novel helped to establish as a wildly popular character type. His opinions about the frontier, thus, are well-informed and to be valued as sage by both the Wentworths in the play and Dunlap's New York City audience watching the play on stage. Because of this fact and because of how his and Amelia's opinions about the landscape differ, Leather-Stocking's gaze becomes central to understanding exactly what kind of gaze is advocated by Dunlap's text.

Leather-Stocking's first lines are his frequent refrain. As Wentworth and Amelia notice the uniquely outfitted woodsman, he bemoans settlement's encroachment upon

the Catskill wilderness: "All changed! The beasts of the forest all gone! What is worth living for here, now! All spoilt! All spoilt!" (32). Settlement, towns, people, and the disappearance of wild nature and animals have spoiled the Catskill Mountains for Leather-Stocking. As with Wentworth, Leather-Stocking's gaze upon the rapidly changing landscape is influenced by what he believes to be faults in the settlers' attitudes towards that landscape. The settlers, Leather-Stocking believes, fail to revere adequately the land, and they fail to give thanks to God for it.

Amelia offers an assessment of settlement different from his. "Oh yes," she says, "but he [the lone hunter] was alone—but *now*, see the smoke rising from a thousand habitations, and the fields covered with grain and fruit, for a thousand happy families." In response, Leather-Stocking asks her: "The smoke rises to heaven; but do the thanks of the people rise with it?" (32). While Amelia sees newly constructed homes and roads instead of wilderness as picturesque, Leather-Stocking does not in part because of the deficiency in those people responsible for the homes and roads; they should be more thankful. When Amelia proclaims that she enjoys what she sees, Leather-Stocking tells her that he used to when it was still unsettled. She steadfastly maintains, "It was, and *is*, a glorious sight" (33), but he cannot because his interpretation of the physical, actual sight of settlement is affected by what he cannot actually see—the attitudes and beliefs of the settlers. As a hunter who has spent his life in the wilderness, Leather-Stocking prefers a wild setting to a domesticated one, but he implies that if the settlers displayed what he considers the proper attitude toward the land, then his lamentations about the loss of wilderness would not be so severe. What disturbs Leather-Stocking—the loss of wild nature—is, of course, a development

caused in part through his initial gaze upon the land, a gaze that helped tame the land and made it ready the area for further settlement and national expansion. His inability to come to terms with his gaze and its implications points to the superiority of Amelia's gaze and her thoughts on the American frontier.

Soon after this, Leather-Stocking conducts the Wentworths to a favorite spot, one with a waterfall and cave, a place he wants to visit once last time before leaving for regions further west that have yet to be tamed by white settlers. While Amelia deems the place sublime and picturesque, Wentworth theorizes that the best tourist sites are not in the new country of America but among the remains of ancient civilizations. In keeping with her stance throughout the play, Amelia declares, "And give me present joy, in scenes of happiness spread around me, by the hand of my beneficent Creator. Oh, brother! I had rather, much rather, see the ruby lips, and sparkling glance of youth, than the ashen hue, and leaden eye of age." Upon hearing this, Leather-Stocking says to Amelia: "You, young woman, see and feel the hand of your Creator in his mighty works. You, have a hunter's heart, a heart that is lifted to heaven, while you look on the wonders of the arth. You, enjoy, and are thankful" (38). Leather-Stocking here validates Amelia's gaze upon the land because she possesses the correct character traits for someone to sincerely and wisely evaluate the land that Leather-Stocking so dearly loves. She displays the reverence and thankfulness for natural beauty that Leather-Stocking has decided that the settlers of the region lack. Thus, even though they come to different judgments about the settlements on the frontier, Leather-Stocking commends Amelia's, an act that works to further promote her frontier gaze as that which the play favors.

Leather-Stocking's lamentations are given a strong advocate through his celebrated, hearty character, and his words are appreciated by Wentworth and Amelia, who give him the respect that a man of his experience deserves. However, while his lament—that settlement is ruining nature—is presented as inevitable, it is not presented by the play as the grievous development that Leather-Stocking himself makes it out to be. Leather-Stocking leaves for the west, where nature is still unspoiled. At the close of the play, he gazes one final time upon Niagara Falls and utters: "This looks as it used to do, they can't spoil this—yet a while—Hawks-eye [his nickname] has taken his last look at the places he loved, and now away to the prairie, the woods, and the grave" (52-3). With his use of the Leather-Stocking character, Dunlap taps into the same theme of the inevitable expansion of civilization into nature that is found in J. F. Cooper's *The Pioneers*, but in this play it is not detrimental or woeful like it is in the novel. In Cooper's novel, when Leatherstocking witnesses the shooting of thousands of migrating pigeons by the local white settlers, he bemoans that such unnecessary carnage "comes of settling a country!" He continues, stating, "Here have I known the pigeons to fly for forty long years, and, till you made your clearings, there was nobody to skear or to hurt them" (235). Condemnations of the trappings of settlement such as this are typical of Cooper's Leatherstocking. *A Trip to Niagara* responds to the complaint of Leather-Stocking in *The Pioneers* by using Leather-Stocking himself in the play. That is, Dunlap offers another analysis of the spread of settlement into the west, one that celebrates such settlement. He accomplishes this by structuring the play to privilege Amelia's gaze on the landscape over Leather-Stocking's.

While Leather-Stocking commands the respect of the other characters as he "*Goes off slowly*" for lands further west (53), and while Wentworth gives him a sincere and enthusiastic handshake as he leaves, he still must leave, and when he does Amelia, Bull, and the now reformed Wentworth are left behind to gaze upon Niagara. Dunlap gives them, not Leather-Stocking, the final word; Dunlap removes Leather-Stocking and presents Amelia as the model gazer of the play, and she believes that settlement enhances and does not detract from or harm the landscape. Amelia's belief that what she sees in the U.S. is praiseworthy and that the settlements among the Catskill Mountains do not ruin the region is the outlook that Wentworth comes to share with her. His are the concluding lines of the play, and with their revels now ended he says, "I am amply repaid for all my dangers. When the film of prejudice is removed from the eye, man sees in his fellow man of every clime a brother. And in this happy country, the stranger has ever found a reception that calls for the warmest feelings of gratitude. Yes, sister, I am pleased: and if all present agree to be pleased, we shall have reason to bless our Trip to Niagara" (54). *A Trip to Niagara* proposes that "the film of prejudice" is not only Wentworth's against America but also Leather-Stocking's against settlement. Once these films of prejudice are removed and individuals are left to gaze unfettered upon the American landscape, they will see it as Amelia sees it. Thus, the gaze advocated by Dunlap through Amelia is that westward expansion improves the landscape and is to be celebrated.

Along with John Pope's narrative, and along with the texts of Indian subjection, Dunlap's *A Trip to Niagara* provides one more glimpse of how written accounts of travel to the American frontier can affect the course of empire. They do so by offering

ways to see the continent, by offering their audiences "coloured glasses," as Amelia terms them, through which to see the west as part of America's immediate future. The gaze exerts control and authority over the uncertainties associated with frontier by setting up a framework of how Native Americans and the untamed landscape are subject to the actions and defining forces of the traveler's home culture. While the particulars of the gazes of the travelers vary, all of them participate in the process of determining what role lands to the west would play in the life of the nation at a time when those lands held both promise and uncertainty for Anglo-Americans living along the east coast.

CHAPTER TWO

Travel, History, Nationalism, and Prince Madoc in America

The gaze of the frontier traveler in the first chapter works to promote westward expansion by modeling how Americans should view western regions of the country. It removes the physical threats of nature, Native Americans, and the unknowns of the region by depicting these threats as being under its all-knowing, all-powerful control. This chapter will explore how the frontier's threats and barriers to expansion were overcome by making familiar the unknowns of the frontier through the creation and retelling of a nationalistic narrative of a legendary journey to the North American interior. The subject of the narrative, Prince Madoc of Wales, and his achievements in North America in the twelfth century give eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans a figure through whom they have an age-old bond to the frontier and a current cultural presence on the frontier.

The legend maintains that in the year 1170 AD, Madoc, the youngest son of Welsh ruler Owain Gwynnedd, left his homeland to escape the feuding of his power-hungry brothers after the death of their father. Madoc sailed west from Wales across the great ocean until he reached what is now known as North America. Finding there fertile soil and a region promising for settlement, he sailed back to Wales, enthusiastically told his friends and family of his discovery, and, along with a significant number of these

people, returned over the ocean to his New World. There they established a community and drifted out of history.

Although Madoc and his followers drifted out of history, however, they maintained a powerful hold over the imaginations of many Anglo-Americans during the eighteenth century and beyond. This chapter attempts to trace the appearances of Prince Madoc in literature written in America during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, years during which knowledge about areas to the west of Anglo-American settlements increased rapidly as more and more white explorers penetrated deeper and deeper into the interior of the North American continent. It attempts to answer the questions: Why has the seemingly impossible to prove tale of a Welshman's discovery of America in 1170 maintained a continual presence in American folklore? What is it specifically about the supposed discovery of white, Welsh-speaking Indians far out on the frontier that captured the imagination of so many Americans? And, finally, what are the implications of the appearances in literature of Madoc and his descendants? First, this chapter will examine how figure of Madoc is presented in an anonymous poem from 1734, which communicates not only how the author pictures Madoc's conquest of the continent, but how the author thinks eighteenth century British Americans should engage in colonization projects. Moving on from Madoc himself, the chapter will then study how numerous texts treat the legendary existence of Madoc's descendants, who came to be distinguished by either speaking Welsh or being of a whiter skin hue than other Indians.

Analyzing these numerous instances of the Madoc legend in different types of early American writings reveals that Madoc provided for writers the means to legitimize

empire by using the legend to imagine a past that points to the successful colonization of North America by England or, later, to the successful national expansion of the United States into the trans-Appalachian west. Thus, the presence of Madoc or of the Madoc Indians beyond the frontier becomes a marker or indicator for Anglo-Americans of their own connection to lands beyond the frontier. Such a marker, such a deep connection to the land virtually beckons Anglo-Americans to continue to move further westward.

Michael Warner writes that "cultural historians have a long-standing fondness for themes of wilderness, land, nature, settlement, and civilization in early Anglo-America. How would these themes be transformed if viewed as part of a complex but in important ways colonialist process of territorialization?" (55). He specifically challenges scholars to ask this question of, among other topics, "the informational use of travel [that] organizes so many colonial texts" (56). Accounts of Madoc's American landfalls provide an occasion for scholars to do as Warner challenges, to re-think early American accounts of the travels of an American explorer in light of their roles as models for and commentaries on the process of British and U.S. territorialization of North America, or of Anglo-America's geographical expansion into the North American continent and the establishment of Anglo-American cultural hegemony therein. The Madoc legend and the legend of the Welsh Indians into which it evolved allow for this because of the centrality of territorialization to the tale. Furthermore, in these texts travel into the unknown creates the possibility for the Madoc figure or the figure of the Welsh Indian to exist, either through the frontier travels of a travel writer

who, in some form, encounters the legend or through an author's imagined adventurous travels of Madoc.

Lacking hard facts about a figure who supposedly flourished somewhere out in the vast American wilderness gives writers the occasion to create a cultural history of the land and of Anglo-American presence on that land. In fact, the very mobility of the Madoc figure proves to be its greatest asset, for writers in different eras can imagine the Welshman and his progeny to have journeyed to any part of the continent's interior and to have had any kind of adventures on this journey. Since, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, only travelers to western regions, a small population, can claim first-hand knowledge about Madoc's descendants, the mobility of the travel writer also plays a central role in the evolution and perpetuation of the legend. Frontier travel gives the travel writer the authority to present the facts of Madoc as he has discovered them during his journey and to opine about the significance of his findings. The fluid nature of the legend allows it to take various forms and for various aspects of the legend to receive attention. For example, some Madoc texts stress racial purity while others rely for validity on the racial intermixing of Madoc's followers with Native Americans. Some texts do not mention skin color, but instead use language as the feature that identifies Madoc's descendants. The Madoc legend, then, is highly transformative, offering numerous ways to validate it as true and offering nationalist-minded writers a myriad of ways to promote empire expansion.

In actuality, little is known of Madoc, as these different and variable components of the legend suggest. Through written records, scholars can be fairly sure of his existence towards the end of the twelfth century, but no indisputable facts exist to

prove as true or false the legend of his voyage to North America. As Robert R. Rea writes, "the existence of a seagoing Madoc may be accepted without undue strain, but his successful and repeated crossings of the Atlantic are quite another matter" (15). Nevertheless, the inability to disprove Madoc's voyages has surely helped the legend to endure through the years. Furthermore, even if he really did make the transatlantic journey to America twice, no concrete evidence exists to reveal what became of Madoc and his settlers once there, only vague clues about white Indians shrouded in centuries of folklore and second-hand accounts of encounters with the descendents of Madoc's people.

Nonetheless, in the late sixteenth-century, Madoc's discovery of America was presented to Queen Elizabeth as a rationalization for colonizing Spanish-claimed lands in America, for Madoc's Atlantic crossing pre-dated Columbus's by 300 years; thus, the Spanish claim to the Americas actually belonged to Britain. In 1583, Sir George Peckham posited that

> it is very evident that the planting there [America] shall in time amplie enlarge her Majesties Territories and Dominions (or I might rather say) restore her to her Highnesse auncient right and interest in those Countries, into the which a noble and woorthy personage, lyneally descended from the blood royall, borne in *Wales*, named *Madocke ap Owen Gwyneth*, departing from the coast of *England*, about the yeere of our Lord God 1170 arrived and there planted himselfe, and his Colonies. (n. pag.)

For Peckham, Prince Madoc becomes evidence to be used against a Spanish presence in the Americas, a project that had long occupied the minds of colonization-minded Englishmen. Madoc, then, becomes another prong of this attack against Spain, one alongside the idea of the Black Legend, a stereotype of the Spanish as devious, wicked, tortuous, and unusually cruel that grew out of Protestant Europe's retelling of the Spanish Inquisition. The same evil, bloody means used by Catholic Spain to slaughter thousands upon thousands of innocents for religious dissent was transplanted to the Americas where Indians were murdered ruthlessly by merciless, papist Spanish conquistadors.

The translation of Bartolomé de las Casas's 1552 text, *Brevissima relación de la destruycion de las Indias*, or, *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, into English popularized in England the myth of the Black Legend's cruelties in the Americas. Himself a Spanish priest who, at several different times, lived in the Americas, de las Casas had witnessed firsthand how the Spanish treated the Indians, and in his text he condemns the treatment and calls for reform. Protestant England used de las Casas to vilify powerful Catholic Spain, its chief rival. Texts such as Walter Ralegh's *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Beautiful Empyre of Guiana* (1596) and William Davenant's masque, *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658), exemplify that English writers were quick to promote the Black Legend in order to denigrate Spain's efforts in the New World. Ralegh, whose *Discoverie* aims to promote English colonization and investment projects in Spanish-claimed American lands, provides a representative example of how the Black Legend was included in literature of the Americas. Soon after he reaches South America in 1595, he describes how

> every night there came some [Indians] with most lamentable complaints of his [Spanish governor Don Berreo] cruelty, how he had devided the Iland & given to every soldier a part, that he made the ancient *Casiqui* which were Lordes of the country to be their slaves, that he kept them in chains, & dropped their naked bodies with burning bacon, & such other torments, which I found afterwards to be true. (133)

Accounts such as this spread word of Spanish "tyrannie and oppression" (134) throughout England as the Black Legend became the standard and accepted narrative of Spanish efforts in the Americas.

The Madoc legend enters the contest for control of the New World with the same potency as does the Black Legend but with a very different undertone. If the Black Legend works against Spain because of the immoral actions of the Spanish conquistadors, then the Madoc Legend works for England because of the admirable achievement of a Welshman. The implications of both, however, are the same: England should be the premiere power in the Americas instead of Spain. Following Peckham's lead, heroization of Madoc and the presentation of his travels as factual continued during the English Renaissance as his adventures found a home in the travel narrative collections of Richard Hakluyt (1589) and Samuel Purchas (1625-6), in Captain John Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* (1624), and in Thomas Herbert's 1634 account of his travels in Asia and Africa.

Hakluyt, who reprints an account of Madoc found in David Powel's 1584 *Historie of Cambria*, furthers the prior claim to North America over Spain, determining that the region where Madoc made his landfall "must needs be some part of that

Countrey of which the Spanyards affirme themselves to be the first finders since Hannos time. Whereupon it is manifest that that countrey was by Britaines discovered, long before Columbus led any Spanyards thither" (134). Proof of Madoc's discovery rests not only on legend or old manuscripts but on the contemporary evidence of New World Indians' familiarity with the symbol of the cross, as given by a Spanish explorer. "It appeareth by Francis Lopez de Gomara," Hakluyt states, "that in Acuzamil and other place [in the Americas] the people honored the crosse. Wherby it may be gathered that Christians had bene there before the comming of the Spanyards" (134). Madoc's legacy, according to Hakluyt, is not only his predating of Columbus but his successful efforts to spread Christianity to the peoples he encountered in his new home. Hakluyt's inclusion of Madoc reveals just how compelling a figure the Welshman was for the English, how readily Madoc could be used to justify and promote empire. The Madoc legend focuses the gaze of the English nation on a centuries-old past that seemingly speaks to its current efforts to expand and augment itself through discovery and colonization.

Far from slipping into utter obscurity in the centuries that followed, the Madoc legend has enjoyed a following into the twenty-first century. Making available the Madoc story and the supporting evidence of the Welshman's voyage, the website Madoc1170.com promotes the Madoc story as highly probable and acts as the home and organizer of an ongoing general discussion about the legend. "I am between 80% and 90% certain that the legend is based on fact," the website author, Howard Kimberley, writes. "I am not guaranteeing that it is true but an 85% probability is a good basis for further research." Of particular interest to Kimberley is research involving DNA comparisons between twelfth century remains of bodies from Madoc's home region in

Wales and those of Madoc's settlers, assuming they can be located. To find corpses for this project, Madoc1170.com defers to Charles Boland, another twentieth century proponent of the Madoc legend, who calls for the excavation of Sand Island, in present-day Louisville, Kentucky, in hopes of unearthing the remains of the Madoc colonizers slain there at the battle of the Falls of the Ohio by Native Americans, one of the various stories that came to be associated with the legend. Boland, in a tone similar to that expressed by Madoc1170.com, declares that "Sand Island still rises from the bed of the Ohio, its wooded acres amenable to a dig, should any be interested. Chance may yet resurrect the Welshmen who fell in the bloody slaughter of Sand Island" (300). Along with such scientifically-inspired propositions, a lively discussion board, and the online vending of wool sweaters and hand-crafted lead crystal goblets and tumblers emblazoned with the Madoc1170.com logo, the website clearly articulates its raison d'être, one reminiscent of the sixteenth century Madoc-based rationalization for New World colonization:

> The opportunity of establishing the Welsh as the first proven European-Americans will give Welsh-Americans of today the unique opportunity to identify with their Welsh Ancestors. The implications of promoting the fact, via a major feature film, that a group of peace-loving Welsh men and women settled in America over three hundred years before Columbus, will raise the profile of Wales considerably, particularly in the United States of America and Canada.

This statement of purpose demonstrates the nationalistic uses that the legend of Prince Madoc of Wales and his landfall in North America has provided for writers and

antiquarians for many years. The Madoc legend provides the opportunity to envision a desired past and to establish a connection to that past. Such envisioning points to a larger need for nations to legitimize empire, in this case through ancestral links to the colonized region. For example, Madoc's pre-dating of Columbus gives those like Kimberley and George Peckham who claim some connection to Madoc a more legitimate claim to America than that of the Spanish. In this way Madoc is used as a means for geographical expansion. In other ways, such as Kimberley's hopes of a Madoc movie that will spread an idealized Welsh culture to the U.S. and Canada, Madoc is used as a means for cultural expansion. To these ends, renderings of the legend perennially assume certain desired character traits for Madoc and his progeny. For Kimberley, Madoc is "peace-loving;" in other texts, he violent and conquering. These varying and sometimes contradictory traits, as is sometimes the case with writings about historical figures, reveal far more about the author and the time and place in which the author was writing than they do about the bygone subject. Indeed, for Howard Kimberley, for George Peckham, and for numerous writers who lived during the four-hundred-year interval between them, the value of the Madoc legend is the fact that the Welshman can be molded to fit the different needs of different authors. In essence, because so little is known about Madoc, the elements that an author adds to the story can clue an audience into what issues concern the author, for these are the issues that he or she addresses through a retelling of the Madoc story.

The trope of frontier travel does more than simply permit this nationalist figure to exist. Frontier travel narratives that refer to white, Welsh-speaking Indians residing somewhere out in America's west establish these descendants of Madoc as frontier

markers in the sense that Jonathan Culler speaks of markers. Part of the complex process of the demarcation of boundaries by the voyager includes the establishment of boundary markers, some indication that he or she has passed from an encounter with one type of people to the next or from one place or type of place to another. Culler articulates this idea of the marker in regards to tourist sites. "A marker," he states, "is any kind of information or representation that constitutes a sight as a sight: by giving information about it, representing it, making it recognizable" (159). In other words, touristic markers delineate a tourist site as such. Culler examines travel associated with modern-day forms of tourism, in which touristic markers like little plastic replicas of the St. Louis Arch, postcards of the Grand Canyon, and the inclusion of Gettysburg National Battlefield in travel guides all define the St. Louis Arch, the Grand Canyon, and Gettysburg as places for tourists to visit. Furthermore, before, during, and after the tourist's visit, his or her perception of a tourist site is influenced by literature, images, souvenirs, welcome centers, and any other sources of information about the site. The frontier travel narratives included in this study engage in a similar process of demarcation. Boundary markers on the frontier can be physical features of the land, man-made signs indicating a boundary line, or people themselves, their physical features, beliefs, practices, or languages, anything that may denote them as what they are uniquely and, normally, as how they are different from the traveler who encounters them. For readers of the narrative and for future travelers to the frontier, markers indicate, describe, name, and judge people, places, and the boundaries between them. Madoc and later generations of his offspring act as markers of Anglo-Americans' supposed connection to the American interior; they act as markers of a frontier to which

Anglo-Americans can perceive a bond. This perception occurs by viewing the unknowns of the west through the Madoc markers instituted by written texts and oral folktales. In other words, the Madoc Indians act for Queen Elizabeth, white British-American colonists, and white U.S. citizens as markers on the frontier of their entitlement to the continent.

An example of Prince Madoc denoting Anglo-America's entitlement to the North American continent occurs in a 1734 poem from the Philadelphia-based *American Weekly Mercury* titled "Upon Prince *Madoc's* Expedition to the Country now called *America*, in the 12th Century."[7] The poem depicts Madoc's feat as the primeval American journey, or the journey that put into motion the British territorialization of the continent, or that put into motion Britain's successful geographical expansion into North America and establishment of British cultural hegemony therein. More than initiating the colonization and westernization of the New World by one trailblazing Briton, the poem presents Madoc's journey as primeval in that the journey is the root of British-American identity; the qualities exhibited by Madoc during his journey and his accomplishments in America are elemental to the value system and character traits of eighteenth century British colonists in America. Furthermore, a close look at the poem displays how history, desire, and memory are intertwined and how this intertwining is used for nationalist purposes.

"Upon Prince *Madoc's* Expedition" lauds the Welshman's achievement as a foundational moment in the history of the world. The poem, in fact, compares Madoc to

[7] Signed with the pseudonym, Philo Cambrensis, "Upon Prince *Madoc's* Expedition" is a poem of debated authorship. Richard Lewis (c. 1700-1734) of Maryland is a probable candidate for authorship.

classical heroes, finding his journey superior to that of Odysseus and Aeneas. "Were *Homer* now alive to hear of this," the poet writes,

> He'd write his *Madock*s, burn his *Odysse*s.
> Could *Virgil* live his *Ænead*s he'd surpess,
> And *Madoc*'s Prowess in *Heroics* dress.
> Had we a *Miltons* Genius to rehearse
> Great *Madoc*'s mighty Deeds in *English* Verse;
> *The new-gain'd World* would be a proper Thing,
> To add to what that *PRINCE of BARDS did sing*. (83-90)

Madoc's voyage is then paralleled with Noah's. J. A. Leo Lemay finds the poem's uses of ancient heroes important because "they mark an early identification of American explorers and frontiersmen with the mythic heroes of the old world" (176). Madoc, in other words, is to British-American identity and culture what Odysseus is to Greek identity and culture. The poem's use of these foundational narratives—those of Odysseus, Aeneas, Noah, and Milton's Adam and Eve—positions the story of Madoc as central to the identity of British Americans. Just as these other adventurers carried with them the germ of their civilizations, so too did Madoc carry with him across the Atlantic the germ of British civilization in the Americas. In this way does the poem imagine Madoc's voyage as the primeval American journey, for imbedded in the poem is the present and future plan for and the history thus far of the British territorialization of America. In other words, using the Madoc story, the poem presents the strategy for British advancement into the interior of the continent: Madoc's strategy. The Madoc story also presents a record of how that strategy has been followed successfully in the

past by Madoc and his followers. Using Madoc as a model, eighteenth century British colonials enjoy similar successes in their efforts to settle in the interior of the continent.

Edward Said theorizes "that the reason for the enduring attractiveness of legends like those of Hercules is that, in dealing with a distant past, the mind prefers contemplating a strong seminal figure to sifting through reams of explanation" (32). Madoc provides just such a figure. The poet associates the daring Welshman with these other seminal characters, and the simplicity of the Madoc legend in justifying and organizing British activity in North America becomes far more attractive and easier to contemplate than the realities of the process of colonization or the political complexities of how and why different European nations are engaging in the colonization of North America. Through the pen of the poet, Madoc adheres to Wayne Franklin's proposition that "almost everything which the explorer sees in the New World enters his text as a sign of this larger process [of settlement], a token of the grand symbolic scheme" (82). In circular fashion, as a larger-than-life seminal figure, Madoc is able to take the untamed interior of the continent and transform it into an area primed for British settlement. And the poet's ability to correlate Madoc with this grand symbolic scheme of British settlement, as Franklin puts it, becomes the foremost reason for Madoc's status as a seminal figure, as Said discusses. Prince Madoc gives the poet an ideal archetype to use to promote deeper Anglo expansion into America.

An aspect of the ideal nature of Madoc as an archetype is that his discovery is not an instance of mere luck or chance; the moment of Madoc's landfall in North America, of the starting point in the history of the British in America, is of divine ordinance. The poem states "That *GOD* ne'er brings to pass such Things for naught"

(100) and that its audience should “conclude that *Madoc* acted thus, / For some great Ends of *GOD* unknown to us” (103-4). These ends, the poem supposes, are,

> by the help of this *old British Nation*,
>
> To shew the Salvages the *Lords Salvation*;
>
> And by their *BRAVE* Assistance to augment
>
> The *ENGLISH EMPIRE* with this Continent. (111-4)

World history is utilized here by the poet to craft a justifiable and righteous history of British colonial activity in America, for this history is the spread of Christianity and of western culture as ordained by God.

An important aspect of the elementary nature of this divinely-inspired achievement is the numerous firsts that the poem mentions. Madoc was first European to view the Americas and to struggle against the Indians and the American wilderness. He was the first to demonstrate that the world was round, which he did without the aid of the compass, and he was the first to traverse the Atlantic. It was Madoc

> Who first this unknown *Indian* World survey’d,
>
> Repas’d, return’d, and conquer’d, undismay’d;
>
> Defied the Terrors of the stormy Flood,
>
> And fought his Way *thro’ Swamps of Savage Blood*;
>
> When fixt his People in the promis’d Land,
>
> As *Israels* Sons were led by *Joshua*’s Hand.
>
> Above Confinement in the Worlds old Bound,
>
> New Realms he sought, and what he sought he found.
>
> No common Rule could satiate his Soul,

(A Soul by Nature fram'd above controul)

But with the Sun he round the Ocean hurl'd,

And to himself engross'd a new-*found*-*World*:

Yet this without the *Magnet*'s Help he did,

When Arts in Vice and Ignorance were hid.

Without, distress'd by conq'ring *Henry*'s Wars,

At Home forsaken by fraternal Jars,

He thought, (which would have *Archimedes* crown'd)

But he both thought, and prov'd, *The World was round*. (27-44)

Here the poem denotes the monumental significance of Madoc's feat. Jill Lepore, in her examination of King Philip's War, argues that "wounds and words—the injuries and their interpretation—cannot be separated, that acts of war generate acts of narration, and that both types of acts are often joined in a common purpose: defining the geographical, political, cultural, and sometimes racial and national boundaries between peoples" (x). The supposed military triumphs of Madoc and his settlers and the writing of these triumphs in the poem fall into the tradition that Lepore describes. The boundaries set here are not only between Madoc's people and the Native Americans but between Madoc—and by extension Britain—and Spain. The physical defeat of the Indians and the physical attainment of the Americas before Colombus place these boundaries between Madoc and these foes and invites eighteenth century British Americans into Madoc's victories over both. And so it should, for this is the true discovery and conquering of America—Madoc's discovery, not Columbus's, a New World discoverer

of British lineage and not Spanish. All the celebrations of Columbus should be re-directed to Madoc, for

> *HE* th' *Herculian* Pillars *first* remov'd,
>
> Which to the *REST* too hard a Task had prov'd;
>
> And then by Means *peculiarly his own*,
>
> Shot the *Atlantick* Gulphs and *Storm'd* Renown; (77-80)

Celebratory in tone, the poem uses Madoc to claim for Britain the status held by Spain through Columbus. That is, the poem imagines an idealized British discoverer of America who, as part of God's omniscient plan, initiated the Christianizing and civilizing of its indigenous peoples and initiated the British activities within its bounds. By predating Columbus, Madoc offers not only a corrective to the issue of who first discovered America but also a corrective to the foul conquest of South America by Spain. Columbus's landfall initiates the Black Legend; Madoc's landfall initiates a laudable colonization effort.

Using an early colonizer with no connection to the Spanish conquistadors allows the Madoc poet to re-imagine how Europeans, and the British in particular, established a presence in the Americas. Significantly, though, Madoc's actions as described in the poem closely resemble those of the cruel and infamous conquistadors like Cortez, de Soto, and Pizarro. In fact, a closer look at this seeming contradiction may provide insight into exactly what kind of colonization that the poem calls for, what the colonization of America in the eighteenth-century should look like, for the qualities of conquest and colonization that the Madoc poet chooses to omit or imitate reveal how he envisions conquest and colonization by the British happening. Mimicking the Spanish

but refusing to condemn the action when performed by someone other than a Spaniard shows that the poet is calling for a conquest of North America similar to Spain's American conquest but, because the British and not the Spanish would be conquering North America, the violent conquest would be free of the condemnation directed towards the Black Legend of the Spanish conquest. Just as Robert Rogers, in the first chapter of this dissertation, is able to make a distinction between similar acts of violence based solely on who performs the action, so too is the Madoc poet able to use his nationalistic coloured glasses to neatly overlook this seeming contradiction. Simply put, from the poet's perspective, Madoc is on the right side and the Spanish and Indians on the wrong side of the conflict; thus, such distinctions are easily made.

Upon Madoc's arrival in America, the poem depicts him conquering the Indian world and fighting his way through swamps of savage blood (28-30); the poem also states that America would be for Madoc

> Where he might Barb'rous Nations overcome,
> And by his Sword obtain a *Better Home*;
> Where he with Conquests might his Valour fill,
> And found an Empire spacious as his Will. (47-50)

If the poem is at least in part an effort to set up a non-Spanish discoverer of the New World, then it seems somewhat odd to use language to describe this discoverer that would be appropriate to describe the Spanish conquistadors, from whom British explorers tried for centuries to distinguish themselves. Madoc's conquests in the poem, though, are not only over Native Americans but also over Caesar, whom the author pictures falling to Madoc in defeat if Madoc had been alive to oppose Caesar's conquest

of Britain. "Had *Madoc* reign'd," the poet supposes, "when *Cæsar* first came o're, / And pitch'd his Standard on the *British* Shore, / *Britain* by *Rome* had (doubtless) ne'er been gain'd" (7-9). Again, nothing is known of Madoc's actions once he arrived in America with his settlers, and besides his desire to leave Wales to avoid the civil wars between his brothers, nothing is known of Madoc's actions prior to his Atlantic crossing. Writing these acts makes them into a reality on which the poem can then comment. In this, the poem conforms to Richard Slotkin's theory that "the first colonists saw in America an opportunity to regenerate their fortunes, their spirits, and the power of their church and nation; but the means to that regeneration ultimately became the means of violence, and the myth of regeneration through violence became the structuring metaphor of the American experience" (5). Battles in the poem are fought by Madoc's colonizers to establish themselves in their newly found land, and, as Lepore describes, the account of these battles in the poem works for the same ends of establishing geographical, political, cultural, racial, and national boundaries. Employing Madoc gives the poet a boundary-marking proxy, one that successfully set up these various boundaries through bloodshed centuries earlier; all that is left for the poet is to write all of this into being and, at the same time, to appeal to what has been written into reality as facts suitable for instruction to the poet's contemporaries about colonizing procedures and expectations.

So, regarding these military achievements, exactly what conquests by Madoc does the poem celebrate? Is the discovery itself to be thought of as synonymous with conquest? Apparently so. The fact that Madoc's bravery and genius got his settlement to America is enough to imply a thorough and successful conquest of the continent. Thus,

in the poem, Madoc's conquest of and conquests in America are purely fictionalized and imagined. Nevertheless, this is the British-American hero that the poem presents as a rival to classical heroes and as superior to Columbus. Like the Black Legend, the Madoc legend as presented by the poem takes fact (albeit an assumed fact) and turns it into a narrative told by a culture to itself to justify its own ambitions and needs. Madoc is the British-American explorer-hero whose foundational journey to America marks the beginning of Britain's glorious achievements in the New World. His act of colonizing, of merely getting to North America, implies military victories once there. With no proof or even hints that Madoc's was a violent colonization, the poem assumes that it was so. Thus, despite long-standing desires to distinguish and distance British colonization projects of America from the Black Legend of Spanish colonization, the model of colonization imagined by and prescribed for the eighteenth century the poem is one of assumed violence. As a culture's story for itself, though, the heroic, laudable, and nationalistic aspects of the Madoc legend give it its significance in the same way that the brutality and sinfulness of the Black Legend give it its significance for the British.

The model is also one based on racial purity and cultural integrity. The poem sets up a hero-figure for the British, and a connection between Madoc and eighteenth-century colonial Britons is implied when the poem posits that Madoc's role in the Americas, as intended by God, is to convert the savages and with their help "augment / the *ENGLISH EMPIRE* with this continent," as discussed previously. The linkage inferred by the poem is one based on race and culture. When wondering why and how the Madoc settlement has been undiscovered by contemporary Britons in America, the poet writes:

> Why *Britons*, thus transported, were conceal'd;
>
> Why still preserv'd unmixt, is not reveal'd;
>
> But Time (perhaps) the Cause hereof will show,
>
> Which now th' *Omniscient Powr's* alone do know. (95-8)

The importance of the inclusion here of the word "unmixd" cannot be understated. The poet indicates that Madoc's settlers and their progeny have for over five hundred years refrained from intermarrying with Native American peoples and have maintained complete cultural and racial integrity, an unlikely scenario at best. Just as Madoc's conquests in the continent are purely imagined, so too is the racial purity of the Madoc colony purely imagined. Here, as guardian of boundaries between civilized and savage, the Madoc figure excludes entirely any cultural intermingling. In addition, Madoc's mediation between foreign and familiar, exists as the model for the British in eighteenth-century America. Even beyond the margins, beyond the known world, where the Madoc colony has existed for so long, racial and cultural purity is maintained. Surely, the poem implies, the eighteenth-century British colonies can maintain the same racial and cultural purity as they expand further and further into the American continent.

The poem reveals, as Neil Rennie writes in his discussion of the European search for Paradise in the South Seas, "the desire of men to locate the imaginary historical past in the real geographical present" (6). That is, the poet uses the actual, mysterious American frontier as a remote arena where a nationalist possibility is played out by Madoc. Locating the imagined conquest of Madoc in the interior of the continent, still an immeasurable unknown area to British colonists of the 1730s, allows the poet to make a claim for Britain to that interior based on Madoc's accomplishments

and on Madoc's tie to eighteenth century British colonists. The America in the poem is one with which the British colonists have a profound connection based across vast time and space, yet this connection still continues, and through this connection lays the promise further successful British colonization of the continent.

Madoc's crossing as the primeval American journey, as that journey that put into motion the westernizing of the continent and the British territorialization of the continent, is a journey imagined, for no hard facts exist about the journey. Yet the type of hero described in the poem must be imagined, for it is in the reshaping and rewriting of his exploits that he possesses relevancy for the poem's audience. Lepore indicates that the continual retelling of an event becomes far more powerful and influential in the long run than the event itself. As an imagined foundation for British activity in the Americas, Madoc takes on the desired traits imagined by the poet. In this case, the journey is imagined by the Madoc poet as racially charged and violent—it must be, according to Slotkin, if it is to regenerate British culture in America. Indeed, as important as the discovery of America and the successful planting of a settlement there is the successful propagation of racial purity and the implicit use of violence to ensure this propagation. These vital features of Madoc's colonization become vital to his primeval journey, and as such racial purity and violence become vital to Britain's primeval roots in America. The poem submits that these qualities are central to British identity and to British territorialization. In so doing, "Upon Prince *Madoc's* Expedition" displays how history and memory are created and revised and how in this invented form they are used for nationalist purposes.

Racial purity also plays a key element in the story of a missionary named Morgan Jones published in the March, 1740 edition of London's *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Penned by the eighteenth century chronicler of Welsh history, Theophilus Evans, this rendition of the Madoc story describes the capture in 1660 of Morgan Jones by the Tuscorara Indians in the wilderness of what became South Carolina during his missionary journey there, a story based in fact, though it remains unclear exactly how much liberty Evans took with the tale. The Morgan Jones story provides an important step in the development of the Madoc legend, for not Madoc himself but his descendants play a key role in the tale. This is an example of the malleable nature of the Madoc legend, for it keeps its relevancy through its ability to be told and retold in different forms. The 1734 poem details a violent conquering of a continent, while Evans's story of Morgan Jones details the captivity of a chaplain by Indians who turn out to be the descendants of Madoc. The violence that the Madoc of the poem enacts against Native Americans is, in the Evans story, directed by Native Americans towards the white chaplain in the form of captivity and nearly execution. The two renditions of the Madoc legend are set during vastly different time frames of the legend—the poem occurs when Madoc makes his landfall and must create a space in the country to live; the Evans story occurs centuries later when the presence in the country of the descendants of Madoc and his followers has long been firmly established. Despite the sharp differences in these two Madoc texts, in both the legend promotes nationalism and legitimizes westward expansion.

In Evans's rendition of the Morgan Jones story, the Tuscoraras, angered because the chaplain Jones intended to visit a rival tribe, according to Evans's transcription of a letter he claims was written by Jones,

> Enter'd into a Consultation about us; which after it was over, their Interpreter told us, that we must prepare ourselves to die next Morning. Whereupon being very much dejected, and speaking to this Effect in the *British* Tongue, "Have I escaped so many Dangers, and must I now be knocked on the Head like a Dog?" Then presently an *Indian* came to me, which afterwards appear'd to be a War-Captain belonging to the *Sachim* of the *Doegs* (whose Original I find must needs be from the Old *Britons*) and took me up by the Middle, and told me in the *British* Tongue, *I should not die*: And thereupon went to the Emperor of *Tuscorara*, and agreed for my Ransom and the Men that were with me. (104)

Violence is averted through the linguistic bond that the two parties discover they share. Henceforth, Jones and company are treated well by the Tuscoraras and stay with them for four months "during which Time," Jones states, "I had the Opportunity of conversing with them familiarly in the *British* Language; and *did preach to them three Times a Week in the same Language*" (104). Jones concludes by declaring, "I am ready to conduct any *Welshman* or others to the Country" (104). Evans then points out that Jones was unaware of the Madoc story and gives a synopsis of that story in which he disputes the notion that the Madoc settlers intermarried with Native Americans. Proof "that they are still a Colony or People unmixed" (105) rests in the fact that their language, the British tongue that they would have spoken in twelfth century Wales, has

remained unchanged and uninfluenced by the language of any Native Americans to the point that Jones can converse with them and preach to them without confusion or misunderstanding. The article comes to a close with Evans rehearsing the contention that England has a more legitimate claim to the Americas than Spain because Madoc predates Columbus, a fact supported by the Morgan Jones story.

Morgan Jones's foray into Indian territory sets up for Anglo-Americans the presence of the Welsh Indians as what David Lowenthal terms a "ruin metaphor." Of the new nation's desire for a distinct history of itself, Lowenthal writes: "One cause of ambivalence toward the past was the paucity of its tangible remains in America," Lowenthal states, "If Europe's ruins spelled depravity by contrast with the purity of American nature, the same ruins helped make American nature familiarly endearing. The landforms of the American West became ruin metaphors" (114). The Welsh Indians of the Morgan Jones tale act as ruin metaphors because, as descendants of Prince Madoc, they provide a human history to the vast frontiers of the American west. Welsh Indians verify the legitimacy of the legend, and they act as tangible remains of Anglo-Americans' past. That they are, Evans declares, "still a distinct People, and retain their originall Language, is a Matter of Fact, which may be indisputably proved, by the concurrent Account of several Writers and Travellers," including Morgan Jones (104). Again, the history of Madoc in America is a history to which Americans could feel linked by blood and by culture, and Morgan Jones provides this link through his first-hand encounter with the Welsh Indians. In this encounter, Jones functions metaphorically as an archeologist or historian picking through the ancient ruins of his

nation in an effort to define its identity by discovering and explaining its past. Evans uses the ancient history of America's western frontier to formulate a desired past.

In the decades following its publication in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, the basic structure of Evans's account of Morgan Jones, in which an Anglo-American ventures into the wilderness and unexpectedly encounters the descendents of Prince Madoc's people and then relates that experience to whomever writes it down, became the foundation of popular folktales in America. These descendants either speak Welsh, as in Evans's Morgan Jones tale, or they are of much whiter complexion than all other American Indians, or they have a combination of both distinguishing traits. Charles Beatty's *Journal of a Two Months Tour*, published in 1768, recounts conversations the author had during his excursion in the Pennsylvania backcountry with several men who separately came across the Welsh Indians on the west side of the Mississippi River. Beatty's Indian interpreter, who knew some Welsh people and hence some Welsh words, had met a tribe of Indians who spoke Welsh, as had another man, Levi Hicks, whom Beatty met on his journey. Benjamin Sutton tells Beatty that he had encountered a tribe of Indians that not only spoke Welsh but possessed an ancient Welsh Bible and "were of different complexions, not so tawny as those of the other *Indians*" (n. 24). Likewise, John Filson, in his 1784 *Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke*, as he describes the Indian tribes in America and their origins, writes that "the Western settlers have received frequent accounts of a nation, inhabiting at a great distance up the Missouri, in manners and appearance resembling the other Indians, but speaking Welsh, and retaining some ceremonies of the christian worship" (96). Filson proceeds to briefly relate the experience of Captain Abraham Chaplain from Kentucky from whom Filson

claims to have received the tale first-hand. During the Revolutionary War, Chaplain "being with his company in garrison at Kaskasky, some Indians came there, and, speaking in the Welsh dialect, were perfectly understood and conversed with by two Welshmen in his company" (96). The Welsh-speaking Indians further told Chaplain's men the history of Madoc, the founder of their nation.

Indeed, the popularity of this story abounds during this era. Jonathan Carver, in his ground-breaking narrative of his search for the Northwest Passage and exploration of the Great Lakes region in the 1760s, hears of the white Indians not in a tavern but from Native Americans. "A little to the north-west of the heads of the Messorie and the St. Pierre," Carver states, "the Indians further told me that there was a nation rather smaller and whiter than the neighbouring tribes who cultivate the ground and (as far as I could gather from their expressions) in some measure, the arts" (98). Regarding the perennial occurrence of encounters with the Madoc Indians, Madoc scholar Gwynn Williams writes that "by the 1780s a veritable tidal wave of Welsh Indian stories was breaking on English-speaking America. … Welsh Indians had become a staple of tavern talk by this time in Kentucky and all along the frontier" (83). Travelers' tales of the exotic have always captured an audience's attention, and tales like those by Theophilus Evans or Jonathan Carver definitely contain elements of the exotic. More than mere traveler's tall tales, the legend of the Madoc Indians appealed and continues to appeal to Americans because it imagines the origin of their society. The Morgan Jones-type traveler and Welsh Indian additions to the legend verify Anglo-Americans' desired link to the west by acting for them as signs of themselves on the frontier. The Welsh language and the pale skin become signs in the wild of civilized culture, making the

wild familiar and welcoming to Anglo-Americans. In this way does the Welsh Indian legend work for nationalist purposes, for it removes an amount of uncertainty from the unknowns of the west, making the west more amenable to settlement.

The Morgan Jones narrative makes an appearance in Amos Stoddard's *Sketches of Louisiana*, a chapter of which Stoddard devotes to the Welsh Indians with the aim "to excite a spirit of enquiry" into the topic (488). *Sketches of Louisiana* contains the Jones story as well as a number of other stories that follow the Morgan Jones framework, including that of Charles Beatty. Far from casting doubt upon the Welsh Indian folktale, the profusion of near-identical stories provides Stoddard proof of their existence. "That such discoveries as we have mentioned were actually made," he writes, "seem the more probable, as there is a remarkable coincidence and agreement, between the seveveral [sic] accounts of them" (482). Stoddard further argues that "most of the great events recorded in ancient history, and even those in the history of modern Europe, are supported by evidence much less certain and conclusive" (483). By 1812, when Stoddard published his text, anecdotes of frontier adventurers stumbling upon Welsh speaking Indians had moved beyond the tavern talk that Gwynn Williams mentions and had, at least for Stoddard, become factual reports of a characteristic of the American frontier.

In this way that the legend grew through oral tradition as well as through written accounts, the Welsh Indian legend operates similarly to how Richard Flores, in his study of the cultural meanings of the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas writes that it operates. Flores theorizes that "Myths, and cultural memories more generally, are not stratospheric tales but deeply grounded narratives through which communities express

their heartfelt convictions" (xv). Flores looks at the provable facts about what occurred at the Alamo and at the elements of the story that were added to the legend in years following the battle there. What a culture adds or removes from its formative stories reveals a lot about its values and concerns; it reveals "a society coming to terms with itself in real historical time" (xvi). The Welsh Indian legend works the same way. As popular as the Welsh Indians became in the late eighteenth century, they never held as prominent a place in America's cultural mythology as has the Alamo; nevertheless, as a national narrative the story of Madoc and the Welsh Indians is one that grew in popularity and developed and evolved in ways that reveal how American society was "coming to terms" with its past, its claim to the west, and its relationship to the lands and peoples of the west. The "heartfelt convictions" to which the Welsh Indian stories point involve the ability of a people to retain cultural identity over a considerable span of time while in a wilderness region. Preservation of the Welsh language in unaltered form for five to six hundred years suggests such a preservation of culture, as seen above in Theophilus Evans's account. Importantly, this preservation of language provides a linguistic and cultural bond that leads to friendship and cooperation between the Welsh Indians and the Welsh-speaking frontier traveler, a bond that makes the Welsh Indians open to hearing the preaching of the Gospel, open to establishing trading practices, or, at the very least as is the case with Morgan Jones, open to refraining from executing the captured traveler. In travel narratives of the period, the Welsh Indians function as signs for the traveler of these nationalism-advancing concepts.

John Williams, who, like Stoddard, documents accounts of encounters with Madoc's descendants, provides another example of this type of frontier nationalist

marker. Published in London in 1792, Williams's *Farther Observations*, which contends that the Madoc story is true, presents frontier travel that allows for economic nationalist possibilities. Out on the Welsh Indian-populated frontier that Williams believes to exist, the British have a simultaneously distant yet immediate ethnic and cultural connection through which lines of trade and commerce will be established. Trade routes stretching across the North American continent will greatly augment England's coffers. "It may reasonably be thought," the text states, "that an advantageous commerce might be opened up with that country," the country where the Madoc Indians reside, a country with "many valuable article of trade" (41). Williams surmises that "it is natural to conclude that they [the Madoc Indians] would prefer trading with us, a people living in the country from whence their forefathers came" (41). It is "natural" for Williams to conclude this since a key element of the literary manifestations of the Madoc Indians is the fact that their racial, cultural, and/or linguistic connections to more recent European immigrants to America, like Morgan Jones, is what seals the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two. Thus, Williams correlates the Welsh Indians with the practical issue of necessary contemporary economic growth. Welsh Indians become markers on the frontier not only of a historical connection to that frontier but of an instant profit available there. Frontier travel and the encounter with the Madoc Indians represent to Evans economic possibility.

This reasoning reveals a frontier travel based in the imagination, based in John Williams's personal study of history and readings of frontier travel writings, and based in the notion to rethink national narratives in a way relevant to the times. Williams may

be more mercenary than others who wrote of Madoc and his descendants, but the practice is the same of taking and molding them into a form that benefits the nation and the individual. Again, the value of the Madoc legend rests in its ability to lend itself to this very practice. Continual reuse and rewriting of the Madoc Indians in this manner brings to mind Robert Berkhofer's analysis of how Native Americans have been depicted through the years. Berkhofer writes:

> Although each succeeding generation presumed its imagery [of Indians] based more upon the Native American of observation and report, the Indian of imagination and ideology continued to be derived as much from the polemical and creative needs of Whites as from what they heard and read of actual Native Americans or even at times experienced. (71)

From the 1734 Madoc poet to Theophilus Evans to Amos Stoddard to John Williams, the Madoc legend alters shape based on individual authorial needs, just as Berkhofer surmises. For this reason, if not that of the improbability of the voyage itself, not everyone in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries believed in Madoc's voyage or the Welsh Indians. The historian Jeremy Belknap, for instance, names the standard version of Madoc's discovery of America as presented by Hakluyt "confused and contradictory" (62). In language that echoes Berkhofer, Belknap writes, "National pregudice might prevail even with so honest a writer [as Hakluyt], to convert a Welch fable into a political argument, to support, against a powerful rival [Spain], the claim of his sovereign to the dominion of this continent" (66). Diedrich Knickerbocker, the fictional writer of Washington Irving's sharp-witted *A History of New York*, also finds the Madoc legend improbable. In a chapter of the text in which historians, like John

Williams, and their conclusions about the discovery of America are satirized, Knickerbocker refuses to discuss or consider the likelihood of Madoc's American landfall. He declares:

> Nor shall I investigate the more modern claims of the Welsh, founded on the voyage of Prince Madoc in the eleventh century, who having never returned, it has since been wisely concluded that he must have gone to America, and that for a plain reason—if he did not go there, where else could he have gone?—a question which most socratically shuts out all further dispute. (35)

These problems with the legend, though—the holes in the story, the unlikelihood of a successful transatlantic journey, and the obvious political agendas of Madoc proponents, the dearth of hard proof of Madoc and the Madoc Indians—are what give it its potency, for in these areas of the legend do writers take the most liberty, molding the legend into their individual uses. If all the elements of the story were known and were known to be certain, then the idea of Madoc's Atlantic crossing and the idea of the existence of white, Welsh-speaking Indians beyond the frontier would be unable to possess the possibilities that it does. Writers can fill in the gaps in the story, and the fact that only travel deep into the country's interior that results in an encounter with the Madoc Indians can prove or disprove how a writer chooses to fill in those gaps and make use of the legend. That which is unbelievable to Belknap and Knickerbocker has attracted a large number of writers and historians over many centuries.

When a traveler claims to be relating a tale heard on the journey, the questions of how and why he would believe these stories to be true, or at least how and why he

makes use of them, become important. Even if the author may want for ideological reasons to believe the Madoc legend and so may offer it to the public as fact, he is simply relating a tale heard from someone who heard it from someone else, and so on. However, when an author claims to have first-hand experience with white or Welsh-speaking Indians, when he claims to have seen and heard for himself what the authors reviewed up to this point take as a point of faith, then the questions shift from why an author takes the story to be true to whether or not an author is telling the truth. A central question becomes: what exactly did the author see and hear out on the frontier? George Rogers Clark, members of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and George Catlin all experience first-hand white or Welsh Indians, and all are credible authors. That is, all do good field work and report factual events; these are not men writing exaggerated, adventurous accounts of their journeys in the wilderness. That these travelers could see and hear actual people out in the wild and determine that these people were Madoc's descendants displays just how strong a presence Madoc had in the way Americans understood the westward frontier. These travelers, all of whom were experienced frontier travelers, entered the wilderness knowing that somewhere out there were the Madoc Indians, and they find people out there whom they can fit into that mold. They all view the western areas of the country through their knowledge that somewhere out there were the Madoc Indians, representatives in the wilderness of Anglo-American culture. By documenting their encounters with the Madoc Indians, these travelers substantiate compellingly not only the existence of the legendary tribe but also the existence of the tribe as a nationalist avocation for expansion into and control of the

west. These frontier travelers help institute the Madoc Indians as frontier signs of America's potential for successful settlement and exploitation of western lands.

In his 1791 account of his military victory in Illinois country during the American Revolutionary War, George Rogers Clark mentions a brief encounter with white Indians from "several hundred miles up" the Missouri River who were curious to see "the Big Knives." He writes: "They were somewhat different in their manner and complexion, being much fairer than any other Indians I had ever seen. I suppose it was this that gave rise to the idea of there being Welsh Indians in that quarter" (104). While George Rogers Clark refrains from personally drawing the conclusion that these Indians were Madoc's descendants, he does present the possibility in his text. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition did not have the same reservation about identifying the Welsh Indians. In early September, 1805, several members of the expedition record their friendly interaction with the Flathead, or Salish, Indians in what is now western Montana, near the continental divide. Captain William Clark writes on Thursday, September 5 that the Salish spoke "a gugling kind of languaje Spoken much thro the Throught" (188). Based on this unique linguistic trait, the expedition deduces that these Indians are the descendants of Madoc. John Ordway, a member of the expedition, writes on Wednesday, Spetember 4:

> these natives are well dressed, descent looking Indians. light complectioned. they are dressed in mo Sheep leather Deer & buffalow robes &C. they have the most curious language of any we have Seen before. they talk as though they lisped or have a bur on their tongue. we

> Suppose that they are the welch Indians if there is any Such from the language. (218)

In his journal entry for Friday, September 6, 1805, Joseph Whitehouse concurs, stating, "we take these Savages to be the Welch Indians if their be any Such from the Language. So Capt. Lewis took down the Names of everry thing in their Language, in order that it may be found out whether they are or whether they Sprang or origenated first from the welch or not" (303). Seven months later Whitehouse reconsiders his conclusion regarding the Salish being the Welsh Indians when a guide tells the company of a tribe of Indians whose skin is white. Apparently skin color trumps language, for Whitehouse decides that these Indians, whom no member of the expedition ever sees, and not the Salish are the Welsh Indians (439). Different tribes are thus identified at different times by these respected frontiersmen as being the Madoc Indians. The national mythology of the Welsh Indians comes to a stage in its development when it begins to meet head-on reality in the form of frontier travels that are based in actual happenings in the real world and not in legendary and fictional frontier travels. At this point, encountering the Madoc Indians starts to lose its mystery and fantastic elements. Instead of revelations of a common language that create excitement and promises of future cooperative efforts between the traveler and the Indians, there is George Rogers Clark briefly mentioning that some people take these Indians to be Madoc's descendants; there is Meriwether Lewis trying to jot down words that nobody understands that sound guttural and therefore possibly Welsh; and there is Joseph Whitehouse for whom the evidence is so shaky that he changes his mind about which tribe derives from Madoc's settlers.

A few decades later, beginning in the 1830s George Catlin traveled throughout the western United States painting Indian portraits and scenes of Indian life and recording in writing what he saw. Catlin spent extensive time with the Mandan tribe in the upper Missouri River region, a tribe with whom the Lewis and Clark expedition spent time in the winter of 1805. Due to their European-like skin, hair, and eye color, "at the moment that I first saw these people," Catlin recalls,

> I was so struck with the peculiarity of their appearance, that I was under the instant conviction that they were an amalgam of a native, with some civilized race; and from what I have seen of them, and of the remains on the Missouri and Ohio rivers, I feel fully convinced that these people have emigrated from the from the latter stream; and that they have, in the manner that I have already stated, with many of their customs, been preserved from the *almost total* destruction of the bold colonists of Madawc. (2.261)

Based on the appearance of the Mandans, a comparison of the language of the Mandans with the Welsh language, and a careful mapping of how the tribe would have migrated across the continent, Catlin concludes that the Mandans are the offspring of Madoc's settlers. Even with this surety, Catlin, like George Rogers Clark and the Lewis and Clark expedition members, writes of the Madoc Indians without the promise of national plenitude that will arise out of frequent future cultural contacts with them. Welsh Indians are an item of interest, and not an unimportant one, but they seem no more significant than other incidents that occur on the journeys. The heyday of the Madoc legend thus begins its decline when practical frontiersmen who are actually coming into

contact with the supposed Madoc Indians refrain from adding to their accounts nationalistic speculations about the possibilities available through the encounter. Real life experience and encounter had taken some of the magic from the legend, and yet these more reliable, realistic verifications of the existence of the Welsh Indians create possibility for westward expansion.

Far from being practical jokers or fiction writers or wild speculators, the men who penned these lines did so with reason and sound judgment. Traveling and writing on the American frontier, a region they, themselves, are only coming to know, these authors engage in the process of sorting out the national possibilities available in the immensity of the west. They do so by familiarizing the margins of the frontier for themselves and for their audiences. Knowledge of what is out on the frontier and how to domesticate it will give people this familiarity, which in turn promotes growth into the west. The existence of the descendants of Prince Madoc's settlers offers a familiarity of the unknowns of the frontier to Americans. Thomas Hallock, in his study of early American literature's role in the "process of making one's home in a wilderness," suggests that conscientious, "more sophisticated" American writers "struggled to establish a genuine link between culture and the physical terrain, while accounting for the social conflicts that interior settlements engendered" (4). In the accounts of military hero and frontiersman George Rogers Clark, explorers Lewis and Clark, and anthropologist George Catlin, the Welsh Indians offer a necessary stage on which to witness this link between culture and terrain. As evidence which the travelers can see and hear and touch, the Welsh Indians supply an image of resolution to conflict stemming from Europeans making their way into the wilderness. This remains true even

if the Welsh Indians are more Indian than civilized in the eyes of the travelers and even if the original settlers arrived in North America hundreds of years before; Joseph Whitehouse of the Lewis and Clark expedition does refer to them as savages, and their integration with Native Americans has resulted in a tribe far from the "unmixd" race imagined by the 1734 poet or Theophilus Evans. Catlin, in fact, describes them as "intermixed with some of the savage tribes" (2.259). But this can be attributed to the tribe's centuries of war and other interactions with Native American tribes without any connection to their European, civilized past. Catlin, in fact, implies a respect for them for preserving themselves from utter destruction by integrating with other tribes.

If the Welsh Indians do offer a link between that which is civilized and the unknown terrain of the American west, then what precedes the encounters described here must be the expectation of the encounter, the expectation of encountering the Welsh Indians. And if the Madoc legend acts as a frontier marker, then these three encounters are examples of how markers affect travelers. All of these western travelers enter the frontier with foreknowledge about the Welsh Indians and view Native Americans through the lens of this knowledge. It is as if they are almost waiting to find Indians who could just possibly be the tribe of Welshmen. They are not lying or even intentionally stretching the truth; they are seeing the frontier through a sign, the Welsh Indians, which marks the frontier as an area viable for settlement. How do they know that American culture can exist fruitfully there? They know because they see the Welsh Indians as representatives of civilized culture, albeit dissipated over time, living successfully on the frontier. Americans can gauge the potential success of western settlement on the success of the Welsh Indians. As Meriwether Lewis scurries about

writing down all the guttural, Welsh words spoken by the Flathead Indians, he is doing more than simply recording fact. He is confirming the Welsh Indians as frontier signposts of the boundless possibilities for national westward expansion. And he is offering Americans a bit of familiarity with the west, an act that promotes the willingness and comfort to view the west as viable for settlement. Extensive travel throughout the frontier by Lewis and Clark and these others, along with the fluid nature of the physical spaces of Madoc's original American exploits and the current dwelling places of the Madoc Indians create possibilities as vast as the landscape on which the legend thrives; American hegemony is located throughout the frontier through the ability of the legend to be located almost anywhere in the country.

If much of this chapter treats Madoc and white or Welsh Indians as markers on the frontier and explores the meanings of these markers for Americans, then it seems appropriate to close with a look at an overt touristic marker that commemorates a place for its affiliation with Prince Madoc. An 855-foot-long rock wall of mysterious origin stands high on a mountain at Fort Mountain State Park in northwest Georgia. Along with similar structures at DeSoto State Park in Alabama and along the Duck River in Tennessee, the Fort Mountain wall has been claimed as evidence of the presence of the Madoc Indians in the region, for the wall predates Columbus and is unlike other buildings of known Native American tribes. The construction of the wall may resemble construction methods practiced in Wales before and during Madoc's lifetime. As of August, 2003, a historical marker at Fort Mountain State Park that elucidates the possible builders of the wall reads:

> The legends about a prehistoric white race are the most popular of all. They are based on tales handed down by word of mouth among the Cherokee Indians. Ancient tribal chiefs said their early forbears passed along to posterity these stories that people with fair skins, blond hair and blue eyes occupied the mountain areas until Cherokee invaders finally dispersed them with great slaughter. …
>
> Some historians give a measure of credence to a very old legend that a man named Prince Madoc led 200 adventuresome Welshmen from Wales in 11 ships in the year 1170 and landed on what is now the Alabama coast near Mobile.
>
> The story relates that the ships returned to Wales for more settlers, leaving Prince Madoc and his 200 followers to establish a colony. Repeated attacks by Indians drove the Welshmen far to the north until they found refuge in what is now the north Georgia mountain area. There they lived in peace for many years, so the story goes, until the Cherokees killed many of them and intermarried with the survivors.

As twenty-first century tourists read the large, metal plaque secured in its stone setting and walk along the long, stone wall as it meanders through the woods, their thoughts and attitudes are focused on the landscape by the marker in much the same way that eighteenth and nineteenth century stories about Madoc affected contemporary perceptions toward America’s interior. Some differences exist, of course. Northwest Georgia has not been a frontier region awaiting development for many years, and obviously modern-day Americans have no reason to bother with legitimating a claim to

America prior to Spain's. In fact, whether or not the wall was constructed by Welsh Indians, whether or not Madoc even sailed to America, is largely irrelevant. The greater impact of Madoc does not rest on any actual, physical feats but on the manner in which stories about him shaped westward expansion in the past and on the manner in which history can still be used to affect perception about peoples and to shape nationalism. Madoc's appeal and value to Americans has always rested on his ability to fit different purposes. The Fort Mountain signpost, like the other Madoc texts examined in this chapter, demonstrates how travel and history can be employed for such nationalistic purposes, for it presents Madoc's crossing as the primeval American journey, a supposition that, for some, carries cultural value. By denoting America's cultural hegemony as having roots deep in the land and in the history of the land, the Madoc legend envisions for visiting tourists, as it did for eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans, an ancient past that bonds them to the pre-history of North America.

CHAPTER THREE

"This Strange Mass of Human Beings":

Frontier Bodies and New Religious Forms

In the instances of Mike Fink, Julius Rodman, and the others in the previous chapter, if frontier travel and physical distance from Anglo-American settlements spurred the development of individual identities quite divergent from what the metropolis would have them be or from what they could develop into while in the metropolis, then traveling away from hegemony and into the American wilderness also instigated and allowed for the development of unique religious forms. Not only does the mobility of the marginalized subject—the ability of the figure to strike out from familiar society into frontier regions—create the opportunity for this development, but "frontier" itself becomes a mobile concept, permitting a wide open range of religious and spiritual capabilities through the internalization of the possibilities represented by frontier travel. This internalization of the mobile concept of the frontier results not only in new religious selves but in new bodies for those selves, for the traveler's body, itself, becomes a marker of the new spirituality-oriented identity formed on the frontier; the body becomes a frontier site. In other words, the physical, corporeal bodies of travelers—through what happens to them, how they are presented to others, how others

perceive them—act as somatic indicators of the unique and recent mental and spiritual developments to which geographical frontier regions have given rise.

Spiritual frontiers explored by the figure of the frontier traveler go hand in hand with these actual geographical frontier regions that are traversed, for the mysteries, the unknowns, the dangers, and the otherness associated with and encountered during frontier travel become catalysts in the texts examined by this chapter for conversions to Christianity and for new modes of Christian worship unique to the traveler's frontier experience. Just as the frontier represents varying possibilities to different travelers and thus possibility is manifested differently in their lives, so too does the frontier grant travelers access to different kinds of religious experiences and thus provides for different manifestations of spirituality and, in these cases, different bodily indicators of that spirituality. In these instances, at the intersection of frontier landscape experience and frontier religious experience is the body of the traveler, and that body comes to embody those contested, open-ended experiences. The liminality of those two experiential events—the instigation by religion and geography of penetrating, affecting, and evocative psychological and physical encounter—produces the body as freshly altered and determined by it.[8] This chapter studies how this occurs.

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[8] Work on the theory of the body continues to be prolific in a number of academic fields of study. For a representative and informative study of the body in the fields of sociology and anthropology see Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner, eds. *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*. London: Sage, 1991. Gallagher, Catherine, and Thomas Laquer. *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1987. For feminism and gender studies see Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* London: Routledge, 1993. Grosz, Elizabeth. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994. Weiss, Gail. *Body Images: Embodiment as Intercorporeality*. London: Routledge, 1999. For race studies, especially as it pertains to early America, see Houston A. Baker and Dana D. Nelson's prefatory piece to the 2001 special issue of *American Literature* titled "Violence, Body, and "The South." Reid-Pharr, Robert. *Conjugal Union: The Body, the House, and the Black American*. New

To do so, this chapter will take a look at texts that, like those in the preceding chapters, are unalike in many ways and thus point to rather broad tendencies by Americans living during the late colonial and early national periods in their conceptions of the nation's western lands. Charles Brockden Brown's novel, *Wieland*, as well as texts written by and about attendees of the religious revivals that broke out along the Kentucky frontier during the early years of the nineteenth century, and the autobiographical works by John Marrant and William Apess all include descriptions of different kinds of religious possibilities stemming from the frontier travels of these individuals, whose personal faiths become closely tied to their frontier experiences. The bodies of these travelers come to embody their frontier-driven psychological and spiritual transformations.

As this dissertation has worked to demonstrate, the frontier acts for travelers and writers as, according to Eric Heyne, a trope—a place, an idea, and/or a symbol that involves numerous and varied systems of meanings and associations that are intertwined with but include far more than the simple geography of a place. A fine example of the frontier acting as a trope for a frontier traveler occurs in Charles Brockden Brown's 1798 novel, *Wieland* through the novel's opening episode detailing the life of the patriarch of the Wieland family. In the novel, travel to the frontier becomes for the elder Wieland that activity through which he can become who he wants to be—a devout Christian. His hopes for his personal identity formation are centered around this frontier journey. Moreover, as he grows more and more isolated from

York: Oxford UP, 1999. Sorisio, Carolyn. *Fleshing Out America: Race, Gender, and the Politics of the Body in American Literature, 1833-1879*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 2002.

friends and family, the frontier becomes the only space where he feels that he belongs. What the trope of travel in the frontier—what travel in the west and encounter with the Native Americans living there—offers him is an idea, a possibility to satisfy individualized needs. For Wieland, the frontier is an indeterminate object of desire, a space that can be molded into possibility. Travel to this frontier makes the desire, the possibility available to the traveler.

The narrator of the story, Clara Wieland, says of her late father's discovery of a book detailing the doctrine of the Camissards, a French Protestant sect that, "His mind was in a state peculiarly fitted for the reception of devotional sentiments. The craving which had haunted him was now supplied with an object. His mind was at no loss for a theme of meditation" (8). Clara proceeds to describe how her father's subsequent devotion to God leads him to leave England for the American colonies with the aim of converting Indians living in the interior of North America to Christianity. After failing in his missionary endeavor, he purchases land outside of Philadelphia and prospers as a family man and farmer. After fourteen years, when financial prosperity allows him to leave farming duties to his workers, the elder Wieland once again tries without success to convert Indians far out on the western frontier. Upon his return to his farm, to facilitate private devotionals, he builds a small open-aired temple not far from his house and faithfully visits it twice a day for time of meditation and prayer, spending increasing amounts of his time alone. He feels guilty about foregoing for over a decade his missionary calling after his initial disappointments, and he senses that eventually he will be severely punished for this inaction. When Clara is six years old her father's premonitions about his punishment prove true when, while he is within his temple,

"suddenly it was illuminated. A light proceeding from the edifice, made every part of the scene visible. A gleam diffused itself over the intermediate space, and instantly a loud report, like the explosion of a mine, followed" (15). Shortly after, Clara's father dies from injuries sustained during this apparent instance of spontaneous combustion, hinting that his simultaneous commitment and aversion to his missionary calling somehow leads to his tragedy. Moreover, the incident proposes that Wieland's punishment as well as his self-alienating use of the frontier manifest themselves in the form of Wieland's body as it bursts into flames. His body becomes the site where the results of the trope of the spatial western frontier of his missionary travels and the spiritual frontier of his religious development, frontiers that removed him from family and society, materialize in corporeal, tangible form. Brockden Brown thus offers his audience Wieland's body as an indication to be interpreted by that audience of the problematic religious views presented throughout the course of the novel.

In a statement that illuminates the obsession of Clara's father and illuminates how he uses the frontier as a trope for the pursuit of personal possibility, Jacques Lacan writes that "desire is neither the appetite for satisfaction, nor the demand for love, but the difference that results from the subtraction of the first from the second, the phenomenon of their splitting" (287). Brockden Brown, in *Wieland*, figures desire as this in-between space, the working towards something instead of achievement of that something. Clara's father's ultimate desire does not seem to be the conversion of any sinners but the hours he spends in contemplating these frontier conversions, the suffering he endures on the frontier while attempting to preach to the Indians, and the meditation he engages in upon his failure—all self-centered aspects of his calling. His

feelings of despair do not seem to be for the Indians, whose souls remain unsaved, but for himself because he has failed to carry out his charge. For Wieland, the religious potentials that he sees are available on the western frontier cause the frontier to act for him as an adaptable and indeterminate object of desire. The frontier is not fixed, and Wieland is able to create for himself a frontier that holds the possibility for the fulfillment of religious duty.

In his explanation of Lacan's theory of desire, Bruce Fink writes that

> *Desire, strictly speaking, has no object*. In its essence, desire is a constant search for something else, and there is no specifiable object that is capable of satisfying it, in other words, extinguishing it. Desire is fundamentally caught up in the dialectical *movement* of one signifier to the next, and is diametrically opposed to fixation. It does not seek satisfaction, but rather its own continuation and furtherance: more desire, greater desire! It wishes merely to go on desiring. (90-1)

The fixed object for Clara's father would be the tangible fruits of his labor—converted Indians. But he desires something else, something unfixed: his ever greater desire to show himself devout, which he demonstrates in his journeys to the west and in his daily meditations. The unfixed nature of his desire works hand in hand with the unfixed nature of the frontier and what it can represent to one who travels through it. Frontier travel is a trope for the possibility of fulfilling religious duty. Wieland's desire to display his devoutness continues to grow as the stakes rise after each failure, for he can more dramatically prove his devotion to God after failure. His shot at redemption is

impossible without this failure, and to succeed after a failure would indicate a greater devoutness.

The intensification of his spiritual regiment demonstrates this idea. Before her father's second missionary effort to western Indians, Clara writes that he "was visited afresh by devotional contemplation. The reading of the scriptures, and other religious books, became once more his favorite employment" (10). Upon his trip into Indian country,

> he encountered the most imminent perils, and underwent incredible fatigues, hunger, sickness, and solitude. The license of savage passion, and the artifices of his depraved countrymen, all opposed themselves to his progress. His courage did not forsake him till there appeared no reasonable ground to hope for success. He desisted not till his heart was relieved from the supposed obligation to persevere. (10)

In addition to his dangerous and agonizing voyage west and back, the personal devotionals he engages in following his return to his home and family also reveal the extent of the elder Wieland's personal investment in his mission. Wieland's frontier travels become the central actions of his life. They are that which occupies his mind and that on which he bases his identity and future actions. He spends almost all of his time in solitude, scrutinizing his spiritual state-of-being, again, a practice the stakes of which are far greater after a spiritual failure. His religious zeal becomes his defining feature. Clara writes that his fellow members of the community "might call him a fanatic and a dreamer, but they could not deny their veneration to his invincible candour and invariable integrity. His own belief of rectitude was the foundation of his happiness"

(12). But, as his perennial devotionals indicate, he is never sure of his rectitude, his uprightness in God's eyes. Thus, for Clara's father, desire (on the surface being at peace with God) lies in the inability to satisfy any one particular desire (coming to peace with God through some action); he desires (most assuredly unconsciously desires) this state of mental flux and spiritual instability.

So, for father Wieland, actual desire in this case ultimately has little to do with the salvation of the Native Americans. Instead, the Native Americans and the American frontier merely provide Clara's father with the means through which his desire can be enacted, the means through which he can define himself as a long-suffering and devoted missionary for God. In this equation, though, the Native Americans and frontier travel still play a crucial role, though any "unsaved" group of people may have sufficed. He centers his life around them and judges his spiritual worth based on his relation to them, yet, as individuals with precious souls to be saved, they remain forever marginal to him. Without them, he cannot pursue his desire, for his desire finds its articulation through and in his relationship to the Indians: he desires to convert the frontier Indians; he desires redemption for his initial failure through another attempt to convert the Indians; he desires redemption through meditation after failing again to convert the Indians during a long trip through the frontier. Frontier travel, an ethereal journey through uncharted lands that lie beyond the margins of society, provides the perfect setting for the intangible nature of Wieland's desire.

"Frontier," however, goes beyond the desire of Wieland to simply see and use the frontier and its inhabitants in a particular manner. Actors on the frontier are also acted upon, both in body and in mind; they are changed and influenced by their

encounter with the landscape and Native Americans. Wieland, himself, is affected by his encounter, for the Native Americans he preaches to reject his message. While this rejection plays into his desire for further demonstration of commitment to God, if the Indians had embraced Christianity, then his obsession with meditating upon his rejection would not have been able to occur. His travel to the frontier contains this reciprocal affectation: the traveler creates a frontier in his mind or in his text, but that frontier is not solely a product of the imagination; the traveler's actual encounter with the frontier causes his preconceptions or stereotypes of it to develop and alter; furthermore, that frontier exists not only in Wieland's imagination but also in the form of his body, a body that endures the sufferings of the missionary trips and that mysteriously spontaneously combusts. This interplay between imagination and reality as well as its emergent forms in spirit and in body becomes crucial to an understanding of not only Brown's novel but to how frontier travel works and how the corporeal and intellectual possibilities it symbolizes contain significance for the traveler and for American culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In a manner akin to how Wieland's spontaneous combustion furthers his family and friends' concern and confusion about his increasing religious fanaticism, so do the bodily activities of participants in frontier religious revivals of the early 1800s contribute to and exist as markers of the new, puzzling and, for many, troubling theological and practical aspects of those revivals. During the closing years of the eighteenth-century, religion in America came to be viewed as necessary for maintaining a decent, moral, orderly society. Religion, and Christianity in particular, thus, became associated with republican virtue. Gordon S. Wood notes that, in the years following the

Revolution, a significant number of Americans "came to believe that Christianity might be the best means of tying Americans together" (329). In no instance is America's high regard for Christianity more conspicuous than in the vilification of Thomas Paine after the publication in 1794 and 1795 of his criticism of religion, *The Age of Reason*. After becoming a national hero two decades prior with the publication of *Common Sense*, a work that significantly pushed America towards separation from Britain, many Americans wanted nothing more to do with Paine after his current work harshly dismissed Christianity. Paine was labeled a Deist and died in obscurity not long after. The issue of Deism also became a heated topic during the presidential election year of 1800 as then-candidate Thomas Jefferson was accused of being a Deist. The label, "Deist," became a term almost synonymous with "infidel" or "atheist."

On the other extreme end of the religious spectrum, religious fanaticism or religious enthusiasm occupied a seat as low as Deism in the minds of many middle-class Americans. A religious fanatic could be just as dangerous to the young American republic as could a Deist because of the disorder and overly passionate temperament associated with fanaticism. What was called for, then, or what was expected, was religious moderation, a reasonable faith, religious commitment tempered by restraint and sobriety—a religion, in other words, compatible with republican virtue.

Within this religious climate, the late 1790's saw a modest but notable rise in religious interest and church attendance in Kentucky's Bluegrass and Cumberland regions. This increase occurred primarily at annual or biannual sacramental occasions held by individual congregations. Scheduled during the summer months, the sacramental occasion—or communion festival as it was also termed—was organized as

a special time of year for a congregation, for the Lord's Supper would be administered. In 1800, in the Cumberland area, specifically at the Gasper River, Red River, and Muddy River congregations, these sacramental occasions attracted crowds in the thousands, some of whom arrived prepared to camp on the ground for several nights, a practice that resulted with these events being dubbed "camp meetings." These large, camp meeting style revivals began in the Cumberland region of southern Kentucky in 1800 and moved into the state's Bluegrass area the next year, culminating in August of 1801 at Cane Ridge, Kentucky with a sacramental occasion that attracted anywhere from 15,000 to 20,000 or more people. With so many people present, preachers—Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and often laymen, -women, and -children—would speak at the same time in different areas surrounding the meeting-house. The preaching and singing continued throughout the days and nights with many people becoming quite affected physically, emotionally, and, presumably, spiritually. In the ensuing months and over the next few decades, camp meetings became common happenings in Kentucky, Tennessee, the Ohio River valley, and beyond. Moreover, camp meetings became closely associated in the minds of many Americans with the frontier even as the Second Great Awakening spread throughout not only the trans-Appalachian west but the whole country.[9]

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[9] The exact nature of what exactly was happening that manifested itself in the form of the physical exercises seen at the camp meetings, as well as the exact role of the frontier in the development of the Second Great Awakening has been a controversial and ongoing scholarly task. Providing in 1919 an early scholarly work on the Kentucky revival, Catherine C. Cleveland's *The Great Revival in the West 1797-1805* focuses on the unique frontier situation that spawned the revival. The sacramental occasions that transformed into the camp meeting format "furnished an opportunity of meeting friends and hearing the gospel to many who in their remote cabins knew no neighborhood life and were out of reach of even the irregular preaching afforded by most western communities" (53). Concerning the attitudes of these rugged individuals toward sleeping out of doors during camp meetings, Cleveland continues: "To men

and women who had once made the difficult journey over the mountains there was no novelty in the idea of camping out" (54). Cleveland posits that on the Kentucky and Tennessee frontier the sparse population, the absence or weakness of organized religion, the hardships of mere survival, and the lack of any other social organizing institution caused the felt need for and the formation of the large, seemingly disorderly, pluralistic sacramental occasion.

Cleveland's thesis received tacit acceptance for about half of the century. Wesley M. Gewehr, for instance, writes that "the camp meeting was just the thing for the West in supplying the need of group association to overcome the monotony and isolation of frontier life" (112). Influential religious historian William Warren Sweet also accepts this role of the frontier in his examination of the era. With the decrease of religious conviction during the Revolutionary years and with the rapidly increasing rate of western migration and subsequent absence of a normalizing hegemonic force on the frontier, the trans-Appalachian region presented itself attractively to missionaries from the Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, and Methodist denominations. "Fortunately for the future of the great West and for the future of the country as a whole," Sweet proposes, "these fully-organized religious bodies were already waiting and equipped to carry forward the battle for decency and religion in the great new West" (117). Camp meeting revivalism results from this battle for decency and religion. For Cleveland, Gewehr, and Sweet, distinct frontier elements gave rise to the camp meeting.

Eventually, the role of the frontier in the development of the camp meeting and the Second Great Awakening is questioned by scholars. Ralph E. Morrow criticizes the inability of historians to see beyond the frontier locale. "The bulk of twentieth-century writing on the revival has been done by historians who worked within tight regional frames of reference," he states. "One result is that the full dimensions of the revival have been obscured by the magnification of its western phases" (65). The solution Morrow offers is a study the frontier revival in the context of the development of religion in America as a whole during the period. Likewise, John B. Boles responds to the Cleveland-esque thesis of frontier revival by moving the Cane Ridge and the other camp meetings out of the isolated Kentucky frontier and into the larger scope of the general development of the American South, which he proposes cannot be understood without consideration of the role religion played in that development. "In the same manner," Boles writes,

> that the awakening enthusiasm spread from Gasper River to Cane Ridge, it swept back over the entire South with amazing rapidity, even seeping into the contiguous portions of the Ohio Territory, western Pennsylvania, and Maryland. By almost instantaneously overrunning the South, the Great Revival proved itself to be more than a mere frontier aberration, suitable only to Scotch-Irish pioneers suffering from a boredom and loneliness unique to the trans-Appalachian West. This was the first revival common to the whole South, and the first in which all denominations shared simultaneously. (70)

According to Boles, the Kentucky revival stands as a watermark event in the history of the South, for it helped form the conservatism of the Southern political and social value systems. Thus, the revival's influence affected far more than the frontier and was influenced by factors originating away from the Kentucky frontier.

While Morrow and Boles focus on the frontier's place in a larger cultural and social setting, Paul K. Conkin examines the religious ritual and theological aspects of the revival to find that the Kentucky and Tennessee revival was not a theologically isolated frontier event. "Evangelical Christianity in 1801," Conkin writes, "was much more sacramental than it would soon become, even as it was spawning new rituals" (169). Instead of being a new form of Christianity created by the social environment of late eighteenth-century Kentucky, Conkin posits that "the context [of the revival] turned out to be anything but local" (ix). The Kentucky revival had historical precedent in elements of American religious thought and practice that had been developing for over two centuries.

Finally, providing the most detailed account of the Cane Ridge camp meeting to date, Ellen Eslinger's 1999 study, *Citizens of Zion: The Social Origins of Camp Meeting Revivalism*, adds further complexities to the topic. Carefully detailing life in Kentucky at the turn of the nineteenth century, Eslinger argues effectively that, "by 1800, western life [the Kentucky Bluegrass area in particular] generally resembled that found in other parts of the rural United States" (31). The revival was nonetheless a product of the unique culture that produced it, she states, even if that culture does not quite resemble the

Numerous accounts have been written by historians that detail the specific happenings at these sacramental occasions, including what would prove to be controversial elements of these camp meetings due to their newness and seeming disorderliness: simultaneous preaching and singing, widespread emotional distress, violent physical "exercises" and "jerks" that befell listeners, unintellectual and Biblically unsound sermons, camping out, and pluralism, which, because of the three different denominations participating, entailed looser adherence to any one denomination's theology and ritual. Unsurprisingly, then, the issue of what was actually going on at camp meetings has been questioned and critiqued in America since their rise in popularity in the early nineteenth century. The unruliness, the strange physical "exercises" that seemed to affect masses of people, and the social aspect of the carnival-like atmosphere have all caused doubts about the religious conversions that camp meeting participants were said to experience. Were attendees sincerely developing a deeper faith or greater knowledge about God and salvation? Or, were attendees simply falling prey to a type of mob mentality? Were they simply manipulated by the camp meeting institution and caught up in the moment? The legitimacy of the camp meeting becomes more difficult to determine because it took place out on the frontier, away from the scrutinizing eye of culture. In addition, issues of tolerable social behavior presented by the frontier itself, regardless of camp meetings, complicates this issue of legitimacy. As Albert Von Frank explains:

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frontier of an earlier time in Kentucky, a frontier the likes of which figures into Catherine Cleveland's text.

> Away from the community, the provincial mind is not only susceptible to influence from every conceivable direction, but it generally lacks the means and incentive to maintain the sort of strong, traditional ideology that might encourage cohesion. Miscellaneous influences turn out to be acceptable that are directly inconsistent with inherited beliefs, and go, together wit the remnants of these beliefs, to make up provincial minds that are often impressively eccentric. (6-7)

Likewise, Gregory Nobles explores this same problematic aspect of frontier life. He writes that frontier settlers "formed the ragged fringe of the social fabric, living at the outer edges of Euro-American society where genteel standards of order appeared to unravel" (114). Without the governance that comes with close contact with society, without the hegemony of a structured community to police itself, frontier life entails the possibility of developing destructive, anti-social behavior. The physical exercises described by camp meeting observers seemed representative of anti-social and destructive behavior and seemed to many Americans to corrupt the moderate Christianity that could, to refer back to Wood, tie the vast nation together. A religion compatible with republican virtue is thus doubly unlikely to be found in frontier camp meetings, for the form of the camp meeting and the setting of the frontier are both individually a possible adversary to moderate religion. Similar qualities of inventiveness and possibility exist in both; no wonder, then, that the camp meeting first appeared on the frontier and that it became known as a characteristic feature of the frontier.

The camp meeting gained fame as a frontier institution, and one of its prominent and salient features was the troubling physicality demonstrated by its participants, the physical "exercises" as they came to be called. Quite frequently, a fervent participant in the camp meeting would be "struck" or would get the "falling exercise." When this occurred, the individual would become overwhelmed with the goodness or power of God and would faint, remaining incoherent for anywhere from a few minutes to many hours. Upon awaking, the individual would praise God, lament his or her sinful condition, preach on the spot, or in some other way celebrate this conversion experience. Critics viewed being "struck" as indicative of fanaticism or enthusiasm; in response, others accused these skeptics of Deism. In fact, this physicality persisted as a salient feature of frontier revivalism long after the time of Cane Ridge, long after the camp meeting had become institutionalized by different Christian sects.

An example a writer who depicts just such a frontier camp meeting is Johnson Jones Hooper, whose famous rascal and confidence man of the Alabama frontier, Captain Simon Suggs, rides twenty miles to a camp meeting "where he hoped to find amusement, at least" (119). Hooper's text provides a representative, though comical, description of the standard camp meeting scene. Franklin J. Meine writes that old southwest humorists like Hooper, "wrote in a boldly realistic vein. Their humor, spontaneously bubbling forth from everyday life, dealt with *real* incidents and *real* characters" (28). Hooper's fictional description of the camp meeting and the bodily exercises of its attendees, therefore, is one drawn from real life. Once at the camp meeting, Suggs witnesses a number of preachers concurrently and vehemently

exhorting a frenzied crowd, and addressing in particular those who had taken a seat on the mourners' bench. Hooper writes:

> The excitement was intense. Men and women rolled about on the ground, or lay sobbing or shouting in promiscuous heaps. More than all, the negroes sang and screamed and prayed. Several, under the influence of what is technically called "the jerks," were plunging and pitching about with convulsive energy. The great object of all seemed to be, to see who could make the greatest noise. (119-20)

Suggs watches the chaos and decides that the spectacle must be a great deception pulled off by the professional preacher. He determines to get in on the action, so he feigns dramatically repentance and fools the enthusiastic audience into taking up a monetary collection to fund his efforts to start a congregation nearer to his own home. Soon after, the story ends with Suggs riding away, enjoying the spoils of his deceit. In Hooper's illustration of the camp meeting, disorder rules in both the actions of the participants and in the form of the camp meeting itself. Sincere worship or spiritual awakening or conversion simply has no place at the camp meeting contained in the pages of the antics of Simon Suggs, whose underhanded deeds take advantage of peoples' foolishness, a foolishness indicated to Suggs by their bodily responses to the revival.

In his sketch taken from life on the southwestern frontier, Hooper perpetuates the camp meeting's peculiarities as its defining elements The camp meeting exists in his text as an object of apprehension, skepticism, and uncertainty that is closely identified with the frontier. Nor are American fiction writers, like Hooper, the sole distributors of this less than idyllic image of the camp meeting. In his narrative of his tour of North

America during the 1820s, Englishman William Newnham Blane comments on the camp meetings that take place “beyond the Alleghanies” (491). Among other deplorable sights, that of families sleeping under their wagons out in the woods “fills the spectator with the utmost alarm and wonder” (492). More damningly, Blane describes:

> Some might think, that in the extraordinary fervour of religious enthusiasm, and in the constant triumph, as it were, of the Spirit, the frequenters of Camp Meetings would entirely lay aside the lusts of the flesh: but this is not the case. The Devil it would seem has power even over these devout men; for at the expiration of nine months, the population of the State is surprisingly, though illegitimately, increased. (492)

More than pointing, as does Hooper, to the attendees’ gullibility or susceptibility to suggestion or mob mentality, Blane casts doubt on their morality, their very reason for being at a camp meeting. While what he witnesses first-hand—“the extraordinary fervour of religious enthusiasm”—undoubtedly influences his opinion of the camp meeting, Blane is obviously deferring to an idea of the camp meeting that comes from popular stereotypes, for he does not wait around for nine months, confirm as true any suspicion about the illegitimate increase in population, and then write what he writes about the event. He sees families sleeping out of doors, and he sees unreserved and unbecoming religious excitement, and he draws from these his conclusion about the participants’ most irreligious behavior.

Touring America from England only a few years after Blane, Frances Trollope also offers a description of a camp meeting. Interestingly, she writes excitedly “that I

found the opportunity I had long wished for, of attending a camp-meeting," this particular one "in a wild district on the confines of Indiana" (137). Her previous eagerness and hopefulness to see a camp meeting reveals the status it held in the minds of foreign travelers like Trollope as a tourist attraction, as something out of the ordinary that can only be witnessed on the American frontier.

Trollope is troubled by what she sees, though. "But how am I to describe the sounds that proceeded from this strange mass of human beings?" she asks. "I know no words which can convey an idea of it. Hysterical sobbings, convulsive groans, shrieks and screams the most appalling, burst forth on all sides. I felt sick with horror" (143). In addition to the troubling physicality demonstrated at the camp meeting, Trollope provides an insight that raises skepticism about the sincerity of the religious leaders in charge of it. "Before our departure," she writes, "we learnt that a very *satisfactory* collection had been made by the preachers, for Bibles, tracts, and *all other religious purposes* (145). Like Hooper and Blane, Trollope, in this instance, finds fault not only with the riotous and uncivilized form of the camp meeting, she finds that it is, in a religious sense, antithetical to what it claims to be; the camp meeting, she finds, is a vehicle for amoral deviancy and not for the promotion of Christian virtues.

Adam Rankin, a charter member of the Presbytery of Transylvania in Kentucky and an active preacher during the years of the Kentucky Revival also finds camp meetings to be highly problematic, and he employs a rhetoric of Deist accusations in his 1803 review of the Kentucky Revival. "The next thing to which I would wish to call the attention of my reader," he states, "as previous to the present revival, and as preparing the way for its commencement, was the almost universal power of deism" (6). Rankin

proceeds to detail the specific attributes of "practical deists," "Christian deists," "a kind of evangelical deist," and finally an "assortment of refined deists" (6). As mentioned above, the label of Deism was one that, at the time Rankin writes, carried with it harsh religious and cultural implications. According to Rankin, though, it was pervasive Deism that set the stage for the rise of the disorderly camp meetings.

Not all accounts of camp meetings, of course, vilify them. Ministers continued to organize and conduct camp meetings, and thousands of people continued to travel significant distances to attend them, which implies that camp meetings were not universally regarded as grievous abominations as described by these writers. The following excerpt is taken from a letter written by the famous Indian fighter and early Kentuckian Colonel Robert Paterson of Lexington on September 25, 1801. It provides both a general picture of the form of the camp meetings and an example of the lively dialogue that raged between supporters and skeptics of camp meetings and their physical exercises:

> The Lord's Supper was appointed to be held at Point Pleasant, on Stony Creek, ten miles above Paris, being one of Mr. Joseph Howe's congregations. There the flame spread more and more. Curiosity led a great many strangers, I with my family attended.—About forty waggons, four carriages, in all about 8000 persons. The meeting commenced on Friday, and continued till Wednesday. Three hundred and fifty communicants, 250 were struck down. There was an opposition both on this and the former occasions, by some who appeared to be real christians, by nominal professors and by deists. The first class stood

> astonished, not knowing, and wondering what these things meant; not willing to reprobate it, and many at last closed in with it. The next class, the most inveterate, call it enthusiasm, hypocrisy, witchcraft, possession of the Devil, sympathy, in fine, every thing but what it really is. The latter confines it to sympathy, agitation, delusion, &c. (Woodward 35-6)

Another man, writing from Kentucky a month earlier than Paterson, in his account of the "glorious work of God in this place," includes a typically militant statement about the fate of Deists amid the Revival. "Many of our accomplished Deists," he writes, "have been made to bow the knee, and throw down their weapons of rebellion" (Woodward 60). If Adam Rankin sees in the revival the work of Deism, and if Paterson and others see in it a triumphant opponent to Diesm, then there obviously existed great disparity in determining what was happening at these unfamiliar and very evocative camp meetings. Different religious spectators at the Kentucky Revival, though all witnessing similar happenings, could not come to a consensus regarding what exactly was occurring in the form of camp meetings and falling exercises or why it was happening. However, both supporters and detractors saw in the opposing side the evils of Deism.

Vital to a general interpretation of the camp meeting is the interpretation of the physical exercises. Colonel Paterson lists the 250 people that were struck down as evidence to support the revival as being in accordance with God's will, while Hooper, Blane, and Trollope imply the exact opposite. Barton Warren Stone, the minister of the

Cane Ridge congregation at the time of the great revival, when looking back at the early years of the 1800s, writes:

> Much did I then see, and much have I since seen, that I considered to be fanaticism; but this should not condemn the work. The Devil has always tried to ape the works of God, to bring them into disrepute. But that cannot be a Satanic work, which brings men to humble confession and forsaking of sin—to solemn prayer—fervent praise and thanksgiving, and to sincere and affectionate exhortations to sinners to repent and go to Jesus the Savior. (35)

That which others label fanaticism—the disturbing physical exercises that some people experienced—can in no way be considered negatively by Stone if the end result of the exercises is a new convert to Christianity or a renewed vigor to live a pious, Christian life. Though unnerving, the exercises, in Stone's words, bring individuals not to a state of chaos but to one rather sober: one of "solemn prayer," "humble confession," forsaking of sin," and "affectionate exhortation."

He continues to describe this process of experiencing the physical exercises then entering a state of mind and contentment far from overly enthusiastic. As the revival begins to spread throughout the town (prior to the August, 1801 great revival) and people are falling to the ground, Stone states,

> In the midst of this exercise, an intelligent deist in the neighborhood, stepped up to me, and said, Mr. Stone, I always thought before that you were an honest man; but now I am convinced you are deceiving the people. I viewed him with pity, and mildly spoke a few words to him—

> immediately he fell as a dead man, and rose no more till he confessed the Savior. The meeting continued on that spot in the open air, till late at night, and many found peace in the Lord. (37)

Stone here includes all of the regular elements included in descriptions of camp meetings: a deist, the falling exercises, and conflict over the nature of the event. Once again, though the falling exercise occurs to the deist, it becomes not a part of disorder but a part of what, according to Stone, is a methodical, orderly conversion process that results in the convert finding peace in his or her life. This inability to come to a consensus about the camp meetings, this inability to concretely define certain aspects of the camp meetings, which were new to Kentucky and Tennessee in the early 1800s, the ambiguous nature of the phenomenon seems right at home on the American frontier, a region in flux and open to interpretation, full of all kinds of hopeful and harmful possibilities. This frontier ambiguity corresponds nicely with the definition of "frontier" offered by David Mogen, Scott Sanders, and Joanne Karpinski, who figure it "as the imaginative border between the known and the unknown" (13). Both the frontier, the camp meetings it hosted, and the bodies experiencing physical exercises remain somewhere between the boundaries of known, accepted religious practice and the kind of utter enthusiasm that could be dangerous to American society if not kept at bay.

Witnesses, participants, critics, and reporters of camp meetings sense that much rests upon their judgment of the happenings—both souls and the republic; and both of these are symbolized by falling, shaking, violently affected frontier bodies. The tenuous attempts to determine the legitimacy of the still developing camp meetings, which occur in settings replete with imaginings of the still developing wilderness, along with the

belief that a moderate, orderly religion is not just preferable but necessary to uphold the nation's value system and the public good, explains much of the hostility towards the revival. Camp meetings, to gain approval by the metropolis, had to fit this mold. But like the bodily exercises experienced there, the camp meeting fit no known, safe mold. Yet its home on the frontier guaranteed that it would not depend for survival on approval by the metropolis. The accounts of camp meetings, which consistently dedicate a substantial number of words to the description of the bodily exercises, though, embody the fearful, hopeful, and many times divisive, notions of frontier and religion in the early republic.

The site of the camp meeting acts as that geographically-bound happening to which numerous people bring with them expectations and thoughts about the possible experiences—social and spiritual—that they might have. Families traveling in wagons, tourists and curiosity seekers like Blane and Trollope, ministers from various congregations coming to help conduct the meeting, men, women, and children, black, white, and Indian—all traveling to a site in the woods to engage in a hotly contested and very unpredictable religious event. It is a scene buzzing with anticipation and energy. It is also a scene closely associated with bodies that, in appearance and in action, signify and contribute to the cause of the contentiousness of the camp meetings. These frontier bodies, contorted, yelling, falling, laughing, barking, and fainting are an inextricable element of the frontier camp meeting and the religious, social, and national connotations they come to possess.

While the large numbers of people help to energize the camp meeting and assuredly give it an exciting atmosphere, and while those numbers whose bodies acted

as markers of the novel form of the camp meeting, that same sense of wonder, sublimity, and anticipation regarding the possibility of a deep and moving religious experience that stems from frontier travel can also occur in the travel of an individual. Both John Marrant and William Apess separately engage in frontier journeys that result in more fully realized Christian identities that could not have developed in the same way if not for the frontier journey, and because both are racial others, the bodies of both become central to their reasons for traveling and the situations in which they find themselves during those travels. The Christian, frontier bodies of Marrant and Apess implicitly attack hegemonic stereotypes and prejudices of American culture, for their physicality—their racial and religious transformations—comes to embody the societal, religious, and nationalist possibilities represented by the camp meeting.

Born a free black man in New York in 1775, John Marrant proves to be a figure marginalized by his home culture who finds on the frontier the freedom to develop an identity with which he feels comfortable. After the death of his father when John was four years old, he moved with the rest of his family to St. Augustine, Florida and soon thereafter to Georgia. When John was eleven years old, the Marrant family moved to Charleston, South Carolina where he was taught to play the French horn and the violin. He became so proficient with the instruments that he was invited to play at many social events, events which exposed the young Marrant to the vices of folly, vanity, lust, and drunkenness. When popular Christian preacher George Whitefield holds a gospel meeting in town, Marrant hopes to play a prank by blowing his French horn among the audience. Instead of disrupting the assembly, however, Marrant faints at Whitefield's fiery words, and the next day, while talking and praying with Whitefield, converts to

Christianity. His family objects to his conversion, and he soon leaves home for the wilderness where he winds up preaching to and converting Cherokee and other Indians. He describes this frontier journey (and the rest of his life) in *A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black*, published in 1785 in London.

In his text, Marrant sees the frontier as an escape from the persecution he receives from his family because of his religious convictions. Not long after his conversion, he writes, "I was persuaded to go from home altogether. Accordingly I went over the fence, about half a mile from our house, which divided the inhabited and cultivated parts of the country from the wilderness. I continued travelling in the desart all day without the least inclination of returning back" (16). The "cultivated" community with which he is familiar becomes the source of his alienation, and he wholeheartedly turns for reprieve and for the opportunity to practice his faith to the wilderness, with its promise of independence from the expectations and governance of culture. Marrant's decision to enter the frontier reveals what symbolic and pragmatic value it held for him. Travel in the wilderness, at the very least, provided for Marrant religious liberty, but his journey comes to play a far more integral role in his development as a Christian, for it shapes his religious zeal and allows for the display of the benefits he enjoys by being a Christian.

For instance, Marrant's decision to undertake his frontier journey indicates that his desire to worship God freely overrides any reservations he has about the dangers of the wilderness. One of the first experiences he describes once in the wilderness confirms this to be a valid notion, for his faith appears to protect him from these dangers. He states:

> The next morning, having quitted my customary lodging, and returned thanks to the Lord for my preservation through the night, reading and travelling on, I passed between two bears, about twenty yards distance from each other. Both sat and looked at me, but I felt no fear; and after I had passed them, they both went the same way from me without growling, or the least apparent uneasiness. I went and returned God thanks for my escape, who had tamed the wild beasts of the forest, and made them friendly to me: I rose from my knees and walked on, singing hymns of praise to God, about five o'clock in the afternoon, and about 55 miles from home, right through the wilderness. (18-9)

The power of God and faith in God are such that these bears—a ferocious incarnation of the most deadly natural perils the frontier has to offer—are rendered as devoid of threat to Marrant. He clearly credits God for making the bears docile, and, still a fairly recent convert to Christianity, Marrant's experience with the bears furthers his belief in the miraculous profits available to the individual through Christianity. With this line of thought, as Christianity and the figure of the Christian are invulnerable to the dangers of the wilderness, frontier regions are thus predisposed to being subdued and ordered by Christianity.

Just as Marrant, the Christian frontier traveler, brings order and safety to the natural wildness and the hazards of the wilderness, as seen in the pacification of the two bears, so too does the figure bring into the fold of Christianity the wild Indian inhabitants of the wilderness. Yet in Marrant's text, preaching the gospel to Native Americans does not resemble the popular, expected model of early American

missionary work—that of civilizing the savage through Christianity. Instead, nativism and the frontier are central to how Marrant practices Chrisitanity; Marrant's body itself comes to resemble the wildness of the frontier as he preaches the Gospel to the Indians. While Marrant brings the bears under his subordination, he forges a place amid frontier Indians by becoming, himself, more and more like them. After being saved by God from certain death at the hands of the Cherokee in much the same way that God saves him from the bears, Marrant begins preaching to them, is thrown into their prison, perseveres, and soon converts the king and his household.[10] Marrant stays nine weeks in the large Cherokee town, assimilating himself into Indian culture. He writes,

> I had assumed the habit of the country, and was dressed much like the king, and nothing was too good for me. The king would take off his golden ornaments, his chain and bracelets, like a child, if I objected to them, and lay them aside. Here I learnt to speak their tongue in the highest stile.
>
> I began now to feel an inclination growing upon me to go farther on, but none to return home. (29)

As he develops in appearance a hybrid frontier-Christian-black-Indian identity, Marrant becomes more and more comfortable psychologically in the frontier setting, and he

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[10] Much scholarly attention is given to Marrant's use of the literary forms of the Indian captivity narrative and the Puritan conversion narrative and how he alters them to frame his own narrative of identity formation. See, for instance: Chandler, Karen. "'Wonderful Dealings': Making African-American Selfhood Speak through Colonial Literary Conventions in John Marrant's Conversion and 'Indian Captivity' Narrative." *MAWA Review* 16 (2001): 20-39. May, Cedric. "John Marrant and the Narrative Construction of and Early Black Methodist Evangelical." *African American Review* 38 (2004): 553-70. Weyler, Karen A. "Race, Redemption, and Captivity in *A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black* and *Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings and Surprizing Deliverance of Briton Hammon, a Negro Man*." *Genius in Bondage: Literature of the Early Black Atlantic*. Eds. Vincent Carretta and Philip Gould. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 2001. 39-53. Zafar, Rafia. "Capturing the Captivity: African Americans among the Puritans." *MELUS* 17 (1992): 19-35.

becomes effective in evangelism efforts. After a tour through the lands of several other Indian tribes and another stay with the Cherokee, Marrant makes the over 300 mile journey home.

When he comes to the first backcountry white settlement, his appearance frightens a family living there. “My dress,” he describes, “was purely in the Indian stile; the skins of wild beasts composed by garments, my head was set out in the savage manner, with a long pendant down my back, a sash round my middle without breeches, and a tomohawk by my side” (31). Eventually, the frightened family warms to him, and soon it and several other families in the vicinity are being led in Sabbath worship services by Marrant for the six weeks he stays with them. This episode is significant for Marrant, for it is the first time he has ministered to white people, and he does so with great success. Before his conversion, he was entertainment for white society, playing his instruments at parties and succumbing to the many temptations to which he was exposed. Now, with his frontier journey behind him, a journey which allows him to evolve into a confident and practiced missionary, it is he who affects the white people he encounters and not vice versa. Previously, Marrant’s body was determined by racist British colonial society, and it was figured as one stuck precariously somewhere between racial otherness (being a black man) and inclusion in high society (attending and negotiating with some fame the world of music and well-to-do white parties). Significantly, his body after his frontier journey literally appears to the backcountry white colonials as if it moving not from settled, high society uneasily into the wilderness but from deep in the wilderness toward and into settled, British areas; this presents him with the ability to perform successfully as a Christian missionary.

Still in his Indian garb, Marrant finally reaches his hometown, but because of his corporeal transformation, he is not recognized by those who know him. He comes to the house of a friend from school and is invited to eat with them. Here he once again successfully exhorts people to follow God. "At supper," Marrant states, "they sat down without craving a blessing, for which I reproved them; this so affected the man, that I believe it ended in a sound conversion. Here is a wild man, says he, come out of the woods to be a witness to God, and to reprove our ingratitude and stupefaction!" (32-3). Not only has Marrant's frontier journey molded him into a capable preacher, but his appearance as a product of the wilderness plays a role in this conversion, for the man seems ashamed that a "wild man" would think to say a prayer before a meal and he, himself, did not. His frontier body is elemental to his power as a preacher. Marrant returns home, but when the American Revolution breaks out, he is pressed into service on the high seas by the British military. After being discharged he winds up in London, is ordained as a minister, and, at the time of his writing, is preparing to leave for Nova-Scotia to preach there.

During Marrant's frontier travel, the more he comes to resemble the frontier in appearance and the more distance he puts between himself and Anglo-American settlements to the east, the more able he is to realize his identity as a Christian (hindered by his family and associates back home) and his potential as a Christian missionary. Frontier travel creates this possibility. Marrant's Christianity is intertwined with the American frontier. The type of religion he preaches to the Cherokee is one of orderliness and discipline, but that in no way implies a need to obliterate native culture. Instead, Cherokee culture and the frontier are perfectly compatible with moderate,

pious, true religion. For Marrant, religion becomes a way into society, a niche in a culture that otherwise denotes him as secondary, non-white, inferior. And the religion that he uses to gain a place of belonging in society is one heavily informed by frontier culture.

Like John Marrant, William Apess, a Pequot Indian, finds himself marginalized from society due to his racial difference from the white families with which he lived and due to his decision to become a Methodist, a move which angered his Presbyterian master. Similar to Marrant's experience, it takes an arduous frontier journey for him to understand his need to devote himself to Christianity and the manner in which this devotion should express itself. This need stems from his basic human need for a relationship with God and from his need to utilize, like Marrant, his religion in order to negotiate his way through Anglo-American society. Religion, and the ecumenical, emotive Methodist religion in particular, provides Apess with the material and the grounding to critique the immoral treatment of Native Americans in the United States. As Irene S. Vernon writes, "in a very creative move, he [Apess] begins to use Christianity to seek and question issues of justice and freedom for Native people" (77). Both Indian and Christian, Apess claims the identity of both with equal force, refusing to subjugate his Pequot identity to the dominant version Christian identity—white, "civilized," for, in his mind as in his body, the two traits are fully compatible.[11]

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[11] A significant portion of the scholarship on William Apess studies how he negotiated these complex nationalist, racial, and religious boundaries that existed between Indian and white cultures. See for instance: Dannenberg, Anne Marie. "'Where, Then, Shall We Place the Hero of the Wilderness?': William Apess's Eulogy on King Philip and Doctrines of Racial Destiny." *Early Native American Writing: New Critical Essays*. Ed. Helen Jaskoski. New York: Cambridge UP, 1996. 66-82. Donaldson, Laura. "Making a Joyful Noise: William Apess and the Search for Postcolonial Method(ism)." *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*. Eds. Malini Johar Schueller and Edward Watts.

Apess tells the story of his journey in two of his texts, *A Son of the Forest*, which is his autobiography, and *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe*. He structures *A Son of the Forest* in a form similar to the bildungsroman: he leaves home at a young age, experiences what the world has to offer, and returns home slightly wiser than he was when he departed. Describing his decision to leave home he writes, "I was just going to step out on the broad theater of the world, as it were, without father, mother, or friends" (23). Once out in the world's broad theater, the young Apess witnesses extensive vice as he visits New York City and, in 1813, at age fifteen enlists in the U.S. Army and fights in Canada against the British. He falls to temptation, and the religious fervor he once had dwindles. After about five years, Apess journeys home. In *Experiences* he writes of his adventure that

> this journey was not instructing to the paths of virtue but of vice—though I did not forget the past, and often recollected those happy moments, and sighed on account of my condition, but had no heart to pray, no pious parents to instruct me, no minister of God's holy word to notice me and pour into my ear the blessed truths of God, but a poor, destitute, helpless child of the forest, all alone in the world, as it were. (71)

New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2003. 29-44. Gussman, Deborah. "'O Savage, Where Art Thou?': Rhetorics of Reform in William Apess's *Eulogy on King Philip*." *New England Quarterly: A Historical Review of New England Life and Letters* 77 (2004): 451-77. Gustafson, Sandra. "Nations of Israelites: Prophecy and Cultural Autonomy in the Writings of William Apess." *Religion and Literature* 26 (1994): 31-53. Haynes, Carolyn A. *Divine Destiny: Gender and Race in Nineteenth-Century Protestantism*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1998. Vogel, Todd. *ReWriting White: Race, Class, and Cultural Capital in Nineteenth-Century America*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2004. Walker, Cheryl. *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and Nineteenth-Century Nationalisms*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1997.

Unlike Marrant, who blossoms as a minister during his frontier travel, Apess's frontier travel reveals to him the depravity to which he and all individuals can fall without an ongoing concerted effort to remain a devoted Christian, free from the evils of alcohol and careless living.

It is on his long trip home, however, that Apess articulates a Christianity in which his identity as a Native American and his desire for order and control play key roles. He writes:

> I was now in the Bay of Quinte; the scenery was diversified. There were also some natural curiosities. On the very top of a high mountain in the neighborhood there was a large pond of water, to which there was no visible outlet—this pond was unfathomable. It was very surprising to me that so great a body of water should be found so far above the common level on the earth. There was also in the neighborhood a rock that had the appearance of being hollowed out by the hand of a skillful artificer; through this rock wound a narrow stream of water: It had a most beautiful and romantic appearance, and I could not but admire the wisdom of God in the order, regularity, and beauty of creation; I then turned my eyes to the forest, and it seemed alive with its sons and daughters. There appeared to be the utmost order and regularity in their encampment. (32-3)

In opposition to the version of religion he experienced as a child growing up with harsh expectations to abide by religious expectations conveyed to him amid disturbing racist undertones, Apess senses in the wilderness, senses in "the beauty of creation" a spiritual

and theological connection. Neither the forest nor the sons of the forest—Native Americans—need to exist in opposition to religion or need to be altered or bettered by religion. Nativeness and orderliness are compatible with each other and are both key to his understanding of Christianity. "In his conversion to Methodism," writes Hilary Wyss, "Apess has in turn converted Methodism into what he sees as a Native American religion" (77). Once Apess establishes himself as a Christian and as an Indian, he can engage governmental policy and cultural practices that, because they systematically mistreat all Native Americans, mistreat not only Apess as some "savage," but Apess as a prominent Christian. Apess's body, inscribed as both Indian and Christian, becomes a visible personification of the inherent civil and religious problems in Christian American culture's dealings with Indians, for, his body demands, how can an effective, practicing, evangelizing Methodist be forced to suffer ills that supposedly protect culture from Indian "heathens" and "savage" non-Christians? His appeals are based in Christian teachings of love for fellow man and in the readily apparent hypocrisy of his unequal status in American society. This formulation of Christianity comes to him during his frontier journey, and his journey into the depths of human degradation teach him the need for devotion to his religious beliefs.

Apess, as well as Marrant, Wieland, and the individuals who experienced bodily exercises at frontier camp meetings, finds himself forced to negotiate culture's complex systems of religious, racial, and social expectations and stereotypes, institutions that work to determine hegemony and punish those who fall outside of its oft-unspoken mandates. In his experiences, like these other frontier figures, the frontiers of religious belief, of the body, and of western landscapes become intertwined in their own complex

system of identity-determination. Resulting from these processes are unique and newly formed, frontier-informed spaces—geographical, psychological, and in body—for these individuals to occupy.

CHAPTER FOUR

Misfits on the Frontier and the Possibilities of Identity

At the close of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, Huck states: "But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me and I can't stand it. I been there before" (307). With no additional explanation necessary, Twain's allusion to "the Territory" conjures up for his audience, as it does for Huck, western frontier images of wildness, recklessness, and an utter lack of, as Huck would name it, "sivilized" society. The image is a fitting one, for where else but on such a frontier could Huck live comfortably as Huck? As that version of himself which he was allowed to be while floating down the Mississippi with Jim instead of the awkwardly mannered boy which his aunt tries to force him to be? Significantly, Twain's phrase "light out for the Territory" provides all the connotation that a reader needs to understand and to envision the frontier for which Huck longs.

The question that arises, then, involves how this idea of the west as a place where an individual is free to live as he chooses came to be widely known and accepted. How does "light out for the Territory" convey sub-surface meanings about this freedom from dominant society that so appeals to Huck? The answer rests, in part, in Philip Fisher's study of the cultural work of nineteenth century novels. Fisher explains: "Once what had only recently been a risky and disputable claim has come to seem obvious, the

highest work of culture has been done, but because the last step involves forgetting both the process and its very openness to alternatives or to failure, the history of culture has trouble in later remembering what it is socially and psychologically decisive for it to forget" (4). In other words, by the 1880s, when Twain published *Huckleberry Finn*, the western frontier meant to Twain and his public what it meant to Huck. Culture had formed the frontier into a place where, as it was understood by Americans, individuals were set apart from more settled, "sivilized" areas and, accordingly, were free from the scrutiny of those areas, free to live as they chose.[12] This chapter studies how that image of the west came to be, how culture worked to institutionalize that image—one that is in many ways counter-cultural, just as Huck Finn in counter-cultural to the dominant culture represented by and forced upon him by Aunt Sally.

One appeal, then, of traveling in America's frontier was the promise of self-determination; this is the appeal of the frontier to Huck Finn. Furthermore, self-determination as an aspect of frontier travel had, by the later decades of the nineteenth century, become a widespread understanding of the frontier. This chapter aims to better understand this notion by exploring the ways in which texts written earlier in the nineteenth century—those which created this concept of the frontier which Twain makes use of—depict normalcy and alterity and the ways in which the frontier becomes

[12] Like this dissertation, Fisher's text concerns itself with notions about America's interior lands. His discussion of James Fenimore Cooper's *The Deerslayer* centers on the image of the wilderness that Cooper presents and that became the dominant version of it. Fisher argues that, because of the popularity of *The Deerslayer*, "Cooper 'made up' the wilderness; the Indian and the killing of the Indian; the process of settlement and, along with that process, the single white figure, Leatherstocking, who made morally tolerable the ethical complexities of settlement and the superseding of the Indians that was the basic secondary fact within settlement" (6). This dissertation's discussion of the frontier and the American wilderness differs from Fisher's in that this dissertation studies cultural images of the lone traveler to the region (such as Huck Finn lighting out for the Territory) while Fisher's uses for its subject concepts of the wilderness itself and of the Indian fighting therein.

a space where marginalized individuals can respond to these culturally denominated categories. Through a study of Morgan Neville's account of legendary boatman Mike Fink, the Abraham Panther captivity narrative, Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly*, and Edgar Allan Poe's *The Journal of Julius Rodman*, this chapter proposes that the frontier becomes a site for the traveler to challenge the hegemony of normalcy, the hegemony of expected and accepted social behavior and traits of identity. Separation from the societal institutions of the east gives the frontier traveler the opportunity to define him- or herself apart from mainstream value systems of American culture. The frontier represents that place where "misfits" can feel a sense of belonging and can flourish and develop an identity free from the restraints of societal expectations. These texts, thus, forge a place for the marginalized—for the "misfit"—out in America's western lands; they forge a place in the popular imagination of the national landscape for the likes of Huck Finn. In doing so, these texts engage in creating a frontier containing quite different implications than the frontiers studied in the previous two chapters of this dissertation. In those, frontier travel accounts promoted nationalism and the steady advancement of American culture into the frontier; in the accounts included in this chapter, despite their differences in genre and time and place of writing, frontier travel advances the ideal of a frontier that allows for counter-cultural values.[13]

This chapter begins with Neville's text, for it most clearly displays the framework that this chapter studies: a subject marginalized by society travels on the frontier and attains an individuality that can exist only on the frontier. Neville's Mike

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[13] For an insightful study of how culture and governmental systems can use frontier regions, with varying degrees of success, to keep in check members of the population who are oftentimes marginalized by society while at the same time serving national economic needs, see Hogan, Richard. "The Frontier as Social Control." *Theory and Society* 14 (1985): 35-51.

Fink becomes alienated from society, but his rough-hewn and indecorous personality become for him, once on the frontier, his trademarks as a masterful keelboat operator and Indian fighter. Like Mike Fink, the woman discovered on the frontier by the narrator of the Abraham Panther captivity narrative as well as the title character in Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly* are compelled to travel on the frontier in order to realize a self-determined identity, but these two works challenge the soundness of individuals developing identities exclusive of the safeguarding and regulating forces of culture. Some of the same motivations and impulses that drive these other characters onto the frontier also work on Poe's Julius Rodman, whose romantic dreaminess alienates him from society. Poe creates a romanticized frontier, making it the perfect place for his protagonist to feel a sense of belonging.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Mike Fink's name has all but disappeared from common use. His fame rests on the now half-century-old Disney-produced Davy Crockett TV series, in which Fink was a character, and on the mentions he receives in the décor of Cock of the Walk restaurants, a chain of restaurants specializing in fried catfish which uses for its menu and decorating theme the keelboat era of the early nineteenth century. However, from 1830 to 1860, Mike Fink was the larger-than-life subject of countless oral and written tales that detailed his many brash exploits along the Ohio River when it was a wild and unsettled frontier region.[14] Walter Blair and Franklin J. Meine write that "it does seem safe to say that during the nineteenth century readers of many sorts and in many parts of the country over a rather

[14] For a study of the reasons behind the decline of the Mike Fink legend and the rise of the Davy Crockett legend, see: Botscharow, Lucy Jayne. "Davy Crockett and Mike Fink: An Interpretation of Cultural Continuity and Change." *Literary Anthropology: A New Interdisciplinary Approach to People, Signs and Literature*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 1988. 75-93.

lengthy period were introduced, one way or another, to Mike Fink" (19). Typical features of Mike Fink stories involve his prowess with his rifle, his fearless battles with Indians, his second-to-none knack to work a keelboat, his habitual fist-fights, and his audacious and brazen boasts about these abilities.

A universal trait of Fink, though, is his marginal position in relation to civilized society. An anonymous account of Fink that appeared in 1829 in the Cincinnati-based *Western Monthly Review* states that some of Fink's words and actions had to be edited out because they are unfit to be read, and it calls Fink's characteristics "monstrous anomalies" (57). His very language, it continues, separates him from other Americans, for it "was a perfect sample of the half-horse and half-alligator dialect of the then race of boatmen" (59). An 1837 piece on Fink in *Davy Crockett's Almanack* concurs, stating that riverboatmen, "spending the greater portion of their time on the water, they scarce know how to behave on shore, and feel only at home upon the deck of their craft" (64). Finally, in his story about Mike Fink, Thomas Bangs Thorpe writes that boatmen's commendable characteristics set them apart from the rest of society. "The good humor," he writes, "the frankness, the practical sense, the reminiscences, the powerful frame, all indicate a character at the present day extinct and anomalous" (69). In Thorpe, Fink himself specifies his aversion to society. Lamenting the westward migration of society, Fink declares, "If forests continue to be used up, I may yet be smothered in a settlement. Boys, this 'ere life won't do" (71). Regardless of a writer's opinion of Fink's exploits and jokes and habits, the legendary figure seems utterly incapable of being a part of a society, which, in turn, seems eager to keep Fink marginalized. This strained

relationship between Fink and society stands as the constant in all of these accounts of his life, and it stands as a formative element in the development of the Fink figure.

"The Last of the Boatmen," an early account of the legendary keelboatman published in 1828 in *The Western Souvenir*, comments on everyday, civilized society, on why Fink cannot subsist in such an environment, and on how the frontier acts as a place where he can, in fact, survive and thrive. Author Morgan Neville, who narrates the tale, travels by steamboat from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati and is nostalgic for a moment in time, a moment swiftly coming to an end during the time of his journey, when the Ohio River frontier was the perfect place for someone like Mike Fink to thrive, when keelboats and not steamboats ruled the river. Unlike Fink, who is forever marginalized from civilized circles, the narrator, well-educated and from an affluent Pittsburgh family, can move in the spheres of both the Ohio River frontier and more cultured areas to the east. Though he has spent a good deal of time in the frontier, the narrator is and has always been far more sophisticated than Fink and therefore is positioned well to comment on Fink's traits that make him unable to exist in more well-to-do society. It is this moment in history—when the frontier held the possibility to give the marginalized a place to belong—for which Neville is nostalgic. Simply put, Neville establishes culture's dominant value system, describes how Fink fails to share those values, and how he is able to live according to his own value system as a boatman.

Frontier travel has a dual purpose in Neville's text. First, travel into the frontier gives Neville the occasion to present his account of Fink, for on his journey he encounters his old friend, Fink, and relates to his fellow travelers who are unfamiliar with frontier customs a story about him. Second, travel in the frontier, in particular

along the Ohio River, is that activity which provides Fink with the opportunity to become a legendary frontiersman. Travel through the region prompts in Neville his longing for a bygone frontier. What Neville's nostalgia reveals is the rapid rate at which the American interior moves from wild, untamed land to frontier to settled, developed land. The speed of this evolution is symbolized in the steamboat that Neville rides and that displaced the slower, less powerful keelboat. Even as his own business venture has occasioned his trip—a sure sign of the developing of a region—Neville misses the way things used to be, a contradiction that has a long history in the history of the American landscape: as soon as people move to an unsettled area and build homes and a continually growing community, they become nostalgic for the area in its more pristine, undeveloped state. Fink represents to the narrator this long-gone era, and his well-known status as a cultural misfit plays such a key role in Fink's persona that it plays a prominent role in the idyllic Ohio River valley of old of which the narrator muses.

At the outset of the text, the narrative voice sets the scene, describing the current and former state of the Ohio River region. This exercise not only provides a description of the setting in which Mike Fink moves but also allows Neville to establish the value system through which he will describe and judge the subject of the story. These values, these principles through which culture achieves unity concerning the social behavior of its members, are those of education, affluence, discretion, cosmopolitanism, and a celebration of technological advancement. Neville holds in the highest regard the development of the steam engine and, subsequently, the steamboat. "The rudest inhabitant of our forests," he states, "is struck with the sublime power and self-moving majesty of a steam boat," implying that a more mannerly individual will obviously

share the sentiment. "The steam engine," he continues, "in five years has enabled us to anticipate a state of things which, in the ordinary course of events, it would have required a century to have produced" (45). The speed and progress initiated by such a technological marvel as the steamboat affects Neville's ability to appreciate the beauty of nature, too, for the steamboat on which he travels brings him quickly to the spring-like weather south of Pittsburgh. He writes that "the old mode of travelling in the sluggish flat boat seemed to give time for the change of season; but now a few hours carried us into a different climate. We met spring with all her laughing train of flowers and verdure rapidly advancing from the south" (47). He goes on to describe the pleasant weather to which the steamboat has brought him.

Even more worthy of commendation is the quickening pace at which civilized society itself is moving down the river. "The stranger views here, with wonder, the rapidity with which cities spring up in forests; and with which barbarism retreats before the approach of art and civilization" (45-6). Thus, the veneration of the progress of American culture and of advancements in technology is a value that Neville positions as one to be shared by all Americans, or at least by every individual who, like himself and his fellow steamboat travelers, could be categorized as a "philosophic traveller" (45). Such learned and farsighted individuals see the potential of the Ohio River region to be an influential and admired region. This potential gives the visitor an even more pleasing view than the current beauty of the undeveloped area. As Neville states, "The reflection possessing the most intense interest is not what has been the character of the country but what shall be her future destiny" (46). Later, at the conclusion of his voyage, Neville writes in similar fashion of "the beautiful city of Cincinnati, which, in the course of

thirty years, has risen from a village of soldiers' huts to a town, giving promise of future splendour equal to any on the sea-board" (55). The inevitable development of the region from frontier into settled and flourishing country is one to be eagerly anticipated and welcomed.

Alongside the presence of technological achievement and other elements of a thriving city are the arts, education, and refined taste as values to normalize the citizens of the Ohio River region. The narrator looks back longingly and laments the ruination of Blennerhassett, a now deserted and decaying mansion along the Ohio that, in years past stood as "the favourite residence to taste and hospitality" (46). The estate's "liberal and polished owner made it the resort of every stranger, who had any pretensions to literature or science" (46). This monument to affluence and learning is just the type of home that Neville pictures dotting the entire region as civilized society edges its way down the Ohio River. Blennerhassett becomes for Neville a cautionary tale for the philosophic traveller who would have been its guest and who envisions the future glories of the region. Instead of exercising discretion and prudence, the mansion's owner foolishly, "in a moment of visionary speculation, had abandoned this earthly paradise to follow an adventurer—himself the dupe of others" (46). He compares what is left of the mansion to Egyptian ruins, the type of site that attracts travelers to the old world. Such tourist sites are the exact opposite of what is impressive and attractive about the American frontier, which, again, is its boundless potential to be home to a great civilization. "Pretensions to literature and science" are a central part of Neville's vision for the frontier's future and not something the heyday of which has already passed on the frontier.

Neville also offers as a desired and important character trait the value of cosmopolitanism or the state of being well-versed in the practices and manners of different cultures. For Neville, this worldly knowledge stems from knowing the manners and customs of the east coast with its significant European influence, the western frontier, and the land between the two. Despite his own refinement, which he clearly presents in his comments on the steamboat, on the potential for civilized society in the Ohio River region, and on Blennerhassett, he displays his ability to move freely in the course, rough-edged world of the riverboatmen and, in so doing, contrasts himself with the snobby tourists also on the steamboat who cannot adequately negotiate the strange, unsophisticated cultural terrain. Neville shakes hands with his old friend, Mike Fink, upon disembarking from the steamboat and then, at Fink's request, acts as a judge in a hazardous contest in which Fink shoots a tin cup off of his younger brother's head at thirty yards distance. When Fink asks him to officiate, Neville explains that he, himself,

> on any other occasion should have remonstrated and prevented the daring trial of skill. But I was accompanied by a couple of English tourists who had scarcely ever been beyond the sound of Bow Bells and … a few bloods from Philadelphia and Baltimore, who could conceive of nothing equal to Chesnut or Howard streets; and who expressed great disappointment at not being able to find terrapins and oysters at every village—marvellously lauding the comforts of Rubicum's. (48)

Understanding the needless danger and lack of logic involved in the shooting contest, a contest with which he was familiar from past experiences with Fink, Neville gives tacit

approval to the diversion in order for his fellow travelers to glimpse the true nature of the land and people for whom he cares so deeply. His cosmopolitan understanding of both cultures—east coast/British and riverboat—gives him the wherewithal to make this decision. The narrative recounts this ability to navigate both spheres once again when, after the steamboat resumes its trip, Neville tells the other passengers stories about Fink, when, in other words, Neville acts in the capacity to effectively disseminate information about one culture to the other.

Mike Fink stands at odds with all of these values. Though clever and not at all dimwitted, he would be as clueless and helpless amid high society as the narrator's steamboat companions are in the company of the keelboat workers. In appearance, Fink is markedly different than the steamboat passengers. The text states that his dress and physical features would make him an appropriate subject to appear in a "wild and gloomy" painting by Salvator Rosa (47). He is well-built and strong; he carries a large knife on his belt; and his skin color resembles that of an Indian because of a lifetime in the sun. In speech, too, Fink differs from the steamboat travelers, for he speaks in the "slang of the keel-boatmen" (47). Neither cosmopolitanism nor discretion is an element of the value system by which Fink lives his life. After the shooting contest, Neville condescendingly but with no malice calls the boatmen "thoughtless creatures," as if they are incapable of the kind of good judgment and prudence that he exercises (49). Unlike Neville, who sees the senselessness of the tin cup shooting contest, Fink plays the game regularly, too often, in fact, for, years later, he dies after finally failing to hit the cup and killing the man on whose head it rested. A friend of the killed man immediately fatally shoots Fink in retribution.

Neville offers a reason for Fink's inability to fit in with civilized society. When he was young he enlisted in the corps of Scouts, a group of frontiersmen charged with protecting the frontier inhabitants of western Pennsylvania from hostile Indians. As the white population of Pennsylvania gained control of and settled lands further west, the Indians were pushed further west, and "the corps of Scouts was abolished, after having acquired habits which unfitted them for the pursuits of civilized society" (54). Fighting Indians and living out beyond white settlements caused Fink to be good for little else than a life on the frontier, though it gave him the skills and knowledge to live well on the frontier. His experience, in other words, to defend society from Native American threats and to make ready the landscape to become an extension of society has negated his opportunity to live as part of that society. As society moves west, so must Fink move further west to stay ahead of it, all the while turning the wilderness into a space where society and all its trappings can soon migrate.

Furthermore, Fink does not share Neville's belief in the virtue of technological progress as represented by the steamboat. Fink lives for the keelboat. Several years later, when Neville learns of Fink's death, he is told that once steamboats had finally replaced keelboats on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, Fink had moved further west to the Missouri River. "He [Fink] had refused several good offers on the steam boats," Neville is informed. "He said he could not bear the hissing of steam and he wanted room to throw his pole" (260). When Fink rejects job offers to work on steamboats, he rejects, in essence, technological progress itself in the wondrous form of the steamboat and the westward progression of civilized society. While the tale details Fink's otherness, again it also details how the legendary boatman uses those traits to become

not only a successful but the best boatman on the Ohio River. However, Fink's failure to abandon those traits, which other boatmen do, when the days of the keelboat have passed causes him to become alienated from the Ohio River region, the one geographical space available to him and his peculiarities. Once the region is civilized, Fink does not belong. He dies shortly after leaving in an attempt to stay true to a rough-and-tumble boatman identity, in the form of the tin cup shooting contest, a contest which, like Fink, no longer has a place. It is no longer a vital and significant cultural practice as it was for the keelboatmen. Fink's insistence on maintaining his identity as the greatest keelboatman, complete with shooting the cup, dictates that his time, like that of the keelboat, has passed.

Like the era of the keelboat itself, while the era in which Mike Fink flourished may have been brief, it was frontier travel—journeying up and down the Ohio River—that made that era possible. The Ohio River frontier offers Neville's Mike Fink more than mere distance between himself and the cultural institutions that define normalcy and dictate behavior, the preferable form of which is represented by Neville himself; it offers him more than a spatial reprieve from the pressure of society to conform. Fink's frontier, the frontier of the keelboat era, offers him the geographic space and the physical opportunity to actively develop his identity as Mike Fink the legendary boatman. Traveling through the frontier prompts Morgan Neville to give this account of Mike Fink. Importantly, though he and Fink differ in their opinions of technological and cultural progress, though in contrast to Fink he enthusiastically looks forward to the coming of civilization that will signal the end of the region as frontier, Neville's tone in his text is nostalgic. He wistfully looks back upon earlier times and readily relates

stories of Mike Fink. There is sadness in his voice when he is told of Fink's death and utters, "With Mike Fink expired the spirit of the Boatmen" (260). While sometimes he appears to heartily embrace a settled, "civilized" Ohio River valley, Neville's desire to experience once more the frontier that gave rise to the legendary tales of Mike Fink is a strong enough desire that, in the end, his attitude toward the increasingly settled, tamed, and cultured frontier is ambiguous.

As far as his own individual identity is concerned, Neville is caught somewhere between frontier and society. Consequently, he fails to fully enjoy a sense of belonging on the frontier, despite his wishes and unlike Fink, who at one time possessed such a sense of belonging, yet he longs for that era and the deeds and scenes with which he associates it; this longing slightly sets him apart from his contemporary society, as seen in his failure to have a shared experience with the rest of the steamboat travelers with whom he travels, a failure resulting from the discrepancy between his insider's knowledge of the frontier and his co-passengers' utter ignorance frontier life. Mike Fink's frontier—the frontier presented by Morgan Neville—is one better suited for a marginalized other like Fink than it is for a model of culture like Neville, himself.

If Morgan Neville's narrative reveals how frontier travel can fulfill a misfit's need to determine his own identity and to belong, the pseudonymously written 1787 Abraham Panther captivity narrative questions whether or not such a sense of belonging can occur without the consensus of society. In the brief story, the narrator details his recent journey to the unsettled west and his discovery of an American woman living in a cave in the wilderness. The tale she tells to Abraham Panther and his traveling companion involves her elopement against her father's wishes, her survival of a

harrowing Indian attack that leaves her husband brutally murdered, her killing, decapitation, and quartering of a giant, and her subsequent nine-year residence in the giant's cavern home. Panther escorts the woman back to Albany, New York where she is happily reconciled with her father, who admits to his unwarranted anger about her marriage, even as the shock of seeing his long lost daughter overwhelms and kills him, which leaves her financially well-off.

The Panther narrative depicts a dangerous, out-of-this-world frontier at odds with innocent young love, the traditional institution of marriage, and even civilized society itself. Things turn tragic for the woman once she and her lover elope and, in order to flee her father's wrath, "move further back into the country" (88), further away from the pale of American cultural hegemony. Although she escapes vicious Indians and a giant with sexual intentions towards her, she still winds up living in what she calls a "wretched situation" (89) in the giant's skull-strewn cave. In this arrangement, the figure of the frontier traveler has the ability to rescue that which is civilized from that which is savage, for Panther, the frontier traveler, rescues the woman from a lawless frontier and restores her to enlightened society.

Significantly, Panther has no such plans when he enters the wilderness. Shortly after finding the forlorn woman, he explains the unpretentious objective of his tour: he and his companion "desired her to be under no uneasiness, told her we were travellers, that we came only to view the country" (87). Though the goal may be "only to view the country," travelers, including Panther, do more than only look at the landscape; as displayed in the first chapter of this dissertation, the implications of travelers' gazes upon the landscape are many. Panther's gaze upon the frontier involves the formation of

order, civility, and American cultural values upon the wild and savage frontier. It does this by offering the woman, a symbol of Anglo-American culture, as the most notable and significant site upon which his gaze finds to rest. Like the travelers described in the second chapter of this dissertation who write of their encounters with the white, Welsh-speaking Indians deep within the country's interior, so too does Abraham Panther venture into the wilderness only to find there markers of his own culture.

Described by Panther as "a most beautiful young LADY" and "an agreeable, sensible lady" (86-7), the woman embodies the best of society. Indeed, her father acknowledges that it was he and not her who was in the wrong concerning her love for a mere clerk instead of a wealthier, more well-to-do man. As a perfect feminized symbol in both physical appearance and mental capacity of the best of society, the woman's ability to survive her initial captivity and to overcome the threat of becoming a sexual victim of the giant represents Anglo-American society's ability to overcome any threats to its purity and innocence presented by the wilderness. At the same time, the woman's lover did not survive the wilderness, and his death prevents her happiness. Despite her survival on the frontier, she utterly fails to accomplish her goal in entering the frontier—to find that place where she, along with her husband, can live comfortably after being unjustly marginalized from society by her father, a figure with the authority to enact such a chastisement.

Thus, it is not her gender which necessitates her return to society. Her femininity has not hindered her ability to survive the wilderness. It is her flawed process of identity formation that she undergoes on the frontier that necessitates it. Giant killer and cave dweller are not appropriate titles for a beautiful, sensible woman who so entirely

personifies Anglo-American culture. The woman must be restored to society. She must be reconciled to her father, a patriarchal figure of dominant culture who acts for her as the gatekeeper to society. A misfit when she entered the frontier, her time on the frontier has caused her father to rethink his reaction to her marriage, and at the story's conclusion she is misfit no more but once again daughter and accepted member of society. A journey into the frontier presents her with a place to belong when she had no other place, but another journey into the frontier—Panther's—presents her with the opportunity to belong to society again.

Charles Brockden Brown, in *Edgar Huntly*, also casts doubt on the idea of an individual marginalized within society successfully using the marginal space of the frontier to determine his own identity. In the novel, Edgar Huntly is drawn to the unsettled, frontier region outside of Philadelphia by a powerful impulse to discover that place where he feels he most belongs and where he can become the person whom he wants to be. He spends great amounts of time habitually wandering about the wilderness enjoying solitude. He explains to the recipient of his letter that makes up the bulk of the epistolary novel, "Thou knowest my devotion to the spirit that breathes its inspiration in the gloom of forests and on the verge of streams. I love to immerse myself in shades and dells, and hold converse with the solemnities and secrecies of nature in the rude retreats of Norwalk," the frontier outside of Philadelphia where Brown sets the story (90). Huntly ventures that "perhaps no one was more acquainted with this wilderness than I" because of the time he has spent exploring it, being "led by a roaming disposition" (92). The recent murder of a close friend has troubled Huntly, intensifying his predisposition for solitary rambles. At the outset of the novel, Huntly has decided to

travel by foot overnight to his uncle's house, visiting on his way the site of the crime. He states that "a nocturnal journey in districts so romantic and wild as these, through which lay my road, was more congenial to my temper than a noon-day ramble" (6-7). Traveling both at night and during the day throughout the Norwalk frontier, a practice that has always been dear to Huntly and regularly done, becomes a repeated characteristic of the novel, as Huntly repeatedly has reason to undertake brief journeys there.

A large portion of the novel is dedicated to one particular frontier journey, a mysterious, fatiguing, and dangerous wilderness experience in which Huntly unwittingly finds himself. Huntly faces the issue of engaging in "uncivilized," Indian-like action during his adventure on the frontier. On the journey, this action seemingly cannot be avoided. However, even when such behavior is necessary for Huntly's own survival and for the survival of a woman captured by Indians, it ultimately works to alienate Huntly not only from society, which he comes to long for during his ordeal, but also from his self, a particularly troubling situation for Huntly who previously had felt most alive during his solitary frontier rambles. Brown's novel challenges the idea that Indian-like and animal-like actions—actions that Huntly speaks of synonymously as "savage"—that are antithetical to behavior promoted and expected by dominant white society can be avoided at all in the absence of society. Elizabeth Jane Wall Hinds writes that "the wilderness around him [Huntly] becomes actively aggressive. The wilderness, in some respects, takes on a pseudo-spiritual function … through its seeming ability to orchestrate human behavior" (114). By forcing Huntly to endure a trying frontier journey not of his choosing, the wilderness itself, then, appears to call into question

Huntly's long-held desire to spend time alone with nature. Like the Abraham Panther captivity, *Edgar Huntly* proposes a frontier on which an individual not wholly in sync with society may establish a personal identity, though that development will actively and dangerously set the individual at odds with society.

Through the frontier it depicts, the novel urges Huntly to embrace society and shun a solitary existence in the wilderness. His failure to do so, his over-familiarity with the frontier results in hardship for him, for he becomes conflicted internally between "civilized" and "uncivilized" compulsions that confront him during his frontier journey. Concerning this conflict in the novel between conduct of whites and conduct of those denoted by white society as "savages," Robert D. Newman proposes that "the underlying irony of the novel is the revelation of the savage potential of the white man" (68). In *Edgar Huntly*, brutally killing Indians and animals may be an element of surviving the wilderness, but the killer cannot simply relegate this behavior—so central as it is to identity—to the frontier. The identity formation that occurs on the frontier has staying power. This proposition stands in contrast to the easy manner in which Robert Rogers, in this dissertation's first chapter, distinguishes between "savage" and "civilized" acts of violence, even when those acts uncannily resemble each other. What allows Rogers to make this seemingly arbitrary distinction is the gaze through which he views the violent acts of the Indians and of himself and his men. But Edgar Huntly has trouble enacting such a gaze because vision itself becomes problematic for him: his frontier journey starts when he unconsciously sleepwalks out into the frontier to which he is perennially attracted during daytime. Rogers has clearly defined reasons for his frontier travel, and he deploys his gaze to accomplish his military goals; Huntly, on the

other hand, has only a sense of confusion regarding how and why he came to be out on the frontier.

By closely following Huntly's long frontier travel, the novel's caution against solitary identity formation emerges. During the novel, Huntly goes to bed at home only to wake partially-dressed and physically aching in a cool, damp, pitch dark environment. He eventually realizes he is in a cavern in frontier country that he had visited for the first time only recently. Once back in his town, he learns that he had sleepwalked his way to the cavern. His journey back to town from the frontier, though, is wrought with confusion over where he is and how he came to be there, fear for his family due to an Indian raid, extreme hunger, mental and physical exhaustion, and, significantly, an extended and vicious battle with a band of five Indians. In appearance and action, Huntly becomes more and more like white culture's stereotype of "Indian" in order to overcome these perils.

After a difficult and anguishing process of blindly climbing his way out of the dark pit in which he initially finds himself after waking in the cavern, Huntly encounters a panther. He kills this "savage," as he calls it, by throwing his hatchet at it (159). So intense is Huntly's hunger at this point that, he writes, "The first suggestion that occurred was to feed upon the carcass of this animal. My hunger had arrived at that pitch where all fastidiousness and scruples are at an end" (160). To survive this wilderness experience he casts off the traits of fastidiousness and scrupulousness and, animal-like, eats the raw meat of the panther. As if his very being tries to resist this embracement of animal action, of, as Huntly terms the panther, "savage" action, Huntly suffers tremendous stomach pain after his meal. He describes being "seized by pangs

whose acuteness exceeded all that I ever before experienced" and writes that "Death was a sweet relief for my present miseries" (160). Nonetheless, the panther meat proves to be adequate nourishment and gives Huntly the strength to persist. Survival had demanded becoming "uncivilized," like the panther, like a "savage," and Huntly had obliged.

Still in darkness, Huntly carefully wanders through the cavern hoping to find an exit when he sees a small, man-made fire. He follows this beacon, writing, "Perhaps the chance was almost miraculous that led me to this opening" (164). He soon sees that this fire has been built by a group of Indians who have taken captive a young white woman. The Indians lay in between Huntly and the mouth of the cave. Bewildered, Huntly states that "I never looked upon, or called up the image of a savage without shuddering" (166). These individuals, who unknowingly saved Huntly's life with their fire, in an instant shift from his "almost miraculous" rescuers to the object of his hate. With this statement and in the panther meat episode, Huntly gives indications of a conflict within himself between the savage means necessary to survive and his civilized sensibilities—he is compelled to devour the raw meat, but his body simultaneously rejects it; he denotes the builders of the camp fire as divinely inspired and moments later virtually as demons. By using the term "savage" to refer to both panther and Indian, Huntly collapses two dissimilar elements of the frontier—Indians and wild animals—into a comprehensive category that seems to include all traits not associated by Huntly with social behavior prescribed by white, "civilized" culture.

Huntly kills one of the Indians by throwing a hatchet into the unsuspecting man's chest and, while the other four Indians sleep, steals away from the cavern with

the captured woman. Not long after, three of the Indians from the cavern pursue, and in the fight that ensues Huntly uses their own weapons to shoot and kill all three of them, though he suffers a bloody wound on his cheek. Following this battle, Huntly reflects on the unlikelihood that he should be capable of such killings: “When thou reflectest on the mildness of my habits, my antipathy to scenes of violence and bloodshed, my unacquaintance with the use of firearms, and the motives of a soldier, thou wilt scarcely allow credit to my story” (185). He continues, writing that “the transition I had undergone was so wild and inexplicable; all that I had performed; all that I had witnessed since my egress from the pit, were so contradictory to precedent events” (186). His wilderness experience transforms him into something other than that which he knows himself to be. Richard Slotkin writes that, on the frontier, “The hunter becomes like the beast he hunts; the would-be destroyer of bestial sin himself degenerates into a Belial” (475). This is exactly what happens to Huntly. “Savage” traits of both the panther and the Indians become incorporated into Huntly’s very identity. In this transformation, Beverly R. Voloshin writes that Huntly “has fulfilled the worst expectations of many European settlers that whites who come into contact with the wilderness will become savage and wild” (273). His shift to this form of savagery, though, keeps him and the former captive alive; that is, Huntly, a “civilized,” rational individual has become, to use his term, “savage” in order to defeat that same “savage” and preserve the “civilized”—the captured young white woman. His actions trouble him for the reason given by Voloshin: he becomes “savage and wild.” He writes, “I was satiated and gorged with slaughter, and thought upon a new act of destruction with abhorrence and loathing” (190). Regardless of the desirable outcomes of what he does

on the frontier, Huntly disdains his savage-like alteration, though he cannot resist it when happenstances demand action.

Unlike Robert Rogers, who simply does not see his own actions as similar to those of the Native Americans, Edgar Huntly comprehends clearly that his actions are not those of a well-mannered, rational man. He seems powerless to thwart his capacity for such reviled action, though. Upon resuming his journey through the wilderness towards home, he meets up with the last Native American from the cavern. Huntly shoots him, wounding him but not killing him. As the man writhes in pain, Huntly decides, "To kill him outright, was the dictate of compassion and of duty" (193). He shoots him in the head to put him out of his anguish, but this second shot fails to end the Indian's life, and Huntly must kill him using the bayonet on the rifle. After doing so, states Huntly, "I dropped the weapon and threw myself on the ground, overpowered by the horrors of this scene" (193). Even in his well-intentioned, "civilized"-minded, virtuous attempt to end the Indian's suffering, to shoot the man twice then bayonet him to death seems more like savage over-kill than civility. This knowledge overwhelms and distresses Huntly, for he senses that basic qualities of his identity—civilized or savage—were falling further and further out of his control. The frontier journey, itself, is dictating his identity instead of him determining for himself who he is and how he will behave during his journey.

Brockden Brown uses the trail Huntly must follow to return from the frontier to his township as a symbol of his protagonist's straying from the path of civilization and into savagery. Huntly describes the worn path through the wilderness as "narrow, and on either side was a trackless wilderness" (195). This road proves difficult to follow and

soon, in a mistake full of symbolism, Huntly "had taken a wrong direction, and instead of approaching, was receding from the habitation of men" (195). Furthermore, even after receiving directions at a home which he comes upon, Huntly soon looses the trail again, and, he writes, "Hence a doubt was suggested whether I had not missed the true road. In this doubt I was confirmed by the difficulties which now grew up before me" (204-5). The trail leads literally and figuratively to civilization, and Huntly fails to follow it. This interpretation of Huntly's failure to stay on the trail corresponds with George Toles' proposition that "All that connects him with what he has left behind is a thin thread of rational awareness that seems in imminent danger of being lost as necessity drives him closer and closer to the level of pure savagery" (150). He, in other words, cannot survive his adventure on the frontier without abandoning hegemonic practices and relying on his savage-like instincts and abilities, which, of course, have served him well during this wilderness experience. And this abandonment seems only partially under his control, for he grows more distressed as he progressively loses the qualities that define him to himself and to others as "civilized."

One of these qualities is his physical appearance, a quality greatly affected by his frontier travel and his battles with Native Americans. At the home where he received directions, the mother living there starts when she sees her savage-looking visitor. "The uncouthness of my garb," Huntly explains, "my wild and weather-worn appearance, my fusil and tom-hawk, could not but startle them" (196). The difficulty in distinguishing Huntly as either white or Indian, savage or civilized, continues as he is also mistaken for an Indian during his journey by a party of whites hunting a band of rogue Native Americans. Simultaneously, Huntly, himself, confuses the party of whites

for Indians. Huntly fires his weapon at a close friend, thinking that he is an Indian, and his friend and company return fire thinking that Huntly is an Indian. Huntly survives by leaping from high above into a frigid, rough river that carries him away as shots are fired at him from the whites, who, of course, think that only an Indian, with the racially stereotypical innate prowess with which they credit him, could live through such a jump. Repeatedly and in different forms, Brockden Brown leaves no doubt in his description of Huntly's frontier adventure that action Huntly thinks of as savage becomes necessary for survival, that this fact troubles Huntly deeply as he sinks into savagery, and that no solitary effort on Huntly's part will alter these facts.[15]

Employing animal and Indian—"savage"—tactics, Huntly survives the wilderness, saves a captured white woman from a band of Indians, and defeats these same the Indians who had raided and terrorized the white community of the area. However, Huntly's actions are not accepted as means to a commendable end as similar actions are for Robert Rogers. Huntly's "savage" actions haunt him and ultimately alienate him from his community. Thus, the frontier of this journey is far from Huntly's idealized frontier on which he previously regularly enjoyed easy-going ramblings.

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[15] This provocative novel has and continues to receive in print new interpretations and critical inquiries. For example, see this representative, though in no way exhaustive list: Achilles, Jochen. "Composite (Dis)Order: Cultural Identity in *Wieland*, *Edgar Huntly*, and *Arthur Gordon Pym*." *Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era, 1650-1850*. Eds. Kevin L. Cope and Laura Morrow. New York: AMS, 1997. 251-70. Bellis, Peter J. "Narrative Compulsion and Control in Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly*." *South Atlantic Review* 52 (1987): 43-57. Bottalico, Michele. "The American Frontier and the Initiation Rite to a National Literature: The Example of *Edgar Huntly* by Charles Brockden Brown." *RSA Journal: Rivista di Studi Nord-Americani* 4 (1993): 3-16. Hamelman, Steve. "Rhapsodist in the Wilderness: Brown's Romantic Quest in *Edgar Huntly*." *Studies in American Fiction* 21 (1993): 171-90. Hustis, Harriet. "Deliberate Unknowing and Strategic Retelling: The Ravages of Cultural Desire in Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly*." *Studies in American Fiction* 31 (2003): 101-20. Krause, Sydney J. "*Edgar Huntly* and the American Nightmare." *Studies in the Novel* 13 (1981): 294-302. Sullivan, Michael P. "Reconciliation and Subversion in *Edgar Huntly*." *American Transcendental Quarterly* 2 (1988): 5-22. Watts, Steven. *The Romance of Real Life: Charles Brockden Brown and the Origins of American Culture*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994.

Instead, his nightmarish frontier journey takes the idea of the individual embracing those character traits that make him able to survive out on the frontier and presents the inherent and intricate problems with such an acceptance. Huntly's frontier excursions, which have in the past been elemental to his identity, cause him, in his identity, to become more like Indians than other white Americans. His failure to resist "savage" impulses during his journey—like eating the panther and beating the dying Indian—reveal that he does not fully dictate who he is while on the frontier. Despite the fact that throughout his life Huntly has preferred the company of the wilderness to the company of people, his most memorable and dangerous journey through the frontier, his frontier journey that most impacts his identity and his private and public image of self, reveals that such company has altered who he is in undesirable ways. Solo frontier travel may make Huntly feel at home, but it ultimately destroys him.

Similar feelings of otherness and a sense of companionship with nature that Huntly possesses are present in the protagonist of Edgar Allan Poe's unfinished *The Journal of Julius Rodman. Being an Account of the First Passage Across the Rocky Mountains of North America Ever Achieved by Civilized Man*. One of Poe's hoax texts which was published serially in *Burton's Gentlemen's Magazine* in 1840, *Rodman* purports to be the recently discovered account of the first white man to cross the Rocky Mountains. In the text, the west and Julius Rodman's experiences there are idealized. The American western wilderness becomes that place where someone like Rodman, who doesn't quite fit in with society, can feel a sense of belonging, purpose, and comfort. Unlike Brown's *Edgar Huntly*, which in the end denies its frontier traveler a

place of belonging, Poe's *Rodman* imagines a place in the west for romantic dreamers like Rodman.

The Journal of Julius Rodman, in which Poe borrows heavily to make his hoax believable from Washington Irving's *Astoria* and *Captain Bonneville*, Nicholas Biddle's account of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and others, is traditionally held in low regard by critics. Burton R. Pollin, for example, writes that "while the piecing together of his borrowings required a high measure of skill and helped to support his hoax, which was not a parody, the whole showed a small measure of original inspiration and slight attention to the stylistic qualities of his narrative" (515). Jeffrey Meyers theorizes that "Poe's desperate need for money forced him to waste his talents on such potboilers [as *Rodman*], which failed to achieve popular success" (115). Scott Peeples readily dismisses *Rodman*: "Unfortunately, the concept of this playful experiment is more intriguing than Poe's execution of it." He finds that the work "remains primarily an example of Poe's complicity in the amoral system of literary production" (117). And David Ketterer finds little innate value in *Rodman*, deciding that it "is clearly a companion piece to [Poe's novel] *Pym* and should be read in the light of that work" (141). However, regardless of Poe's use of other people's material and its unfinished state, *Rodman* stands as a carefully crafted tale of the protagonist's development from hypochondriac misfit into confident wilderness trek leader, from someone lacking a sense of purpose into someone having vitality and drive. Frontier travel allows for this character development.[16]

[16] For additional scholarship on the writing and publication of *Julius Rodman*, see: Achilles, Jochen. "Edgar Allan Poe's Dreamscapes and the Transcendentalist View of Nature Publication."

While much of *Rodman* is material lifted or adapted from other texts, in the midst of landscape description and incidents with Indians and bears flows throughout the text the development of Rodman himself. To succeed with the hoax that the text really is the journal of the first white explorers to cross the Rocky Mountains, Poe is not mentioned as the work's author. Instead, the narrative voice who presents Rodman's journal is purportedly the editor of *Burton's Gentlemen's Magazine*, in which the journal appears. Immediately in the text, Poe establishes Rodman's differences from other members of society. The editor refers to "the peculiar character of the gentleman who was the leader and soul of the expedition, as well as its historian, has imbued what he has written with a vast deal of romantic fervor, very different from the luke-warm and statistical air which pervades most records of the kind" (521). Not only, however, does Rodman possess romantic fervor and a peculiar character that results in a unique piece of travel literature, Rodman also possesses "an hereditary hypochondria" (522), and it was this ailment that drove him westward. The editor determines that Rodman "was urged solely by a desire to seek, in the bosom of the wilderness, that peace which his peculiar disposition would not suffer him to enjoy among men. He fled to the desert as to a friend" (522). Add to his ailment the fact that his family, historically, had lived "almost in hermit fashion" (522), and it becomes clear that Poe is here writing a situation similar to that displayed by Morgan Neville in his text about Mike Fink. That

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Amerikastudien/American Studies 40 (1995): 553-73. Hulsey, Dallas. "Plagiarizing the Plagiarists: Poe's Critique of Exploration Narratives." *Edgar Allan Poe Review* 3 (2002): 28-36. Kime, Wayne R. "Poe's Use of Irving's *Astoria* in "The Journal of Julius Rodman." *American Literature* 40 (1968): 215-22. ----. "Poe's Use of Mackenzie's *Voyages* in "The Journal of Julius Rodman." *Western American Literature* 3 (1968): 61-7. Mainville, Stephen. "Language and the Void: Gothic Landscapes in the Frontiers of Edgar Allan Poe." *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 14 (1981): 347-62. Weissberg, Liliane. "Editing Adventures: Writing the Text of *Julius Rodman*. *Modern Fiction Studies* 33 (1987): 413-30.

is, Poe is not only commenting on Rodman's inability to fit in; he is using that inability and the reasons for it to comment on the culture in which Rodman cannot feel comfortable. The narrator continues in his description of Rodman's character, declaring that "he was, indeed, *the man* to journey amid all that solemn desolation which he, plainly, so loved to depict. His was the proper spirit to perceive; his the true ability to feel" (524). In what follows throughout the text, Poe indicates just what elements, what scenes, what encounters gave Rodman the sense of belonging that he never felt while in settled, civilized areas.

Rodman does not fear or shrink back from the company of others. He is not simply a misanthrope or someone who desires utter isolation. In fact, among the expedition members whom he is leading into the west, Rodman finds a kindred soul with whom he can share his impressions of the journey. Without this kind of friendship, the frontier experience would be less fulfilling. As he looks out upon the landscape and contemplates his journey, Rodman writes, "At that moment I seemed possessed of an energy more than human; and my animal spirits rose so high a degree that I could with difficulty content myself in the narrow limits of the boat" (537). Yet, he continues, "these scenes and reflections which they encouraged, could not, I found, be thoroughly enjoyed, without the society of some one person of reciprocal sentiments. Thornton was precisely the kind of individual to whom I could unburthen my full heart … I never, before or since, met with any one who so fully entered into my own notions respecting natural scenery" (537). While companionship becomes necessary for Rodman to convalesce from the ailment that spurred his journey, it is a companionship centered on an appreciation of the beauty of nature and the wonders of the vast western frontier. No

wonder, then, that Rodman never felt contented in settled areas. The frontier itself plays a role in structuring the type of society in which Rodman can flourish. Just as Brockden Brown writes a frontier that demonstrates the necessity of society, so too does the frontier in Poe's *Rodman* point to society as an important influence in an individual's development of identity; Rodman, though, is not brutalized as Edgar Huntly is for this point to be made.

As the editor initially indicates, Rodman is a romantic dreamer and his descriptions of the landscape have an otherworldly, unscientific quality. Rodman writes:

> I strolled to some distance southward, and was enchanted with the voluptuous beauty of the country. The prairies exceeded in beauty any thing told in the tales of the Arabian Nights. On the edges of the creeks there was a wild mass of flowers which looked more like Art than Nature, so profusely and fantastically were their vivid colors blended together. (542)

Three days later, he records in his journal that his present location "was one of the most fairy-looking situations in the world, and filled my mind with the most delightful and novel emotions. The whole scenery rather resembled what I had dreamed of when a boy, than an actual reality … looking rather like some of those scenes of enchantment which we read of in old books" (543). Descriptions of similar sentiment occur again and again in the text. In the final installment of the unfinished work, Rodman describes cliffs that they come across along the Missouri River. He writes that "their effect upon my imagination I shall never forget. They had all the air of enchanted structures, (such as I have dreamed of,)" (573). Once more he writes that the sight where the river forks

"presented the most enchanting appearance" (575). This is the American frontier seen through the eyes of Julius Rodman. His descriptions hint at the role of the imagination in the restorative process that Rodman undergoes during his travels. Rodman feels at home on the frontier, feels as if he belongs. His eccentricities that are so out of place in society become on the frontier a factor in his self-determination, for they help mold the landscape itself and his interaction with the land as he describes it in his journal. Out in unexplored country, out on immense tracts of land that never have been described in writing until he does so in his journal, out here Rodman can define not only himself but also his environment. Choosing to define the environment as similar to those in fairy tales or romanticized times of yore reveals his disdain for that which is hard and fast; it reveals that he is a dreamer and a romantic. This ability stands in direct contrast to life in society, amid cultural institutions that categorize, describe, and define everything one encounters. Rodman is free on the unexplored frontier to perceive the land as he will, instead of having culture stipulate what is what.

In addition to allowing himself to construct the frontier in his journal as he chooses, Rodman's writing of his frontier journey determines his fate in another way. According to Poe's story, the facts surrounding the dissemination of Rodman's text are humble and unassuming, in as much as it relates to Rodman himself. The editor states that during the journey Rodman "merely kept an outline diary of his tour … and that the MSS. with which we have been furnished were not written out in detail, from that diary, until many years afterwards, when the tourist was induced to undertake the task, at the instigation of *M. Andre Michau*, the botanist" (522). Moreover, once finished, the travel journal was lost by the delivery man in transit to Michau, with "Rodman's peculiar

disposition leading him to take but little interest in the search. Indeed, strange as it may appear," he continues, "we doubt, from what we are told of him, whether he would have ever taken any steps *to make public* the results of his most extraordinary tour" (523). Instead, Rodman "never made his own journey a subject of conversation; seeming, rather, to avoid the topic" (523). Rodman's aim in undertaking his expedition was never to attain fame or to prosper financially by publicizing his accomplishment. This mind-set contrasts sharply with that of a frontier traveler from another work by Poe: "The Man That Was Used Up."

Published in 1839, the year before *Rodman* and also in *Burton's*, "The Man That Was Used Up" relates the efforts of its narrator to find out some hard facts about the exceedingly handsome and well-built Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith, the hero of the recent campaign in the American South against the Kickapoo and Bugaboo Indians. The narrator wants desperately to know about the campaign, but his conversation with Smith is interrupted, so the narrator then visits numerous people to ask them about Smith's military achievements. While everyone speaks very highly of Smith and stands in awe of the dangers and heroism of the recent campaign, no one offers any specifics of the man or the battle. Instead, when questioned by the narrator people run through a series of highly generalized praises of Smith and generalized astonishments at the viciousness of the Indian war, and soon the conversations are interrupted. Finally, the narrator gets an opportunity to meet with the man in his quarters as he dresses; however, instead of simply talking with Smith as he gets ready to go out, the narrator witnesses the disturbing and unexpected sight of Smith's valet actually putting together Smith's body parts as Smith talks with the dumbfounded and

overwhelmed narrator. From “a large and exceedingly odd-looking bundle of something which lay close to my feet on the floor” (386) the valet pieces arms, legs, shoulders, a wig, eyes, and all the rest of Smith’s body into the dashing figure that the narrator recognizes. Smith, he explains, has been broken apart during the many Indian battles in which he has been engaged, and now his body parts—the symbolic bits of all the heroic stories told about Smith—must be reconstructed into the fashionable and sought-after figure whom the public knows and adores.

After witnessing this, the narrator departs, as he states, “with a perfect understanding of the true state of affairs—with a full comprehension of the mystery which had troubled me so long. It was evident. It was a clear case. Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith was the man—was *the man that was used up*” (389). Smith, that is, is artificial, empty, false, a mere simulation of a hero. He is put together literally by his valet; figuratively, he is put together by the stories told about him, but they are empty and lack detail, lack substance. His travels in the southern frontier, engaged in battle with Indians, are done, seemingly, to produce for Smith renown and popularity. Julius Rodman, who also travels the frontier and also successfully battles Indians, does not exploit his frontier journey. By the end of the unfinished *Rodman* text, the protagonist has developed into a capable and confident adventurer; he is more substantial than he was before he began his journey, whereas Smith is in every way insubstantial after his journey and after the dissemination of the story of his journey. Rodman has always been alienated by society, while Smith fits in and is celebrated in society, but he is used up.

Similar feats on the frontier produce different final effects in the two travelers. The difference is the nature of the narratives of the journeys. In light of "The Man That Was Used Up," Rodman's presumably odd ambivalence about publicizing his story becomes an important element of how frontier travel can contribute to an individual's ability to be self-determining. Unlike Smith, Rodman has no need for society to define him or his frontier accomplishments.

Comparing these two frontier travelers, then, indicates that Poe places significance upon how each makes use of the space of the frontier as a means for identity formation. For Poe, the American frontier is best suited for a romantic like Rodman; for an opportunist like Smith, who would use the frontier for socially expedient purposes, frontier travel results in his deconstruction into only the fragile likeness of the conqueror that story makes him out to be. Initially, when Rodman makes arrangements for his western trek, his personal aim is to cure his hypochondria. His practical aim, in order to pay for the voyage and to engage fellow travelers, is to lead a fur trapping expedition. However, by the time eleven months had passed since the journey began, Rodman and his fourteen companions had abandoned this mercenary goal and had instead decided to travel for travel's sake. Rodman writes: "One interest seemed to bind all; or rather we appeared to be a band of voyagers *without* interest in view—mere travellers for pleasure" (564). In fact, except for the few Canadians in his party, he continues, "I have no doubt in the world that the pecuniary benefit to be afforded by the expedition was the last thing upon which they speculated" (564). In place of pecuniary benefits, the frontier comes to hold for Rodman benefits of a more

personal and cerebral type; exploration of America's western lands contains the fully realizable possibility of plenitude.

In contrast to Brevet Brigadier Smith, whose piecing together enacts how the public creates him through its concern and interest in him, Rodman's frontier undertaking loses any care for that which the civilized world back east concerns itself. Rodman neglects his initial intent to obtain animal pelts worth vast amounts of money. "Interests, which, in the settlements," he states, "would have been looked upon as of the highest importance, were here treated as matters unworthy of a serious word, and neglected, or totally discarded upon the most frivolous pretext" (564). For Rodman, the frontier journey itself is of value, for it prospers the journeyer as an individual and not as a mere one of the culture's masses.

This type of personal reward can only be achieved if the traveler is to foray into the wilderness, as Rodman does, disregarding common interests of the settlements. He states that instead of hunting beaver he would far rather experience "the pleasure of pushing up some romantic-looking river, or penetrating into some craggy and dangerous cavern," that he wants to forgo the pragmatic goal of fur-trapping and "turn aside in pursuit of idle amusement" (564). Such activities allow Rodman to develop himself into a frontier adventurer, an identity seems to be that which will allow him to flourish as one of society's outcasts. Morgan Neville's Mike Fink finds a similar calling on the Ohio River; the life of a boatman is the life in which Fink feels comfortable. Likewise, an adventurer out in the wilderness becomes a role in which Julius Rodman feels that he belongs, as if the further from civilization he moves, the more he feels a sense of belonging. Even out on the Great Plains, he admits, "I felt as if in too close proximity to

the settlements for the full enjoyment of my burning love of Nature, and of *the unknown*" (564). Furthermore, he continues, "I was anxious to go on—to get, if possible, beyond the extreme bounds of civilization" (565). Once marginalized by culture, Rodman now chooses to set himself apart from it.

Frontier travel allows Rodman to decide for himself to embrace both the hardships and enchantments of trying circumstances. His journey is fraught with encounters with hostile Indians, with uncertainty about streams and passages to follow, and with physical toil and injury. These trying aspects of the expedition, though, allow him to more fully embrace his adventurer identity. In the last chapter of the work that Poe wrote, Rodman and several of his companions, while out surveying, are attacked by bears, and a desperate struggle for survival ensues. Rodman writes that "for some moments I felt as if about to swoon, but a loud scream from Greely [one of his companions], who had been seized by the foremost bear, had the effect of arousing me to exertion, and when once fairly aroused I experienced a kind of wild and savage pleasure from the conflict" (578-9). Rodman survives the bear fight. Poe's text ends two paragraphs later, before Rodman even reaches the Rocky Mountains, and Poe never finished the tale. Thus, Rodman is left on this note, having developed a "wild and savage pleasure" for a kind of danger and violence—hand-to-hand combat with ferocious bears—that cannot occur in the population centers of the east coast. He has, in other words, assimilated himself into the wild and romantic wilderness that he describes in his journal, for he himself becomes a rather wild and romantic figure of a frontiersman successfully battling bears. Unlike Edgar Huntly, Rodman's assimilation to the frontier is not fraught with misgivings about growing more and more distant in

character from society. Like Mike Fink, Julius Rodman is able on the frontier to actualize an identity that is available only on the frontier. Rodman deeply desires to continually press on westward because, like these other travelers, frontier travel not only makes their self-determined identities attainable, but frontier travel is central to these identities.

EPILOGUE

Gatekeepers of "Frontier":

Natty Bumppo and the Frontier Culture Museum

In the final scene of his 1827 novel, *The Prairie*, James Fenimore Cooper illustrates the dramatic and commanding final moments in the life of his frontier hero, Natty Bumppo. An aged and revered man, Bumppo is seated in the middle of the Great Plains on a chair encircled by mournful Pawnee Indians and a few white men. He sits facing west, silently providing commentary on how frontier settlement and activity by both whites and Indians should proceed. As is the case in this and Cooper's other Leatherstocking novels, Bumppo monitors, determines, participates in, scrutinizes, and acts as a moral compass of this settlement and activity, and he does so even here as he nears death. Though his efforts are only partially successful in the novels as thoughtless, ravaging settlement proceeds westward relentlessly without heed for anything or anyone, Bumppo continually calls for responsible (Indian-like) stewardship of the land, for honesty and integrity (noble savage-like) in conduct while moving within contested frontier land, and for Christian belief, which he finds fully compatible with his frontier existence.

After settling his worldly accounts, Cooper writes, "The trapper [Bumppo] had remained nearly motionless for an hour. His eyes, alone, had occasionally opened and

shut. When opened his gaze seemed fastened on the clouds which hung around the western horizon, reflecting the bright colours and giving form and loveliness to the glorious tints of an American sunset." Suddenly, grabbing for support two friends, one white and one Indian, he struggles to his feet, says clearly and loudly, "Here!" and then dies (385). This closing scene of Bumppo's life provides a fitting close for this dissertation project, for in it Bumppo embodies many of the nationalist, racial, mythic, and individualistic possibilities, meanings, and limitations that the North American western frontier and the very idea of "frontier" possess, subjects explored by this dissertation project.

Bumppo, both in the America of Cooper's day and in the localized American communities that populated the novels, was a legendary frontiersman, that is, an individual whose actions and utterances—and the dissemination, or the stories, of his actions and utterances—deeply affected the development of the frontiers of the novels and of the concepts of America's frontiers in the minds of Cooper's audience. His body, itself, offers an approach to traveling on and settling the frontier, for it reveals the unlikely duality of mastering Indian fighting, survival, tracking, and hunting skills while at the same time remaining a "man without a cross" (or a man of unmixed, unadulterated white lineage which he claims often in *The Last of the Mohicans*). As such a body—white yet more Indian than most Indians in many ways—indicates, Bumppo lives his life as an other, albeit a respected and feared one, to the Indians and as marginalized, both geographically and through social behavior, from white society; he is at home only on the frontier. When this formative frontier figure casts his final gaze in life across the vast western horizon, he fixes that gaze as a watchful eye over all

travelers who would venture there, and he instills those values in which he believes as a social conscious to govern and judge the actions of individuals venturing into and settling in America's western frontiers.

Natty Bumppo, in this scene from *The Prairie*, acts figuratively as a gatekeeper by which travelers must pass to enter the "frontier." In other words, when approaching the subject of the American frontier and when theorizing what role frontiers play in culture, individuals are influenced in their thinking by these notions about the frontier offered and popularized by Cooper through his Leatherstocking character. And not only Cooper's novel, but these varied other texts of frontier travel studied in the preceding chapters also serve to formulate for culture the complexity of meanings possessed by the trope of the frontier, or the concept, both geographically-speaking and otherwise, of that which is just beyond the borders of the known, the defined, the familiar.

Perhaps one last brief example will assist in this illustration of how travelers are drawn into unknown lands and what the implications are of such passages. In Staunton, Virginia sits the Frontier Culture Museum. Along with traditional museum-fare artifacts, the Frontier Culture Museum consists of several fully functional, working homes and farms from colonial times in Virginia and Old World Europe—"a living history site" as it describes itself in its literature. The grounds are beautiful and the colonial farms highly picturesque. Visitors to the museum tour these sites to learn through material culture how colonials lived. "The farms," continues the museum's website, "represent the daily lives and agricultural heritage of the peoples who came to the new world and formed a unique American culture." Furthermore, "the Museum's mission is to educate the public about the lives, reasons for immigration, and cultural

synthesis of the ethnically diverse peoples who arrived in western Virginia and the mid-Atlantic backcountry during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries; as well as the native peoples who made the area their home." This description and mission statement provide a glimpse at the multi-layered process involved in approaching the frontier. The museum takes for its subject of study people who emigrated from different countries to western Virginia and the mid-Atlantic backcountry during the colonial era. To teach a twenty-first century audience about the frontier culture of that era, the museum attracts tourists to travel to Staunton and tour its facility. Visitors to the museum then travel through the interpretive lens of the museum back to backcountry colonial times.

That is, modern-day travelers to the museum travel to colonial Virginia to learn of the lives of travelers from Europe to colonial North America. The Frontier Culture Museum acts, in this instance, as the gatekeeper to America's colonial frontier, a gatekeeper by which tourists must pass in order to travel to the colonial frontier. Just as Natty Bumppo, through the popularity of the character and its enduring literary and cultural legacy, affects how many Americans view and think of the frontier—and, thus, what "frontier" entails—so too does the Frontier Culture Museum, through the physical process through which the colonial Virginia frontier is created for tourists, affect how many people understand what life was like for colonials on the frontier, for those tourists perceive the 17th, 18th, and 19th century frontiers with their own five senses. They see, touch, smell, taste, and hear exactly what "frontier" is, as determined by a museum, and as a popular, well-funded, convention-and-visitors-bureau-promoted museum, it is invested by culture with the authority to define just such a subject as "frontier." While the forms of the institutions or texts that act to define, endorse,

produce, or advance the concept of "frontier" vary—from a museum to literary pieces to oral tradition legends to nonfiction diaries to paintings to video games to monetary units and countless others—similar, highly unique, give-and-take, and situation-specific processes of defining the frontier, frontier experiences, and frontier cultures take place in all of them. And maybe these very processes must, by necessity, be complex, for just maybe the notion of fully understanding these processes of representing "frontier"—the art of clearly knowing how this representation works—is, itself, as indefinite and frontier-like as any geographical frontier ever has been.

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