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MANY WORLDS CONVERGE HERE: VISION AND IDENTITY IN AMERICAN INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY

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MANY WORLDS CONVERGE HERE: VISION AND IDENTITY IN AMERICAN INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY

by

Alicia L. Harris

A THESIS

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MANY WORLDS CONVERGE HERE: VISION AND IDENTITY IN INDIAN
PHOTOGRAPHY

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University of Nebraska, 2013

Adviser: Wendy Katz

Photographs of Native Americans taken by Frank A. Rinehart at the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in 1898 were then and continue to be part of the construction of indigenous identities, both by Anglo-Americans and Natives. This thesis analyzes the ramifications of Rinehart's portraits and those of his peers as well as Native American artists in the 20th and 21st centuries who have sought to re-appropriate these images to make them empowering icons of individual or tribal identity rather than erasure of culture.

This thesis comprises two sections. In the first section, the analysis is focused on the historical functioning of the Rinehart photographs taken at the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in 1898. The second section turns to a contemporary reading of the Rinehart images and other images like them. This includes an analysis of the author's relationship with the photograph of an ancestor who was present at the Exhibition, as well as an examination of a piece by the performance artist, James Luna. The latter section relies heavily on Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory, through which identity is formed by traumas inherited by succeeding generations, often through the vehicle of family portraits.

This thesis is dedicated to my family.
Before me and after me.

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I would like to acknowledge the people who have made this work possible.

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Mostly, I need to thank the Native people in the photographs that I have studied herein. It is their sacrifice and their lives that have really made this work possible, and whose stories I respect and love more now than ever before.

Philámayaye.

GRANT INFORMATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
GRANT INFORMATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	vii
Many Worlds Converge Here	9
A Dominant Gaze: 19 th -Century Anglo-American Views of the Indian Congress	14
Disrupting the Narrative: Interventions against the Gaze	41
Figures	61
Bibliography	85

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Frank A. Rinehart, Towakonie *Jim*, 1898. p. 61
2. *Henry Ward Beecher*, Frank A. Rinehart, 1898 p. 62
3. Frank A. Rinehart, *Pablino Diaz*, 1898 p. 63
4. Frank A. Rinehart, *Bartelda*, 1898 p. 64
5. Frank A. Rinehart, *Wolf Robe*, 1898 p. 65
6. Frank A. Rinehart, *Grant Richards*, 1898 p. 66
7. Frank A. Rinehart, *Indian Congress*, 1898 p. 67
8. Frank A. Rinehart, *Baby Incubators*, 1898 p. 68
9. Frank A. Rinehart, *Threshing Machines*, 1898 p. 69
10. Frank A. Rinehart, *Good Road Girl*, Front, 1898 p. 70
11. Frank A. Rinehart, *Good Road Girl*, Profile, 1898 p. 71
12. Frank A. Rinehart, *Blanket*, Frontal, 1898 p. 72
13. Frank A. Rinehart, *Blanket*, Profile, 1898 p. 73
14. Frank A. Rinehart, *Blanket*, Back, 1898 p. 74
15. Frank A. Rinehart, *Geronimo*, 1898 p. 75
16. Frank A. Rinehart, *Crowd in Stands*, 1898 p. 76
17. Frank A. Rinehart, *Naiche and Family*, 1898 p. 77
18. Frank A. Rinehart, *Poor Dog and Family*, 1898 p. 78
19. Frank A. Rinehart, *Red Dog and Family*, 1898 p. 79

20. James Luna, *Take A Picture With A Real Indian* Performance Still, 2010 p. 80
21. Art Spiegelman, *Prisoner on the Hell Planet*, Maus, 1991 p. 81
22. Lorado Taft, Columbus Fountain, 1912 p. 82
23. James Luna, *Take A Picture With A Real Indian* with Cutouts, 2010 p. 83
24. Edward S. Curtis, *The Vanishing Race*, 1904 p. 84

Many Worlds Converge Here

As we peruse old photographs from a century's distance, we are looking not only *at* but *for* something. That something varies among Euro-American and Native people. It is often necessary to pry up the surfaces of apparent pathos, as well as apparent pride, and to dig out from beneath something less accessible...only through personal and historical contextualization can we fill in the blanks left by incomplete and mythologized histories.

Lucy R. Lippard, *Partial Recall*, p. 19

Photographs of Native Americans taken by Frank A. Rinehart at the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in 1898 were then and still are today part of the construction of indigenous identities, both by Anglo Americans and Natives. These images at their most basic illustrate American colonialist practices. The photographer's interest in recording details of costume, family groups, and specific tribes documents the anthropometric and assimilationist policies and practices of turn of the century American culture. These photographs in many ways resemble the other types of photographic and "scientific" records used to document the alterity of Native American peoples in this period, in order to support an Anglo American national and imperialist identity. It is difficult to know with any certainty how the people in the photographs understood these individual and family portraits. But the images and the measures that they provide testimony to--boarding schools, land redistribution, legal restrictions on sovereignty-- have continued to deeply affect contemporary Native culture. Accordingly, contemporary Native artists have deconstructed these "historic" portraits as a method of mediating the cultural traumas of the past.

In 1898, Omaha photographer Frank A. Rinehart, as part of his official duties at the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, took a set of approximately 750 photographs of Native Americans attending the simultaneous Indian Congress. These photographs have been preserved in print at the Omaha Public Library along with Rinehart's photographs of the rest of the Exposition, and a second set with glass plate negatives exists at Haskell University in Kansas. Other Rinehart photographs include scenes from the Exposition at large, which showcased the economic, cultural and artistic achievements of the individuals and groups who lived in the Trans-Mississippi region. All of the buildings, which housed over 5000 exhibits, were built as temporary structures. A monument to the exposition remains in Omaha's Kountze Park, the former site of the exposition.

In considering the set of Indian Congress photographs as a separate totality, Rinehart's intention emerges as threefold: to show regional progress through evidence that Native Americans were assimilating into middle-class American society, to commemorate their culture before its supposed "vanishing," and at the same time, to document Native American "otherness." While these images appear to distinctly identify tribal affiliations, the end result is nevertheless to create, for Anglo Americans, an amalgamated or even homogenous snapshot of Western American Indian culture, facilitating its detachment from actual individuals and making it available for consumption.

Rinehart was given a franchise to sell the photographs and colored prints made from them. As part of this large but basically commercial (rather than overtly anthropological) project, he took a significant number of family portraits. Of the 650 images made at the Indian Congress, 531 of them are portraits. 210 of these are family groups or individuals

identified as members of family units. Most of the portraits and family groups have captions written directly on them, usually naming the sitter. In the group portraits, the male sitter is usually named, while women and children are often listed as “others” or “unidentified.” These captions are visible on each image. Through some additional research and through looking at the entire collection, I have surmised the names of many additional individuals who are not explicitly named by Rinehart. The remaining 120 photos are comprised of images of dances, parades, ceremonies and sham battles, where the performance of indigeneity is most explicit.

At the time that Rinehart was selected as the official photographer for the Exposition, he was a leading portrait photographer in Omaha. He owned and operated (with his wife Anna R. Rinehart as business partner) a professional studio, but was afforded a temporary one on the fairgrounds during the Exposition. It is likely that the Indian Congress portraits were made in this temporary studio.¹ Sold as souvenirs or as commodities in a market mostly aimed at white viewers, these photographs document the psychological and cultural alterity of Native American people at the time of their creation, and this aspect of the photographs continues to fuel their sale and exhibition today. But the portraits also support a Progressive-era narrative of Indigenous people adapting to Anglo-American norms and modernity. These images thus perhaps unintentionally document the trauma Native American peoples experienced at the end of decades of wars and as a result of legal and military measures aimed at eradicating traditional ways of life. Elements within these photographs, including dress, family composition, pose, and even standard photographic portrait conventions all allude to the “successful” integration or assimilation

¹ Robert Bigart and Clarence Woodcock, “The Rinehart Photographs: A Portfolio,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, 29: 4 (Autumn 1979) 25.

of individuals and whole tribes into Anglo American social norms, while at the same time marking cultural wounds.

In this thesis, I argue that various viewers construct the meaning of these photographs differently. Essentially, I am interested in understanding and explaining these shifting meanings. I structure my argument into two main parts. First I consider the modes of Anglo viewership in 1898, especially those who saw in these photographs either the “Vanishing Indian” or the assimilated one or both. In the second section, I will consider the perspective of Native peoples in viewing these photographs. Though not considered by Rinehart as his ‘intended’ audience, the Native American sitters who were paid only for attending the Congress at large but not for sitting for Rinehart, were crucial and understudied consumers of their own photographs. Without actual statements by Indian Congress participants, I turn for evidence to the attitudes recorded by Native Americans with regard to being made a subject for photography and a Western gaze generally. In this latter section, I ruminate on the effects such photographs have on the descendants of the photographed subjects as well as their overall place in photography of Native Americans. This evidence, drawn in part from fieldwork and oral history, offers insight into the kind of inherited memory, or “post memory,” existing among subsequent generations. During the course of my research, I discovered that I am, in fact, a descendant of one of the families discussed in the latter section of my paper, Red Dog. The effects of this discovery have permeated this section, especially its consideration of generational trauma. Finally, I argue that photographs of Native Americans from this era including Rinehart’s have become important for contemporary Native artists who are working to re-integrate these images as documents of past oppression and as a means of deepening personal and cultural identity.

Indeed, the ramifications of Rinehart's portraits and those of his peers like the more famous Edward S. Curtis persist into the early 21st century. The continuing commodification of the image of the Native American in popular culture and in contemporary "western art" is deeply rooted in the time period in which Rinehart was working. Native American artists in the 20th and 21st centuries have sought to re-appropriate these images, to make them about the empowerment of individual or tribal identity rather than erasure. Performance artist James Luna (Luiseno) is particularly known for creating a dialogue about the dissemination and function of this ongoing practice of European Americans searching for authentic evidence of "Indianness" in portrait photographs and Natives preserving an identity apart from and amidst its enactment. In my conclusion, I focus on Luna's performance entitled *Take A Picture With A Real Indian*.² My aim throughout is to examine the way in which these photographs—Luna's and Rinehart's--were and are at work in performing and constructing Native and American identities.

² *Take A Picture With A Real Indian* was originally performed in 1993, and has been performed multiple times since then at various locations, but I focus on his 2010 performance in Washington D.C.

A Dominant Gaze: 19th-Century Anglo-American Views of the Indian Congress

The Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition and the concurrent Indian Congress was held in Omaha, Nebraska, from June 1 through November 1, 1898. In most respects it duplicated the very successful Chicago World's Fair of five years earlier. The several fairs and expositions of this period, held in Nashville, St. Louis, Buffalo, and San Francisco, to name just a few, were where Progressive elites staked their psychic, social and economic claims to an ever-expanding territory. The commemorative history of the Exposition was published in 1909, ten years after the Exposition—and the Spanish-American War and the annexation of Hawaii--and is notable for its emphasis on national commerce rather than colonization:

DURING the prosperous years antedating the Chicago World's Fair (1893), when the West made unexampled progress, there was an oft-expressed desire that an interstate exposition might be held in Omaha. The suggestion contemplated only a sectional exhibit of the products and industries of Nebraska and adjoining States, and was born of a knowledge of the wealth-producing power of this region, and of an urgent call for the spreading of that knowledge throughout the East.³

Combining state and regional pride with a desire to bring economic investment to the area, the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition was, however, conceived from the beginning as a support for the internal colonization of western lands. The exhibitionary project itself asserts the rights of Americans to not only occupy formerly Native land and seek economic advantage from it, but also to integrate this terrain to American models and value systems.

Omaha's great innovation, however, and the source of most of the Exposition's popularity, was the Indian Congress. Of the Indian Congress, the Exposition's historian

³ James B. Haynes, ed., *History of the Trans-Mississippi and International of 1898*, (Omaha, Nebraska: Woodward and Teirnan, 1910) ii.

recorded the interest in assembling a mass of Native Americans “who would, by their equipage, dress, actions and participation in the rites and ceremonies peculiar to their race, show to the younger [American] generations in an interesting and instructive manner the kind and character of people the early settlers had for neighbors.”⁴ This proposition seems to have come from Edward Rosewater, editor of the *Omaha Bee* since 1871, and the Exposition’s chief publicist. The federal government’s Office of Indian Affairs, with additional local supporters, funded the event.⁵

The most important consequence of Washington’s involvement in the Exposition was that James Mooney, a U.S. Bureau of Ethnology scientist, designed the living exhibition of American Indians. In his official report about the exhibition, he explains his vision, which was to charge all Government-commissioned Indian Agents involved with tribes west of the Mississippi River to bring their tribes to Omaha for the display of their life ways.⁶ With the backing of the Office of Indian Affairs, Indian Agents were informed that the object of the Indian Congress was:

⁴ Haynes, *History of the Trans-Mississippi*, 222.

⁵ The Office of Indian Affairs would become the Bureau of Indian Affairs and would be transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1947. At the time of the Indian Congress, however, it was called the Office of Indian Affairs and was housed under the War Department. This office was created in 1824 and is separate from the US Bureau of Ethnology, which was created in 1879. The Bureau of Ethnology provided some funding for the Indian Congress. The mission of the Bureau of Ethnology was "to organize anthropologic research in America" and house this information in the Smithsonian Institution. The Office of Indian Affairs, still under the War Department, operated under and facilitated the Indian Appropriations Bill, which established Indian Territory in Oklahoma in 1889. The bill also allocated funds for the resettlement of indigenous peoples onto reservation lands throughout the 1890s. A clause of the Indian Appropriations Bill allocated funding for the display of “Indian exhibits upon the fair grounds” throughout the country, largely focused on Western states. The text of the Bill states that “these annual exhibits afford an admirable opportunity to the Indian to become familiar with the results of labor as practiced by the whites, and encourages him to go and do likewise. These fairs should be properly encouraged. Funding for the Indian Congress under the Indian Appropriations Bill totaled \$40,000 and was made available in July of 1898. Text of Congressional Hearings about the Bill is available at:

http://archive.org/stream/annualreportofco188900unitrich/annualreportofco188900unitrich_djvu.txt.

Additionally, funding for the Indian Congress was made available through a bill passed by US Congress in 1897, which provided a sum of \$100,000 to execute the Indian Congress.

⁶ James Mooney, “Report on the Indian Congress,” *American Anthropologist N. S. I.*, (January 1899), 128.

to make an extensive exhibit illustrative of the mode of life, native industries, and ethnic traits of as many aboriginal American tribes as possible. To that end it is proposed to bring together selected families or groups from all the principal tribes, and camp them in tepees, wigwams, hogans, etc., on the exposition grounds and there permit them to conduct their domestic affairs as they do at home, and make and sell their wares for their own profit.⁷

While Mooney prescribed the display of a great variety of peoples and lifestyles for the observation of American audiences, he bemoaned the resulting exhibition's deviation from his original plan. He explains that the Congress lacked a representation of "the leading native industries," which he lists as "blanket weaving, pottery making, silver working, basket making, bread making, or skin dressing." He notes that the traditional earth lodge of the Omaha was not even displayed, as typical of the Congress's overall mediocrity in achieving accurate representation of the diverse tribes. Of the ethnological studies, embodied visually in the Rinehart photographs, Mooney reports, these "were the work of an expert detailed at the special request of the management and were paid for outside the appropriation," presumably alluding to the funding of the Congress by the Office of Indian Affairs.⁸

The Indian Congress hosted over 545 individuals, called "Indian delegates" by the official organizers of the event. The tribes represented in the archive at the Omaha Public Library include the Assiniboiné, Blackfoot, Chippewa, Cheyenne, Tonkawa, Wichita, Flathead, Crow, Omaha, Sioux (Ogalala and Wind River bands, although they are unspecified in the collection), Apache (San Carlos), Apache (Chiricahua), Apache (Jicarilla) Kiowa, Fox, Ponca, and Southern Arapaho. While participating in the living exhibition, these delegates were supplied with filtered water and daily food rations which

⁷ Mooney, "Report on the Indian Congress," 128.

⁸ Mooney, "Report on the Indian Congress," 129.

were, according to Mooney, “equivalent to the regular army ration.”⁹ The Congress represented the largest gathering of American Indians from different parts of the country that had yet been achieved, and Rinehart’s photographs represent one of the best photographic documentations of both Indian leaders and common people at the turn of the 19th century.

The Indian Congress concluded a decade that had begun with a great deal of bloodshed as the “Indian Wars” came to a close at Wounded Knee in 1890. During the previous century or more of warfare, American culture had established Native Americans as vicious savages. Even after Natives were confined to reservations, popular imagery still emphasized bloodthirsty half-naked or uncivilized foes, often in contrast to western Anglo heroes. Anheuser-Busch in 1896 sent a lithograph of *Custer’s Last Fight* to saloons throughout the nation, showing a valiant Custer and his cavalry hemmed in by war bonnet wearing, club wielding shirtless warriors. Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show, which performed outside the gates of the Trans-Mississippi Exposition, similarly put on a display of “wild” Indians at war. Certainly Native Americans were widely viewed through this lens, and the Indian Congress to some extent supported this with “sham battles.” Bonnie Miller argues eloquently that this concept of the savage Indian was closely tied to the prevailing assumption that he was part of the past:

The alleged closure of the frontier and the defeat of the Lakota at Wounded Knee in 1890, largely conceived of as the last of the significant Indian wars, renewed authority in the romanticized image of the “noble” Indian destined to “vanish,” literally or culturally. At the same time, political, diplomatic, and economic policy-making was increasingly directed outside American borders, culminating in the decisions to intervene in Cuba’s struggle for independence from Spain in 1898, annex Hawai‘i, and acquire Spain’s remaining colonies:

⁹ Mooney, “Report on the Indian Congress,” 129.

Puerto Rico, Guam, Cuba, and the Philippines. The world's fair became an important site for this imperial vision to take shape in the American cultural imagination and reach a broad audience.¹⁰

America's civilizing mission was, in a sense, underwritten by the presentation of Indigenous people at the Exposition in Omaha and at others like it, as well as in Rinehart's photographs.

Reactions to the Congress and the peoples displayed there varied greatly. Author and publisher Alice Harriman commented of the Indian Congress in the *Overland Monthly*, "it is possible that there never will be again, as there never was in the past, such a gathering of representatives of a fast-dying race."¹¹ This popular idea that American Indigenous populations would soon disappear prevailed in great part because of how Anglo Americans pre-defined them as savages. Photography came to be a powerful tool for confirming this definition, as in Theodore Roosevelt's interpretation of Edward S. Curtis' similar photographs some thirty years later.¹² Such statements that the American Indian (as photographed by Rinehart or Curtis or others) would soon "vanish" were often paired with evidence of assimilation of selected Indians, while both scenarios buttressed the superiority

¹⁰ Bonnie Miller, "The Incoherencies of Empire" The 'Imperial' Image of the Indian at the Omaha World's Fairs of 1898-99," *American Studies*, 49:3/4 (Fall/Winter 2008) 40.

¹¹ Alice Harriman, "The Congress of American Aborigines At The Omaha Exposition," *Overland Monthly*, 3 (1899) 506.

¹² The notion of the "Vanishing Indian" is seen repeatedly in various texts produced in the 19th century and is especially poignant in the work of Edward Curtis. His book of photographs, *The North American Indian*, was published by Curtis and funded by banking magnate J. Pierpont Morgan and sold by subscription, from 1907-1939. In the introduction, Theodore Roosevelt writes: "The Indian as he has hitherto been is on the point of passing away. His life has been lived under conditions through which our own race passed so many ages ago that not a vestige of their memory remains. It would be a veritable calamity if a vivid and truthful record of these conditions were not kept." Accessed through the Library of Congress and Northwestern University Digital Library Collections at . Furthermore, Native American populations at the end of the 19th century seemed to confirm this view since they showed a staggering decline in numbers. The 1890 census information was lost in a fire at the Department of Commerce in 1921, but it is estimated by Michael Haines and Richard Hall Steckel, in *A Population History of the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), that the population of Native Americans in 1800 was around 600,000. In 1900, they estimate the population at 248,253. Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) is another excellent source on this information. It is evident that the trope of the "vanishing" Indian reflected some aspects of lived reality for indigenous populations.

of Anglo civilization. The objectives of such racialized photography were not themselves explicitly instrumental in subjugating or destroying a culture, but rather served a rhetoric that romanticized and memorialized, and thereby confirmed the ultimate projected demise of a people. At the same time, though less often acknowledged, the photographs documented the continued survival and resistance of Indigenous people.

In Omaha, which was anxious about how its image would appear to Easterners, Indians were understood to be both an attraction to tourists and a threat to undermine the city's sophistication by confirming that it was still too close to the frontier to have pretensions to culture. This concern about minimizing the presence of the Indians is evident in a publication from Omaha's elite clubwomen. These women were involved in the Exposition: in fundraising, in organizing the educational displays and congresses, in contributing artwork to exhibitions, in writing publicity and criticism, and as visitors, employees and participants. They were typically well-educated, well-to-do, white, and related socially and by family to the Exposition's male managers, who as a group were reform-minded Republicans. A publication by two Omaha literary society ladies may thus represent this genteel, progressive group's reaction to Rinehart's photographs. Mary D. Learned writes, "In this brief space, I can only touch upon the most prominent and interesting of the Indians and the pictures."¹³ She proceeds to write at length about her favorite images, frequently drawing comparisons between the sitters and famous contemporary Anglo celebrities. For example, she compares the photo of Wichita chief Towakoni Jim (Figure 1) to Henry Ward Beecher (Figure 2), a popular Congregationalist

¹³ Mary D. Learned, *The Pebble*, I (March 1900), Part I, 22. *The Pebble* was a monthly periodical edited by Learned and Louise McPherson. There is no title to the various sections, but individual folios could be purchased separately. This folio in Part I included a section that reviewed the Indian Congress and provided commentary on the photographs made by Rinehart.

clergyman and author. Beecher had received great renown for his progressive views, his avocation of women's suffrage and ending slavery. Though the comparison of Towakoni Jim to Beecher is not explicitly negative, it demonstrates only a cursory knowledge of the Wichita chief; the comparison seems based on mere appearance and little else in the personality, history, or lifework of either of the two men. The Natives gathered at the Indian Congress were seen as a spectacle, rather than individuals with storied or noble histories. Neither the fact that Towakoni Jim had led the Wichita in resisting the division of their lands in the Allotment Era, nor the fact that he was one of the main signers of several treaties with the U.S. government were relevant. Instead her commentary privileges Anglo popular culture.

Learned similarly makes an allusion to "the North American Cyrano" in the photograph of the Kiowa Pablino Diaz (Figure 3).¹⁴ While her reference to the 17th-century dramatist indicates her keen awareness of the physical features of Diaz' face, it again asserts a Western tradition and a privileging of European historical narratives. Her discussion of the San Carlos Apache man Bartelda shows her typical approach. She makes her enjoyment of the image personal, commenting that, "If I could have but one picture from the Rinehart collection I would choose his. It bears a remarkable resemblance to the finest profiles of Napoleon. Once seen, it lingers, persistently on the memory (Figure 4)." Again, Learned connects the portrait to a Western heroic tradition, choosing celebrities whose faces are widely known. It is the sentence that follows, however, that solidifies and problematizes this seeming habit of the humorous comparison to a famous Anglo-European. She adds, "however, it is not strictly speaking, an Indian picture," because of

¹⁴ Learned, *The Pebble*, 21.

Bartelda's Western dress. She asserts instead that "Mr. Rinehart considers Wolf Robe, the Cheyenne chief, as the typical Indian."¹⁵ The photograph of Wolf Robe shows a man standing in full regalia, deeply and thoroughly performing the role of indigeneity, whether consciously or not (Figure 5). Wolf Robe stands, his full body in view of the camera, carrying an assembled peace pipe, beaded bandolier bag, and wool robe in his hands. He wears his hair in two long braids that rest on his chest, and a large circular medallion hangs from his neck. The beading on his bandolier draws the eye of the viewer to his beaded moccasins. In nearly every regard, indeed Wolf Robe is shown as "the typical Indian." But he is standing at a three quarter angle, a portrait convention with deep European roots. His body (like all of the bodies in the Rinehart collection) is positioned in front of a draped background fabric, likely painted canvas. It is visible in the photograph of Wolf Robe that this backdrop material sometimes gets wrinkled, disrupting the romance of its almost Gothic-looking window, painted in at the left side.

By comparing portraits of Indian men to Western celebrities throughout her article, Learned's comments are always predicated on the ultimate demise of American indigenous peoples, due to their supposed savagery. She achieves and reasserts the perception of the savagery of Indian peoples through her narrow focus on specific elements of their person. In the case of Bartelda and Wolf Robe above, she is forced to assert that the Bartelda photo is *not* an Indian picture, and so must quickly turn her attention to what she perceives as a "real" Indian, embodied in Wolf Robe. It is the selective focus that helps underscore Learned's bias about the characteristics of "authentic" Indian people. She makes bold claims that the Tonkawa tribe constituted a "mere remnant of a people on the verge of

¹⁵ Learned, *The Pebble*, 24.

extinction,” who “are of a peculiar interest because they constitute a distinct linguistic stock and are the only existing cannibals in the United States. They are also the sole representatives of the old Alamo mission. There are only fifty three left.”¹⁶ She makes this statement while discussing the photograph of Grant Richards, Tonkawa Chief (Figure 6). Her attitude about the savagery and the implication of cannibalism among the Tonkawa serves as a means to further primitivize American Indians, despite the contrary evidence in Richards’ portrait.¹⁷ This results in an appreciation for and urgency to the progressive “aid” offered to them in assimilationist institutions. While it is unknown whether Learned herself was supportive of these programs and institutions, the development of such programming in the decades that followed her commentary suggests that her sentiments were pertinent in the dominant discourse about Natives. Ultimately, Learned’s style of rhetoric provided a means by which to further justify the treatment of American Indians throughout the 20th century. This attitude abounded at the fair, and, it could be argued, that this was in fact the *purpose* of the Indian Congress.

As a male complement to Learned’s whiggish style, Horace M. Rebok’s *The Last of the Mus-Qua-Kies and the Indian Congress, 1898*, provides a Romantic narrative that emphasizes the pathos of what are nonetheless still assumed to be doomed peoples, by focusing more on an individual than a tribe. Rebok was the Indian Agent for the Musquakie tribe in 1898, and though an Anglo American, he purports to describe the Congress from an indigenous perspective. Pity for the “poor natives” and support for their assimilation are his *modus operandi*. His bias is laid out most succinctly when he states that the benefit of the

¹⁶ Learned, *The Pebble*, 24.

¹⁷ According to Miranda “Nax’ce” Allen-Myer who is the Tonkawa Museum (Tonkawa, Oklahoma) Executive and NAGPRA Assistant, there is no record of cannibalism among the Tonkawa. I corresponded with her via email on February 20-22, 2013.

Indian Congress was not only to teach Anglo Americans about Indigenous life, but also to instruct Natives in the potential and power of Western, industrial lifestyles. He characterizes the Congress thus: “It was the very irony of fate. It was a continental drama wherein the children of nature came back to pitch their tents and sing a new song by the waters of the Missouri, on whose banks their fathers wept the bitter tears of desolation.”¹⁸ The role of Anglo Americans, like Rebok himself, in colonizing and invading American prairie lands apparently was lost on Rebok. He continues, “The journey was a melancholy pilgrimage to the dispossessed heirs of the rolling plains and the rich valleys over which they passed to join the Omahas on the playground of their youth, but in the panorama to which they came they saw the only salvation which will prevent the extinction of their race- the arts and industries of civilized life.”¹⁹ His position again presumes the cultural superiority of Anglo society. It reads as though the loss of lands and lifeways were a means by which Americans were aiding indigenous peoples. Though Rebok is careful to exclude the photography of the Congress from his account, a proceeding that might interrupt the romantic individualism of the text with a reminder of the constant surveillance the tribes were under, his account is part of the same commercial phenomena as Rinehart’s photographs. Both serve the larger objective of providing a means to justify, commemorate, and memorialize a people who were presumed to soon disappear entirely.

Rebok’s book is illustrated throughout with prints from the Rinehart collection of portraits, mostly individual photographs of the most “authentic” looking people, dressed in traditional regalia, as though Rebok was making a studied effort to avoid representing Indians who had obvious contact and interaction with the Anglo world. These pictures most

¹⁸ Horace M. Rebok *The Last of the Mus-Qua-Kies and the Indian Congress of 1898*, (Dayton, Ohio: W.R. Funk Publisher, 1900) 61.

¹⁹ Rebok, 60.

often accompany paragraphs about specific tribes or people, but photographs of large gatherings and sham battle re-enactments turn up somewhat arbitrarily in various places. No images of family groups and only a few images of women are shown, in keeping with Rebok's stereotyping of Plains tribes as warrior cultures, underscoring the romantic understanding of heroic individuality as a masculine and autonomous structure. Most of the photos within the text are accompanied by the caption written on the original prints made by Rinehart, lending the photographs a further quality of documentary immediacy.

The insatiable demand at the end of the 19th century for "authentic" Native American culture and artifacts lay behind both Rebok and Learned, despite their differences in style and media. Photographs of the physical appearance of these people provided, in equal measure to accounts of their interior subjectivities, a product demanded in Anglo collections. They represent the newly-won empire in pictorial detail. Art historian Elizabeth Hutchinson analyzes this trend in her 2009 book, *The Indian Craze*. She argues that Anglo enthusiasm for collecting Indigenous objects at the end of the 19th century and throughout the early years of the 20th century was a product of the very modernism that "Indians," in their craftsmanship and ties to nature, were believed to amend or provide an antidote to. She further links the desire for authentic artifacts to western expansion.²⁰ The complement to this Anglo-American practice is the Native American performance of indigeneity. Literature on the performance of identity abounds, but Jason Zingsheim's emphasis on changeability is most important here. In the development of Native American identity, especially through the late 19th and the mid-20th centuries, individuals of

²⁰ Elizabeth Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze: Primitivism, Modernism, and Transculturation in American Art, 1890-1915*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009) 19.

indigenous descent walk a thin line between full indigenous, and full dominant cultural expressions of identity. Zingsheim explains,

The key components of mutational identity are evolution, multiplicity, embodiment, and agency. Identity [is] in process. Mutation does not necessarily move in positive, beneficial, or even new directions, but movement is nevertheless constant. The subjectivities that hail us, and the identities we construct through them, are constantly evolving. This evolution varies in both speed and scale, sometimes slowly shifting undetected moment by moment in miniscule ways and at other times being radically reconfigured in a split-second. As a result of these movements, identity is constructed through [Derridean] difference.²¹

The individuals portrayed in the photographs made by Rinehart at the Indian Congress, and other images of similar type, made conscious decisions about their self-presentation. While the Anglo reading of the Rinehart images might suggest the control of Anglo society over the individuals represented therein, it is likely that they retained a large degree of autonomy in how they would present themselves for the camera. Mostly these people appear dressed in the finest regalia or uniform if they were associated with the U.S. military or tribal police units. However, their presence at the Exhibition was apparently mandatory. Their identity is truly mutational in nature in that they existed in a liminal place between the world of tradition and impending modernity.

The tension between performed indigenous and dominant cultural identity operates to extend (and to meet the demands of) the consumer culture that had begun in the Gilded Age. If ethnographic collecting is a form of material enrichment designed to exacerbate the differences between Anglo Americans, based on superior knowledge and access, Native Americans and ethnographic “others” were in turn defined by their being consumed.²²

²¹ Jason Zingsheim, “X-Men Evolution: Mutational Identity and Shifting Subjectivities,” *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 22 (2011) 228.

²² Brad Evans, “Cushing’s Zuni Sketchbooks: Literature, Anthropology and American Notions of Culture,” *American Quarterly*, 49:4 (1997) 717-745.

Learned provides information about the demand for these specific images at the end of her report in *The Pebble*. She notes requests from Russia, Austria, France, Germany and India for a collection of the photographs from Rinehart's studio. She lists demands from institutions throughout the United States, including the Boston Public Library and the Field Museum in Chicago, as well as Columbia, Yale, and Harvard Universities.²³ The far-reaching demand for these images seems to reflect the broad spectrum of their influence and the impression they made.

Indeed, Rinehart's Indian Congress oeuvre satisfies a variety of functions, while maintaining a certain promise of authenticity and access, as it varies from studio portraits of individuals and families, action scenes of "sham battles" and sacred dances, to more candid images of Native Americans interacting with one another as well as with Exposition patrons. These works, regardless of subject, consistently demonstrate the presence and privilege of the Anglo American gaze upon Native American populations. Feminist scholars, who argue, essentially, that men bear the active role in viewing where women take the passive role in being the image on display, have studied the control of the gaze.²⁴ The same argument that has been applied to sexual divisions can be applied to racial ones as well, where Anglo viewers exercise the equivalent of the controlling male gaze.

The quintessence of this ever-present gaze is an image simply titled "Indian Congress" (Figure 7). Several Natives gather in a drum circle sitting in the grass, while others dance and walk around with spectators in Anglo-American dress gathered in the center of the composition. The central Native American groups, seated in the foreground, have their backs turned to the viewer of the photograph. Their bodies obscure their actions,

²³ Learned, *The Pebble*, 25-26.

²⁴ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen*, 16:3 (Autumn 1975) 6-18.

so one cannot be certain exactly what the subject of their attention is, but it is likely that they are seated around a drum, singing and performing a song. Behind them, in the mid-ground of the composition, the Anglo audience stands watching their actions. Because the Natives are difficult to see, the subject of the photograph becomes the imperial gaze of the Anglo audience. White bouffanted women in corsets and summery straw hats, perhaps very similar to Learned, gather together with men in full suits and bowler hats to watch the drama unfolding at the center of the Natives' circle, thus effectively making a spectacle of their gathering. An interesting power play happens as two Native women stand near the center of the circle fully covered in blankets, looking rather stoically towards Rinehart's camera. They directly hold his gaze as behind them, American women amicably look at the blanketed women. A trading and shuffling of gazes is happening here: the Native women are seemingly undeterred by being watched, and stare at the photographer, while the American women are observed beholding the actions of their Native born sisters. The American women have become the spectacle, too, as both parties take on a "touristic gaze," surveying one another in a living, face-to-face interaction.²⁵ Native Americans were not unwilling participants in the transformation of their culture into a spectacle at the Indian Congress; rather, their part in the experience was performative and one to be consumed by Anglos.

In becoming an ethno-spectacle at the fair and on film (glass plate negatives in the case of Rinehart), Native American lives, even when those lives are portrayed as savage, are effectively made captive and tame in the minds of Americans. It is at the exposition, the Wild West Show and the roadside tourist trap that Native American cultures and bodies

²⁵ Nancy Parezo and Don D. Fowler, *Anthropology Goes to the Fair: The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007) 9.

become enmeshed in Western systems of popular entertainment and didacticism.²⁶ Lucy Lippard argues in the introductory chapter of her edited volume on photography of Native Americans that “around the turn of the century, Indians were the photographic counterparts of today’s “lookouts”- roadside scenic vistas, ready-made “views,” “nature” viewed from a static culture.”²⁷ But this explanation leaves out two types of photographs, seemingly different from the tourist spectacles, which run through the Rinehart collection: individual and family portraits. Their structure is equally telling of the perception of indigenous Americans as the subject of the Anglo gaze at the end of the 19th century.

First are the individualizing portraits of American Indians, largely adult women and men, but some of children. These function as an immediately telling index of the dominance of Western ideals, asserting Anglo fidelity (even in farflung outposts like Omaha) to established values and normative behavior, and the ambition to conform Natives to such a value system. Such portraits also serve to advance the notion of individualism itself, a concept deeply rooted in Western ideologies of hard work and religious conviction.²⁸ The advance of “the individual” functions antithetically to the tribal and community ties that had held Native American populations together. Paula Gunn Allen elucidates that “for Indians, relationships are based on commonalities of consciousness, reflected in thought and behavior; blood is only a reflection of that central definitive bond. In such a system, individualism (as distinct from autonomy or self-responsibility) becomes a negatively valued trait.”²⁹ Furthermore, the “wars to make North America safe for Anglo-Protestant mercantile interests, into which the Trans-Mississippi Exposition is

²⁶ Christopher Pinney, *Photography's Other Histories*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) 56.

²⁷ Lucy Lippard, *Partial Recall*, (New York, The New Press, 1992) 26.

²⁸ Louis Dumont, *Essays on Individualism* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992) argues this eloquently.

²⁹ Paula Gunn Allen, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986) 10.

readily categorized, and the individualism that was its weapon continued well into the twentieth century.”³⁰ The apparent economic need to create individualistic American citizens out of “Indians” is embodied fully in the individual portraits from the Indian Congress.

Along with individuals, family photographs by Rinehart at the Exposition also advanced the momentum to assimilate Native peoples into contemporary middle-class, Anglo society. On the heels of the Dawes Act amendments of 1891, the push to create cohesive single-unit nuclear families out of formerly tribal and clan-based peoples was strong. And, like the individual portraits, the family pictures show the pressure of scientific classifications. In the latter decades of the 19th century, many pseudoscientific fields arose to increasingly taxonomize and give order to the world. These fields rose with the advent of photography. It is perhaps a reflection of the time that these new “sciences” were nurtured together, and the effect of their relationship is evident in pictures. Alongside displays of scientific advances such as baby incubators (Figure 8) and threshing machines (Figure 9) at the Trans-Mississippi Exposition, Rinehart’s photogravures of Native Americans convey a systematic or classificatory and yet still spectacular approach to understanding indigenous peoples. Of the over 800 images in his entire body of work from the Congress, Rinehart included approximately 210 individual or family portraits, which separately and together demonstrate the desire for an ethnographic taxonomization of native people that would officially and scientifically secure them as “other.”

Rinehart was not actually an anthropological photographer. He was a professional “Western” photographer by trade, with a portrait studio located in downtown Omaha. In the

³⁰ Allen, *The Sacred Hoop*, 14.

decade prior to his appointment as the official photographer at the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, Rinehart had a professional relationship with noted surveyor William Henry Jackson, who was famous for his images of the American West.³¹ Rinehart was employed at the Exposition to photograph the architecture, sights on the Midway and other attractions, but the bulk of his images were from the Indian Congress. For their creation, Rinehart employed Adolf F. Muhr, who would go on to work with Edward Curtis in his expeditions across American Indian territory a decade later. The influence of Muhr's training with Rinehart at Omaha is felt in Curtis's famous pictorial studies of indigenous tribes. From 1904 until his death in 1913, Muhr operated Curtis's studio in Seattle, and he processed and printed most of the photographs that Curtis took in the field.³² Muhr was also responsible for the printing and publishing of the Indian Congress photographs. Some have even argued that the Indian Congress images were largely made by Muhr. But when some of these photographs were reproduced as a set of postcards under F. A. Rinehart's name, Muhr had already begun to work with Curtis.

The Indian Congress portraits are taken from several angles in order to convey the various dimensions of the facial features of Native population. The effect is to provide a visual record by which to measure the physical and even cranial difference of Native Americans from their European American neighbors. Encyclopedic lists of language, body measurements, anthropological descriptions and photographs contributed to a popular belief in a hierarchy of races, wherein Native Americans, Australian Aborigines and other

³¹ "Frank A. Rinehart photographs and negatives, circa 1890-1910," National Museum of the American Indian Archives, Smithsonian Institution Finding Aid.

³² Bill Holm and George Quimby, *Edward S. Curtis in the Land of the War Canoes*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980) 23-24.

hunter-gatherer groups were ranked low in social evolutionary progression.³³ In Rinehart's images, Mary Learned explicitly considered Native American features and frames in contrast to normative white features and character; the format of the portraits of approximately 105 people provides a platform for such evaluations of deviation from "norms." For example, the photographs of Good Road Girl (Assiniboine), and Blanket or Miles Spring (Blackfoot) show both a frontal (Figure 10) as well as a profile (Figure 11), permitting Rinehart to categorize his subject as the Other: both female and non-Caucasian. This is in line with specimen images made of African and Polynesian subjects throughout the 19th century. In her 1996 article, "Talking Back: Recoding the Body," Beryl J. Wright declares summarily that "as a genre, documentary photographs are constructed to identify and classify social classes and races, [while] "evidentiary" portraits used empirical indices of the body to support dominant social theories that tended to serve a repressive function."³⁴ Wright's argument here is buttressed by the examples seen in Rinehart's photographs at the Indian Congress. Participating tribes underwent an upheaval in the next decade as efforts were made to assimilate and effectively eradicate Native culture.

Alan Sekula has addressed how photography creates racial and other norms as well. In his 1986 article "Body and the Archive," he effectively argues that photography helped to codify and repress social groups by establishing and delimiting "the terrain of the other, to define both the *generalized look*- the typology- and the *contingent instance* of deviance and social pathology."³⁵ Rinehart's portraits of various individuals from at least eight tribal groups, whose selection criteria is unknown, fit comfortably into this assessment. These images (for the sake of the argument, I point only to the images made of Good Road Girl

³³ Pinney, *Photography's Other Histories*, 57.

³⁴ Beryl J. Wright, "Back Talk: Recoding the Body," *Callaloo*, 19:2 (Spring 1996) 397-413.

³⁵ Alan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October*, 39 (Winter 1986) 3-64.

and Blanket, but many others exist) provide a variety of angles from which these individuals may be surveyed and made specimens for study of both their difference and similarity from pre-established norms. Images from front (Figure 12), profile (Figure 13) and back (Figure 14) of a multitude of subjects aggravated and deepened the belief that indigenous Americans were an inhuman specimen, subject to scientific objectification. Laura Peers and Alison Brown explain that the style and mode of anthropometrizing individuals in images like the Rinehart photographs reflects colonial ideologies, and anthropological scholarship (contra the knowledge systems of the family or descendants of those portrayed) aids in the broader project of assimilation.³⁶ For the public, the distinctions between various displays of Native people were blurred as former tribal identifiers became subject to a colonizing, assimilationist agenda. The effect of this is the dehumanization of these individuals for the merit of pseudo-scientific study.

Photography's work of establishing certain sectors of the population as "Other" had been a practice of European and American photographers since the 1870's. The mentally "disabled," like ethnically diverse bodies and faces in these works function, along with their captions and archives, to consistently identify and condemn non-normative facial and body types. Sekula explains that the photographic archive at the end of the 19th century contains "both the traces of the visible heroes, leaders, moral exemplars, celebrities, and those of the poor, the diseases, the insane, the criminal, the nonwhite, the female, and all other embodiments of the unworthy."³⁷ He elaborates that physiognomy and phrenology, with photography as their main medium "shared the belief that the surface of the body, and

³⁶ Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, "'Just by Bringing These Photographs...': On the Other Meanings of Anthropological Images," *Anthropology and History, Expanding the Frame*, ed. Christopher Morton and Elizabeth Edwards, (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2009) 266.

³⁷ Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 10

especially the face and the head, bore the outward signs of the inner character.”³⁸ It is through their documentary character that these portraits measure the deviance of “abnormal” bodies, as such photographs appear as a scientific index to truth. The psychology and physiology of deviant women, the mentally unsound, criminals and other sub-standard populations were effectively sanitized through the camera lens.

Photographs of Native Americans taken with similar techniques make visible the power relations between them and their colonizers; the fact that their format and features resemble the quasi-scientific studies of earlier photographic generations contributes to a reading of Rinehart’s images through a colonial lens. Through the portrayal of deviant populations including aboriginal populations, lives come under the controlling gaze of the dominant sector. Mark Alloula points to the “ethnographic alibi” as a means by which to fabricate a “pacified reality, restored to colonial order.”³⁹ It is the colonial order to which the Rinehart images precisely conform. Alloula continues, when paintings and stories of orientalist persuasion became outmoded,

photography steps in to take up the slack and reactivates the phantasm at its lowest level... the postcard does it one better; it becomes the poor man’s phantasm; for a few pennies, display racks full of dreams, the postcard is everywhere, covering all the colonial space... It produces stereotypes in the manner of great sea birds producing guano. It is the fertilizer of the colonial vision.⁴⁰

Photographs made at the Indian Congress would go on to be sold as posters and postcards.⁴¹

Science was used justify showmanship, and showmanship was used to justify science.⁴² As

³⁸ Sekula, “Body and the Archive,” 10-11.

³⁹ Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 91.

⁴⁰ Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 4.

⁴¹ Charles M. Plein was the colorist for the Rinehart Studio. Plein illustrated what became known as the “red border prints” of Native Americans such as Geronimo and Sitting Bull. These images appeared as posters, postcards and calendars.

⁴² Parezo, *Anthropology Goes To The Fair* 239.

Robert Rydell notes, the Indian Congress, like colonial exhibits at previous world fairs, was intended to render the colonization and subjugation of the American Indian into an empirical, observable reality.⁴³

The anxiety to control and subjugate Native Americans is particularly high in times when American power is questioned. The Spanish American war broke out just months prior to the opening ceremony of the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition. Displaying what was perceived to be once-aggressive peoples in the manner of the Indian Congress assuaged disquieting apprehensions and outright disagreements about the stability of American sovereignty and power for common Americans. An official spokesman for the Exposition clearly expressed this in his statement on opening day, June 1, 1898, when he observed, “The Exposition has become the instrument of civilization. Being a concomitant to empire, westward it takes its way.”⁴⁴ The Indian Congress was a stage where the drama of domestic American colonization in the Trans-Mississippi West was enacted as a prologue to external ventures in the Pacific.

Importantly, the inclusion of Geronimo (Figure 15), who was viewed as the last great Indian warrior, in the exposition and in the photographic record documents the defeat of indigenous America. A scheduled event of the Indian Congress, among the reenacted battle scenes and parades, was the reunion of the Chirichaua Apache leader with his captor, General Nelson A. Miles. Miles was then Commander of the campaigns in Puerto Rico, but he had been an accomplished “Indian fighter.” Miles had captured Geronimo in 1886, after which he was held prisoner at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The reunification of the two men amongst monstrous crowds of fair attendees (Figure 16) was, as Bonnie Miller suggests, an

⁴³ Robert Rydell, “The Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition: To Work Out the Problem of Universal Civilization,” *American Quarterly*, 33 (Winter 1981) 607.

⁴⁴ James Baldwin, quoted in Haynes, *History of the Trans-Mississippi*, 347.

“imperial spectacle,” through which the possibility of total Anglo-dominance might be brought to pass.⁴⁵ The *Omaha Bee*, in a statement that circulated throughout the country, reported the following:

At yesterday afternoon’s battle General Miles and the members of his staff occupied front seats in the reserved section. . . . Geronimo looked up into the thousands of faces, apparently trying to locate a familiar one. . . . Suddenly he turned his eyes toward the place where General Miles was sitting. . . . He brushed aside the crowd with his hands and was soon at the side of General Miles. Mustering the best English at his command, he extended his hand and exclaimed: “Now general, I am glad to see you.” The general reached for the extended hand, but suddenly it was withdrawn and instantly Geronimo clasped the white warrior in his embrace and hugged him as affectionately as would a father who had not seen his son for years.⁴⁶

The sentiment expressed deepens and solidifies the benevolent relationship being established at the end of the 19th century between the United States and Indian tribes who were, at the time, legal wards of the state. General Miles in this quote represents the benevolent father-figure, while Geronimo here represents a child-like dependent whose survival relied upon the government entirely. Robert Rydell adds that although the promoters of future expositions would try to convince Americans of the value of possessing overseas territory, the directors of the Omaha fair helped to ensure that this national debate would take place with Indians as the immediate frame of reference.⁴⁷ In short, Native Americans, at this time, were a means by which Anglo America could exorcise anxieties about foreign lands without leaving the continent.

⁴⁵ Miller, “The Incoherencies of Empire,” 41.

⁴⁶ “Miles Mixes with the Indians,” *Omaha Evening Bee*, (October 14, 1898) 12.

⁴⁷ Rydell, “The Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition,” 603. Also see Sarah Moore, “Mapping Empire in Omaha and Buffalo: World’s Fairs and the Spanish- American War,” in *The Legacy of the Mexican and Spanish- American Wars: Legal, Literary, and Historical Perspectives*, eds. Gary D. Keller and Cordelia Candelaria (Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Review Press, 2000) 111-26; Robert Rydell, “Souvenirs of Imperialism: World’s Fair Postcards,” in *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards*, eds. Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998) 147-177.

While Geronimo's participation in World Fairs has been considered by other scholars, it is less often observed that by creating isolated nuclear families from 35 formerly tribal and clan-based groups that Rinehart also enacts the colonization of the West. Jo Spence and Patricia Holland have claimed, "Cameras and film (western inventions) were created with the family in mind."⁴⁸ The modern nuclear family developed in direct contrast with ancient tribal and clan-based systems, and photographic culture was there to document the conflict and buttress the family throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. This too was a mark by which contemporary Americans sought to differentiate themselves from the "uncivilized" indigenous peoples on American soil. Pierre Bourdieu demonstrates the connection of the spread of photographic processes as civilizing practice and the ideology of the modern family: "photographic practice only exists and subsists for most of the time by virtue of its *family function*, or rather by the function conferred upon it by the family group."⁴⁹ Photography of family units has held a deeply sentimental and important place in Anglo-American psyches. The extension and projection of this value onto American Indians deepens the ideology of the importance of the family unit, while simultaneously advancing the possibility of their assimilation into Anglo-American life.⁵⁰ Further, the focus on families who bear claims to historical importance in battles or spiritual leadership within Native cultures are the focus for Rinehart's photographs. This further exacerbates the Anglo traditional hierarchies which determine which families and individuals will have place in recorded history.

⁴⁸ Jo Spence and Patricia Holland, *Family Snaps: The Meanings of Domestic Photography*, (London: Virago Press, 1991) 4.

⁴⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art*, trans. Shain Whiteside, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) 19.

⁵⁰ Alan Sekula, "The Body and The Archive," 8-9, writes that "Family photographs sustained sentimental ties in a nation of migrants. This 'primal household affection' served a socially cohesive function... nineteenth century familialism would survive and become an essential ideological feature of American mass culture. Furthermore, widely distributed portraits would subject everyday experience to a regular parade of moral exemplars."

Changes in Anglo-family structure and function occurred throughout the 19th century, as U.S. society became urbanized, industrial, migratory and colonialist. As markets became diversified and expanded, American citizens saw the potential in the American West. Settler colonization of the American West was the legacy of Anglo-families in the latter 19th century. Results of increased industrialization and the opening of the West for colonial expansion included increased social stratification and the transformation of the American family. The trend would unfurl westward following America's colonial expansion, stretching forth across America's Great Plains. Increasingly prescribed roles and individuation of nuclear family units in turn served industrialization and the rise of capitalism as well as a means for governmenta population control.

The patriarchal nuclear family, wherein the father is legally and morally responsible for the household, his wife and his property, and the wife is the major caregiver of children and keeper of the house, became the modern standard in the 19th century. The family was where individuals learned social norms, with mothers supplying much of the training. It was a model possible only for families that earned a sufficient income for a non-earning wife and children who stayed in school. The family as enforcing a notion of obedience and submission to socially approved behavior is an enormously useful tool for Westerners.⁵¹ It is photography which displays, reinforces and sustains the notion. The creation of nuclear families from Native American groups at the Indian Congress reasserts the dominance of American power over and the possibility of assimilation (cum survival of the race) of indigenous American peoples.

⁵¹ Julia Hirsh, *Family Photographs*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

Wittingly or not, Rinehart was doing the work of colonialism in the production of his collection of photographs, even in those like the family groups which seem to be the least commercialized or bound by scientific conventions.⁵² The picture of the Chirichua Apache family of Naichi, including his wife and two children (Figure 17) concisely demonstrates the colonialist state in which Native American families were situated at this time. The clothing worn by members of the four-person family unit provides one sign of their relationship to the burgeoning American mental metropole in Omaha, Nebraska. The unnamed wife is seated, wearing an ankle dusting Victorian gown, which would have been cumbersome at best in both the Apache's traditional southwestern homelands and in the Oklahoma prairie to which they had just been relocated in 1898. Naichi's uniform indicates his association with the tribal police, though his rank and position are unclear. The two children reflect more traditional qualities, although the isolation of the family unit is not a traditional one. The young girl on the left of the photograph is wearing a traditional Apache shawl and long Victorian dress. The baby, strapped into a cradleboard and wrapped tightly in traditional wool blankets, was likely being cared for in a traditional way, despite the encroachment of Western society evidenced by the clothing and affect of the rest of the family.

Similarly, the photograph of Poor Dog and his family (Figure 18) highlights clothing that signifies a relationship with the United States and its government. When Natives were asked to participate in the Indian Congress, they were asked to perform dominant culture's perception of native America. The Sioux man wears full regalia, including a ceremonial feather headdress and a fringed and beaded hide shirt. He carries a

⁵² There are many family photos in the entirety of the Rinehart collection. The images I have selected were chosen for the clarity with which they demonstrate assimilationist policies.

bandolier bag with traditional design likely created using porcupine quill and beadwork. The young daughter is wearing a traditional elk tooth buckskin dress and knee-high leggings over booties. Similarly, her mother wears a traditional Sioux women's dress with ribbon detail about the shoulders and neck. The stamped metal piecework belt around the mother's waist signifies contact and trade with Americans.⁵³ The image reads differently from that of Naichi in the heavy emphasis on traditional Sioux regalia rather than the inclusion of Victorian apparel, although still nuanced in the detail of the belt.

By 1898, Native Americans were entirely living on allotted lands, doled out in acreage sections by the Dawes Act of 1887. The fantasy of the "savage" Indian was precisely fantastical. Most indigenous peoples were probably living in wooden houses by this time. The stylized backdrop drapery behind the group and the chair on which the girl is seated stand out as surprisingly modern, contradicting the romantic view presented by the full regalia the subjects are shown wearing. These elements disrupt the image of an idealized Native American family and, along with the estrangement of this small nuclear group from their larger tribal or clan-based context, the message of potential for assimilation into the burgeoning middle-class is evident.

Finally, the image of Red Dog and his extended family (Figure 19) is perhaps the most egregious in its primitivizing. It depicts three nuclear families and, while it is less aggressive in separating these families from their tribal or clan group (Red Bottom Clan, Assinibione), it is much cruder in its representation. The image shows, standing from left to right, The Man, Red Dog (aka Red Stone), and Yellow Boy. Sitting, the women from left to

⁵³Metalwork would become particularly important for Northern Plains and Southwestern tribes, but the trade of metal and metal goods revolutionized the traditions of nearly all Native American groups. See for example Edwin L. Wade, *The Arts of the North American Indian: Native Traditions in Evolution*, (Easthampton: Hudson Hills Press, 1986).

right are “Unknown,” Old Woman, Good Road Girl (aka Hairy Head), Fierce Woman, and an Unknown girl. Sitting on the floor is Flying Hawk, a young boy of maybe 3 or 4 years. He leans to his left, into the leg of Fierce Woman. This photograph reflects the development of a kind of stereotyping that would come to a head in the work of Edward Curtis, whose flagrant disregard for the specificities of various tribal cultures is well documented. A child-sized bow and arrows with their points dulled to a round nub, likely a prop used in the Rinehart studio have been placed on Flying Hawk’s lap. His hand is intertwined with the bowstring as though he could pick it up and use it. Despite the disruption and his obvious distraction from the camera (his glance is to the right of the frame), someone in the studio deemed the prop as an appropriate means to convey the boy’s racial heritage. Flying Hawk is here performing a stereotype of Indigenous hunter-gatherer, despite the fact that these people’s traditional homeland was in the process of being turned into farmland.

Disrupting the Narrative: Interventions against the Gaze

In this section, I use the work of Marianne Hirsch to explain how Rinehart's portraits and others like them are at once traumatizing and important to subsequent generations. Hirsch coined the term "postmemory" in the mid-1990's to describe the relationship that succeeding generations bear to the "personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before--to experiences they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up."⁵⁴ Traumas are transmitted to the secondary and tertiary generations so deeply and effectively by objects like photographs that they function as personal memories in their own right. Hirsch and other writers have applied this theorization of photography to descendants of Holocaust survivors, but Hirsch argues that this model can be applied more broadly. In fact, Hirsch turns her attention to family photographs and states that *all* families are "historicized and contextualized- marked by race, class, historical moment and relation, nationality, ethnicity, and sexuality among other determinants."⁵⁵ Postmemory thus applies equally to the generations who inherited the trauma of the subjugation of Native American peoples as documented in Rinehart's photographs.

This model allows for a degree of reconciliation with tribal histories as Native American populations live on. While Indian culture has changed significantly since the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, it has not vanished. The concept of postmemory provides a means through which contemporary people are able to deal with the traumas of inherited identities, the performance of which is conflated with the images

⁵⁴ Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today*, 29:1 (Spring 2008)) 103.

⁵⁵ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press (1997) 103.

made by Rinehart. In my own case, coming to terms with this identity has been deeply moving, and has allowed me a greater respect for the families who have come before me. The photograph of Red Dog and his family gives proof that my family existed and provides historical roots for my own identity. Their existence is reinforced in the physicality of the photographic print.

It is the pain of severed access to a family network, and the resulting lack of belonging, which makes photographs of ancestors such an awakening for me and for my family and arguably, for other contemporary Native viewers. Though the traumas of history inflicted upon American Indians continue into the present, indigenous culture persists. The viewing of these photographs, therefore, reaffirms that we have roots and heritage, that the pain we may have known has precedent and history. In this respect, one of the most interesting interactions I had while seeking oral histories in the summer of 2012 was in Macy, Nebraska. I met a man named Howard Wolfe, an Omaha tribal elder, who I thought might be related to Fannie Wolf, an Omaha woman that Rinehart photographed. He was not, but he provided me with some insight about the persistent importance of photographs for his people. He insisted that I visit the local school, where framed prints of the Rinehart portraits line the halls. I think he wanted me to know that these images give meaning to the Omaha students' education. They give a shared history to the rising generation of Omaha people, some of whom may (even despite living on the reservation) have lost the sense of kinship that preserves identity. Wolfe spends his afternoons teaching Omaha students the traditional language of the Omaha in a trailer near the school. His attitude impressed me, that like language, Rinehart's photographs, though they seem so distant from contemporary

young people, and without the individual power that kinship bonds endow them with, are necessary for sustaining the present.

The only name that is officially recorded with the Rinehart photograph of Red Dog is that of Red Dog himself. I am aware of the names of the other members of his family because I am a descendant of this family group and came to know their names through the aid of other members of my extended family. My grandfather was named Ernest Manning. He met my grandmother in Los Angeles when he was stationed there in the mid-1950's. He had joined the Navy while still a teen and after he had left the reservation at Fork Peck, Montana. I imagine the 1961 film *The Exiles* reflects his experience of being one of many "urban Indians" in Southern California at mid-century. My fully English grandmother had fled her Utah home to become a star. Instead, working as a waitress, she met and became involved with my grandfather. It is difficult for my family to bear and to hear this story because of their attempt to hide my mother's and her sister's indigeneity while they were children. It is a story, however, that, it is crucial to understanding the personal implications of the Rinehart collection and the lived actuality of "postmemory."

During a turbulent time together, my grandparents bore three daughters. Before the last one was born, my grandfather had left my grandma, never to be heard from again. He didn't know that he had that third daughter until the early 2000s. My grandmother remarried a German and had more children, all with blue eyes and blonde or red hair. We didn't look like them. The three oldest daughters, of whom my mother is the middle, all had deep brown eyes and jet black hair that begged to whip through the wind. Growing up in the 1960s was not an easy time to be Native and so, for most of their lives, they sought to pass as white, mainstream girls. The family objective, it seems, was to essentially forget

their indigeneity, to whitewash the reality of their blood. They all met boys and fell in love and bore children, only occasionally and tangentially brushing with their Native heritage. Though they are all enrolled members of the Assiniboiné tribe in Fort Peck, Montana, only one of them used her status to get into college, and the yearly benefit check they get from the tribe is paltry at best.

What I have learned of Ernest Manning's history is limited, and he has haunted my psyche since my childhood. We moved around a few times when I was a kid. On one of our moves, I vividly remember finding a box of old photographs all in disarray, as my family kept most photographs. I found one of a handsome soldier walking across the front yard of a small house. He was dressed in his white uniform and wore a cap that distinguished him as a U.S. Navy serviceman. I didn't know at the time who he was, but I was immediately captivated. I stole the photograph from the box and put it in my wallet, which had the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles splayed across the front. Through some childhood reconnaissance, I learned the history of my mother's hidden identity and the truth about the man in the photograph who I would come to call my grandfather. He had been missing from our lives, from my mother's life and by association from mine, for 40 years. He had become a family legend who only a few cousins had any legitimate claim to know. It is the tangibility and promise of eyewitness veracity that gives photographs their authority. I felt that the photograph, the only one we had of him, entitled me to equal status with my cousins. I carried that photograph with me for years until I dropped the wallet in the Pacific Ocean in Alaska when I was 20. I will never forgive myself for losing it.

Looking back, I think this photograph was my first connection with my indigeneity. It was the first inkling of what I would seek out in the future in my family's heritage and

past. As a person who is descended from both Anglo and Indian peoples, I needed to hear both sides to feel whole. My Anglo family was very proud and very vocal about their history, but what of Red Dog and his daughters? What about my grandpa? What about a fourth of my own blood? When I came as an art historian to the photographs of Rinehart, the same feelings were sparked: a deep longing to know and to connect with these people resurfaced and I was compelled to learn about them. In the photograph of my grandfather in his Navy whites, I see the history that connects him to Red Dog and to other men from the Indian Congress of 1898. They too dressed in full ceremonial regalia, if not in U.S. military uniform. The men of my Native family have fought for American freedom, for the country that both rejected and fostered them. Like his ancestors, my grandfather's Navy dress represents both pride in serving what had become his country as well as the trauma of enduring the process of assimilation.

I presume my grandmother took the photograph because it was rather amateurish and softly focused, not like the concise view of sitters at the Indian Congress. Perhaps she took the picture before he left her for the last time, or maybe before he left her for the first time. I can't be certain about who took it or why, but the physical proof of his existence persisted from the late 1950s down to me in the late 1990s. This proof gave me access to my untold history, to my family. In contrast to the "authenticity" Anglo viewers sought in the Rinehart images, however, this picture provided me with the authenticity of an actual person rather than a stereotype or a cartoon. In this photograph, my grandfather was not idealized or made to fit into official conventions, but rather he was shown rushing, rather mundanely, across the grass of a little house. This photograph was anything but epic or

romantic, but still his power as an individual persisted. In looking at the Rinehart portrait of Red Dog after I discovered the family connection, I had the same response.

In 2001, my mom decided to do an Internet search for her father on a whim. She found a listing in southern Texas for a man with his social security number and name. I remember listening to her call her sisters with anticipation, fear and promise all mingled into an uneasy ball with deep roots. For us, finding him practically guaranteed that we were no longer abandoned, that we had a source and a reason for existing in the way that we had, and that our identity as not-quite-white-enough white people could have an answer and cause. It bore the hope of familial roots that could go further back than a question mark and the stuff of legend. He was the biggest, most defining mystery of our childhood. Having him revealed when I was only a teen was staggering.

My mom and her eldest sister traveled to south Texas to find him. The youngest sister told me that she was scared that he wouldn't want her, because he had left before she was born. His absence had come to define her identity and her relationship with(out) him influenced her deeply. While they were there visiting, my mom took a picture of the man and his two eldest daughters sitting at a table while they were out to lunch. The picture is badly out of focus and she printed it on poor quality computer paper using low quality ink. That picture marks the reality of contact with the legend of my biological grandfather. It is the only "proof" of his life besides my own memory. At the time that they reconnected, he was living in the same neighborhood that my grandmother (their mom) and her husband (the man I had called my grandfather) were serving on a mission for their church. My mom and her sisters never told my grandma that they went to Texas to meet their dad. Instead, they met in secret, crying and rejoicing in the little retirement home where he was living.

He had lived the hard life of a sailor and had essentially killed his liver and kidneys. He was missing a hand and had a hook instead. The other arm had a tattoo of a heart pierced by a sword and snake wrapped around the shaft of the sword that moved when he flexed his forearm. He had to receive dialysis treatments daily and, when he came to visit our family in Southern California, the fantasy of his warrior status and majesty was shattered. Instead I came to know and see a real person whose life had taken him around the world. I met a man whose pain was profound. My grandfather was a man who had seen unfathomable cruelty in his life, but was gentle in his maturity.

My mother knows the names of his most immediate relatives, his mother and father and their siblings who, in Indian families like ours, became our generation's mothers and fathers too. I don't know of any other photographs or images that link me to them. I can't remember the web of connection that they all bear to one another and really, those aren't the details that are important. In the summer of 2012, with grants from the Art History Department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Center for Great Plains Studies, I embarked on a research trip to contact descendants of the people in Rinehart's photographs and ask them how the pictures helped them to form their indigenous identity. I wanted to know how these photographs helped formulate their indigeneity, as I had been raised with my own indigeneity as only a mythical mystery to which my access was restricted. My research was really a personal journey to attempt to reconcile the problems and questions I had been wrestling with in my own life. I needed someone to show me how to belong to this family. I have come to rely, in part, on photographs as one way to help me do this.

I was only able to speak to two people who were descended from the Indian Congress delegation, although I tried to contact many individuals. I decided to look at the lack of known descendants as indicative of the deletion of Indigenous family ties that was happening in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I credit this trend back to the assimilationist policies that had a stronghold on Native populations throughout this time, and which were contradictory to the tribal and clan-based systems of family living that had sustained these peoples for millennia. However, I had posted the picture of Red Dog on my Facebook page and my aunt, the one whose existence had been so long unknown and unacknowledged by her own father, commented that we are related to him. Red Dog, as it turned out, was the grandfather of my grandpa's mother. Here was my family. Here was my connection. Here was my access to a deep understanding of the trauma of history and its conflation with the present day.

While photographs both in my family and in the Native families I met during my 2012 research were not considered crucial to kin bonds, because memory and oral tradition still serve that function more effectively, for descendants in families like mine where that oral tradition has been weakened by external and internal pressures, photographs take on a new resonance. My mom and a few cousins traveled back to the Fort Peck reservation a few times, but the sense of their foreign status was overwhelming. We did not belong to anyone on the reservation. The other descendants of Red Dog, as far as I can tell, have dispersed far and wide outside the confines of Fort Peck, Montana.⁵⁶ While this family still exists and, I believe, is thriving, they are doing so separately not only from us but from the

⁵⁶ Perhaps significantly, at UNL I have met and befriended two people who are also descended from Red Dog. Margaret Red Elk lives in Heber City, Utah, where she officiates at a Pow Wow every June. Dennis Smith is a professor of History at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. I see these two people as important factors in my coming to understand my indigeneity and in claiming it as an important and substantial part of my person.

tribe. The clan system is only loosely serving to connect us; Rinehart's portrait of Red Dog and his extended family is the only accessible record of our kinship and at the same time marks the degree of impact—the erasure of family lines—that assimilation had.

Susan Sontag declared in 1989, “to take a picture is to have an interest in things as they are, in the status quo remaining unchanged.” She explains that the act of photograph making is to assert or at least be a complicit participant “with whatever makes a subject interesting, worth photographing—including, when that is the interest, another person's pain or misfortune.”⁵⁷ It is the pain and misfortune of American Indian cultures as a photographic subject throughout the history of the United States of America that James Luna engages in his art. Many works by Luna seek a disruption of the accepted narrative of American Indian history, but my focus here is on his 2010 performance, *Take A Picture With a Real Indian* (Figure 20). This work was selected for its particular engagement with and performance of the “postmemory” of Native American identity. It raises questions about the accepted performed identity of indigenous Americans and challenges the history of these peoples. These are questions that are also raised by postmemory.

For Marianne Hirsch, “postmemory” describes the relationship of “post” generations to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births. Much of Hirsch's writing has addressed the experiences and expressions of generations of Jews whose families faced trauma during the Holocaust. Yet her concept has value across other cultural groups. An exploration of the transfer of distress from one generation to another has raised serious questions about the ways in which the generations who did not experience suffering themselves come to accept trauma as a part of their identity.

⁵⁷ Susan Sontag, “On Plato's Cave,” in *On Photography*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1989) 12.

Furthermore, this line of study has come to interrogate the ways in which other, non-participants in the memory transfer, regard, make room for, and understand what Sontag calls “the pain of others.”⁵⁸

This theorization works well with Luna’s performance of *Take A Picture with A Real Indian* as he engages similar questions. Namely, Luna is seeking a dialogue with the history of photographing Native Americans, advancing a challenge to those who have passively accepted this history and especially those who are complicit in its creation. In this work, he is pursuing a means to re-integrate this painful history into the legacy of American Indian culture while he is questioning the ways in which photographs of these peoples informs present day identity. Photography is an agent of memory in very real ways in *Take A Picture With A Real Indian*.

Hirsch’s analysis of photographs in Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* is the most relevant in the development of the postmemory as a means to transmit trauma. Using the graphic novel as an example, Hirsch elucidates the disruptive nature of photographs and the power with which they convey memory. Hirsch points to the three instances in *Maus* where photographs are used. They provide stark contrast to the illustrative delivery of the narrative throughout the remainder of the graphic novel. The inclusion of a photograph of his mother taken ten years before her suicide disrupts the narrative throughout the remainder of the text as the photograph links to an actual person and her lived experience (Figure 21). Hirsch cleverly describes the way that this page operates to allow the function of postmemory. At once two chronologies—Spiegelman’s and his mother’s--and two phenomenological moments are conflated and function alongside one another. Past and

⁵⁸ Susan Sontag, *Regarding The Pain of Others*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003) 58.

present, destruction and survival, primary and secondary traumas converge. Now, the postmemory (generated by the photograph) acts as a portal to access pain, and at the same time as a talismanic element that might afford some consolation.⁵⁹

Hirsch argues that the technology of photography itself connects the Holocaust generation to the generation after. Photography's promise to offer access to the event itself, and its easy assumption of iconic and symbolic power, makes it a uniquely powerful medium.⁶⁰ As Roland Barthes writes in *Camera Lucida*, a photograph is "never distinguished from its referent (from what it represents), or at least it is not *immediately* or *generally* distinguished from its referent... It is as if the Photograph always carries its referent with itself."⁶¹ It is this referential nature of photography which makes it such a compelling element in the work of Spiegelman and, as will be discussed, Luna. The advent of a photograph in Spiegelman's work is utterly disruptive to the narrative as it serves to link the text to actual people and to lived events. The transcendence of the horrors detailed in the text becomes present and actual through the appearance of a photographic image.

In similar fashion, Luna uses his own body to disrupt typical depictions of American Indians, and his performance defies a stereotypical reading of images of this population as a whole. His performance of *Take A Picture With A Real Indian* on Columbus Day, October 11, 2010, took place in front of Lorado Taft's 1912 *Columbus Fountain* (Figure 22) in front of Washington D.C.'s Union Station. It was sponsored by the National Museum of the American Indian, also in Washington D.C.⁶² The fountain is a

⁵⁹ Hirsch, *Family Frames*, 32.

⁶⁰ Hirsch, *Family Frames*, 19.

⁶¹ Roland Barthes, Richard Howard trans., *Camera Lucida*, (New York: Macmillan, 1982) 22.

⁶² In the *Art Journal* special issue on Recent Native American Art ,51:3 (Autumn 1992), n.p., an editor wrote that Luna's work "can best be described as an "insider's" view of contemporary American Indian existence." This description appears in the by-line of Luna's article in the same issue, "I've Always Wanted to Be An American

monument to Christopher Columbus, and it includes a statue of the explorer as part of a group: an old man represents Europe and a Native American youth represents the New World, flanking Columbus. Columbus stands proudly, wearing a mantle of discovery, atop a sculptural depiction of a ship's bow.

Luna's performance opens with three cardboard cutouts of Luna in various costumes arrayed around the monument (Figure 23). Luna enters from behind the audience who are assembled on the plaza in front of *Columbus Fountain*. In the first act, Luna, wearing only a loincloth and crude moccasins, shakes a rattle as he enters the scene. He first surveys the cardboard cutouts, which are representations of the three various costumes he will wear throughout the performance. He then takes his place centrally and loudly invites the audience to "take a picture with a real Indian." He stands there for a few moments, or until it seems the audience is willing to participate. A few people stand next to him to have their picture taken by one of Luna's professional photographers; unlike Rinehart's sitters, he keeps control of the representation. They snap Polaroids of the audience members standing next to Luna in his costume. There are two sets of each photograph, one for the audience member to take with them as souvenir, the other stays with Luna's team as a document for the archive associated with the performance.

He then exits the area to add a headdress and a beaded breastplate to his costume. Neither of these items are traditionally associated with the tribes from which Luna is descendant: Payomkowishum (Luiseno) and Mexican Native, but are common regalia for tribes native to the Great Plains region and through Rinehart and other photographers have

Indian," 18-27. In line with his work generally, including his performance of *Take A Picture With A Real Indian*, his closing line states: "This isn't the feathers, the beads of many colors, or the mystical, spiritual glory that people who are culturally hungry want. Hey, do you still want to be an Indian?" This statement follows text and photographs that provide statistics about the state of the La Jolla Indian Reservation in California, the reservation that Luna's family is from.

become symbols for “all” Indians. He returns in similar fashion to his first entrance, this time touching the cutouts as he passes them, and again returns to his central post to invite the audience to “take a picture with a real Indian.” As he stands there, the audience shows fervent interest and lines up to have their picture taken standing next to Luna’s “real” body in his costume regalia. The audience is more capable of reading these signifiers, which code Luna as a “Real Indian” when he adorns himself in stereotypical regalia. The effect is increased enthusiasm for the project, and a level of comfort and lack of questioning by the audience.

In the third segment of the piece, Luna again exits and makes a costume change. When he returns, he is dressed in 21st-century clothing and has removed the regalia. He again inspects the cutouts and again, retakes his place in the center of the stage. Again, he invites the audience to “take a picture with a real Indian,” and again, the audience gradually rises to the occasion. In this last segment, many audience members show a greater degree of trepidation as the meaning in Luna’s performance is fully conveyed. It is in the last segment that the commodification of Native Americans is exposed, and the trauma of lived indigenous experience surfaces.

As Luna enters dressed in contemporary attire, his body interrupts the narrative that many Americans have learned about the history of the American Indian peoples. It is in this instance that the reality of the trauma inflicted upon the people indigenous to the American continent comes into full light as he is seen as an actual person with lived experiences, in contrast to the stereotypical portrayal he provides in the other two segments of the piece, or in the photographically reproduced cutouts. This function of Luna’s body in this instance acts in the same way as the photographs of Art Spiegelman’s parents in *Maus*. It obstructs

the illustrated text, which, in the case of Luna's performance is embodied in the cardboard cutout flattened representations of his body and the statue of a Native American to the side of Christopher Columbus in the background. These become synecdoche for the whole of perceived Native American history, as the general population has understood it. In contrast and defiance, Luna's body becomes synecdoche for the phenomenology of Native American identity and existence.

It is this perception, derived from photographs like Rinehart's, which Luna is attempting to call into question. Much of the history of photographing Native Americans is similar to that of Rinehart at the Indian Congress. Unpaid sitters were asked to come to the studio within the fairground. Of the photographs that were made at the Indian Congress, only select varieties were sold. The Omaha Public Library, where a substantial collection of prints from Rinehart are held report that from 1903-1905, only eighteen of the approximately 800 different photographs were published as postcards. The production and consumption of these selective images is deeply embedded in the history of America. Elizabeth Hutchinson posits that the early 20th-century craze for "Indians" resulted in a flattened perception of culture and history as Native American cultures came to be seen as one-dimensional and monolithic rather than the multidimensional and multi-ethnic conglomeration of actuality.⁶³ This effect, creating a unified "Indian" image, was intensified by the boarding schools that sought to "Kill the Indian, Save the Man," and by the creation of a single Native American aesthetic, embodied in the Dorothea Dunn School of Native American painters. In tandem with domestic tourism to Indian Reservations after World War I, the removal of Indian children to Eastern boarding schools and the slaughter

⁶³ Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 3.

of American Bison herds, it amounted to acts of cultural genocide against the indigenous peoples of America.

These are components of the trauma experienced by American Indians throughout the history of America's settlement by Europeans. While these traumas were not isolated and dense in precisely the ways that the Holocaust was, the effect of the trauma is still a deep and permanent part of Native American identity today. From the loss of native homelands, to the eradication of language, and the stifling of lifeways and systems of knowledge, American indigenous identity has experienced deep trauma. The consistent silencing of Native voice and agency has infested the minds of and deeply informed generations of American Indians. The symptoms resulting from historical trauma are numerous and affect the psychological, social, economic, intellectual, political, physical, and spiritual realms of Native American people.

This systematic oppression and deepening of lived trauma of American Indian peoples is normalized and commodified by the persistence of the photographic medium as a documentary source. The photographs taken by the Rinehart/Muhr team at the Indian Congress were largely conserved and the original glass plate negatives are now held at the Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas. Prints of the photographs are also held at the Omaha Public Library as well as at the Smithsonian Institute. These loci of archival memory comprise the official body for preserving the Rinehart images, however, the popular memory of them persists elsewhere. Consistently, documentation of Native Americans has been viewed by elites as a benevolent means to preserve and give order to Native American experience for the benefit of the Anglo-American empire. Popular memory of these photographs functions similarly, though most people do not recognize the

specific details of the images. On a Facebook forum, for instance, I ran into a person who was looking for information about the photograph on the cover of a Jefferson Airplane album cover, which just happened to be the image of James Nighthrider from the Blackfoot album taken by Rinehart at the Indian Congress. Rinehart's portrait of Nighthrider had been modified by the graphic artist John Van Hammersveld and was distributed widely. I learned that Hammersveld did not even know the name of Nighthrider or Rinehart, but was attracted to the romance of the image itself. As both these kinds of taxonomization and memory making occur, Native populations become objectified and cultures become flattened and readily consumable through the presence of a photograph. The photograph provides a degree of verity and, in so doing, the moment of death for these cultures, as Barthes asserts.⁶⁴ It is this death that Luna's performance is working to question and disrupt.

Another crucial tactic of disruption is the inclusion of the word "real" throughout Luna's performance. The classification "real Indian" might refer to one of two things. First, and most pressingly, this alludes to the legal practice of defining Native Americans by a "blood quantum." This is an umbrella term that designates the legal means by which the Federal Government may classify a person as a Native American based on the fraction of non-Anglo ancestry. This is done in an arcane fashion by dividing the number of generations since all one's ancestors were pure-blood Native by the number of marriages with people who aren't pure-blood. The system was created for a number of reasons that initially were intended to allow self-governance and tribal sovereignty for Native American

⁶⁴ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 24.

groups. Ultimately, however, this system essentially guarantees what Edward Curtis and Theodore Roosevelt prophetically envisaged: the extinction of the American Indian.⁶⁵

The second referent for “real”-ness in the performance might be a social or cultural one. Some Native peoples argue that a person must only be culturally knowledgeable and capable of operating as a member of a tribal group in order to be considered one of the tribe. While this is a less systematic means of tracking who is precisely (and who is precisely *not*) Native American, it is a relevant tool. This means of measuring a person’s “realness” as an Indian defies the codified methodical ranking of hierarchies of inherited genetics. As a form of protest, this is a powerful means to circumvent the ordered approach of the United States Federal Government, which tends to give a greater degree of autonomy and sovereignty to tribes themselves. In an interview shortly after the initial performance of the piece, Luna commented on what he meant in using the word “real.” He explained that “it doesn’t really matter what I am. I know what I am. See, that’s the point. I’ll be in a plane. And someone’s sitting next to me. And they’re looking at me. And they’re

⁶⁵ The topic of blood quantum is a hotly debated issue amongst Native Americans today, as there are feelings that the government’s interference and designation is no longer and has never been needed to certify a person as native or otherwise. On the other hand, many people feel that these laws help to protect the sovereignty and legal status of Native Americans and protect legal rights that are given to them in treaties and legislation. Some Natives believe that one’s knowledge of the culture and values systems ought to be enough to be classified as a Native American, while still others feel that non-natives can be adopted into a tribe if an elder will commit to teaching the individual the life systems of the tribe. Much literature abounds on the subject, including a PDF from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, entitled “A Guide to Tracing Your American Indian Ancestry” accessible at <http://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/text/idc002656.pdf>. Two books that have received much critical attention from Native American communities on the topic are Eva Marie Garrouette’s *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America*, (University of California Press, 2003), and William E. Unrau’s *Mixed Bloods and Tribal Dissolution: Charles Curtis and the Quest for Indian Identity*, (University of Kansas Press, 1989). The debate is especially relevant in the arts, as there are special designations for businesses and arts institutions which are run or owned by Native Americans with a tribal record number (tribal record numbers are given at birth to members of tribes, similar to social security numbers). The objective of this legislation is to prevent non-Natives from using Native identities as a means for capital gain. This issue is particularly relevant in light of recent events wherein non-Native entities including the clothing chain Urban Outfitters, designer Paul Frank, and lingerie line Victoria’s Secret have appropriated Native American themed costume for the promotion of their clothing brands. Some instances of this were more flagrantly offensive than others and, in the case of Urban Outfitters a direct legal confrontation ensued in *Navajo Nation v Urban Outfitters*, the proceedings of which are accessible at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/83205508/Complaint-Navajo-Nation-Uod>.

wondering what this guy is. And they'll ask me: "Excuse me sir, are you Native American, are you Indian, or Hawaiian?" I get that a lot too. One of the most troubling questions that I hear is, "are you full blood?" For me, an Indian is foremost somebody who is culturally Native. They know their tribe, their cultural background and their "Indian ways," as we would say amongst ourselves."⁶⁶

Luna's entrance in the third and final segment of his performance of *Take A Picture With A Real Indian* serves to disrupt and defy this prediction about the vanishing of American Indian culture and peoples. His performance enacts the postmemory of the traumas of Native Americans in having lands, culture, and life ways taken from them. The realities of a society deeply invested in colonial expansion under the banner of Manifest Destiny contended deeply with Native societies equally deeply tied to their lands and life systems. The rupture of indigenous systems is the ordeal and shock with which contemporary Native peoples deal. Further, the consistent reliance by dominant society on staid depictions of American Indians in romanticized tropes such as those produced by Edward Curtis (Figure 24), among others, silences Native voices today and exacerbates beliefs by dominant American society that Native Americans are subjects for history textbooks and little else.

For photographs taken during the Holocaust with a disturbing subject matter, Hirsch points to the oscillation between life and death as a defining characteristic. These images document both the memory (the survivor's) and the postmemory (the children of the survivors) as experiences are conveyed through photographs.⁶⁷ This is the same operation

⁶⁶ Jess Righthand. "Q and A: James Luna, The Native American Artist talks about his 'Take a Picture With a Real Indian' Performance," *Smithsonian Magazine*, (January 2011) Accessed at <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/Q-and-A-James-Luna.html>

⁶⁷ Hirsch, *Family Frames*, 22.

which historic photos of Native Americans have. While not all photographs of Native Americans are traumatizing or particularly evidentiary about the struggles these peoples have faced, they are a record of dispossessed communities. Thus, photographs of Native Americans bear at once this troubled history and the hoped-for future of indigenous Americans as both Anglo and Native peoples continue to create, preserve and question ideas about indigenous identity.

Take A Picture With A Real Indian enacts this conflation of past and future. As a piece entirely dedicated to memory and its effects, Luna effectively confronts the narrative that is commonly given of Native American history. He challenges the ideas and dialogue that Rinehart's photographs contribute to and the indolent acceptance of that history as he asks individuals to participate alongside him in the humiliation and guilt associated with the trespasses against his people. When works like Luna's confront this history and are seen by indigenous audiences, their identity is permitted to expand.

Luna's work creates a commentary on the performance of Native Americans in the production of photographs like Rinehart's from the Indian Congress. His exposition seeks to question and clearly demonstrate the performative quality of such works while at the same time demanding the participation of the audience in the construction of this performed identity. It is this performative aspect of the work by both viewers and "sitters" that makes it so deeply compelling for my study of the Rinehart images. Personally, I come to embody both the audience (looking for authenticity, kinship) and the subject of photographs of "real" indigeneity. Constructs of authenticity *and* performativity are both embodied in my own identity. I believe the lessons embodied in these works provide meaning and substance in negotiating "real" identity amid the necessity of also inventing an

identity. This is the lesson I learn from my forbearers: to walk two paths at once and with grace while filling in gaps in constructed histories and identities. This, then is what it means to be a “real” Indian today.

Figures

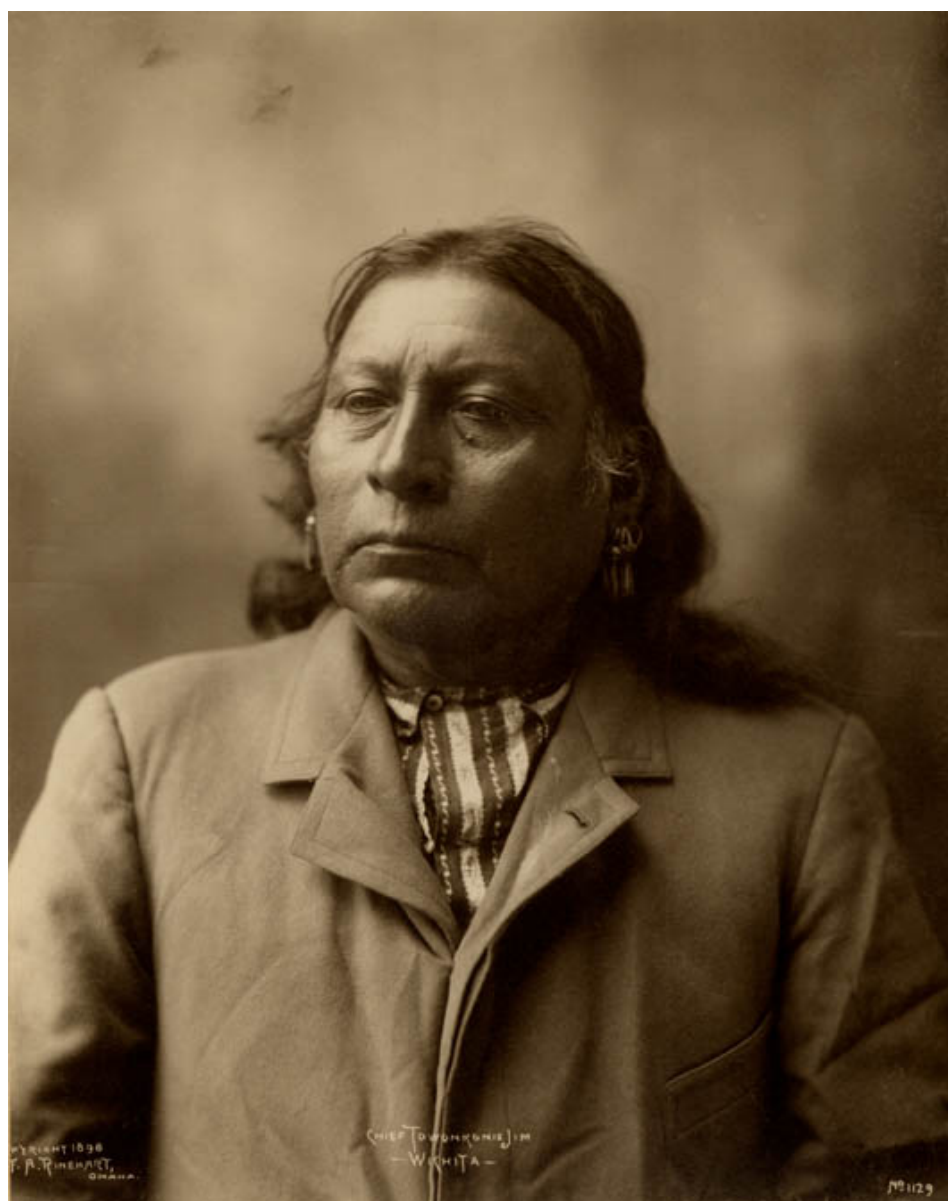


Figure 1

Towakanie Jim, Wichita

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 2

Henry Ward Beecher
John Quincy Adams Ward

1891

Bronze

Columbus Park, Brooklyn, New York



Figure 3

Pablino Diaz, Kiowa

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 4

Bartelda, San Carlos Apache

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 5

Chief Wolf Robe, Cheyenne

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 6

Grant Richards, Tonkawa

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 7

Indian Congress (Drum Circle)

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch

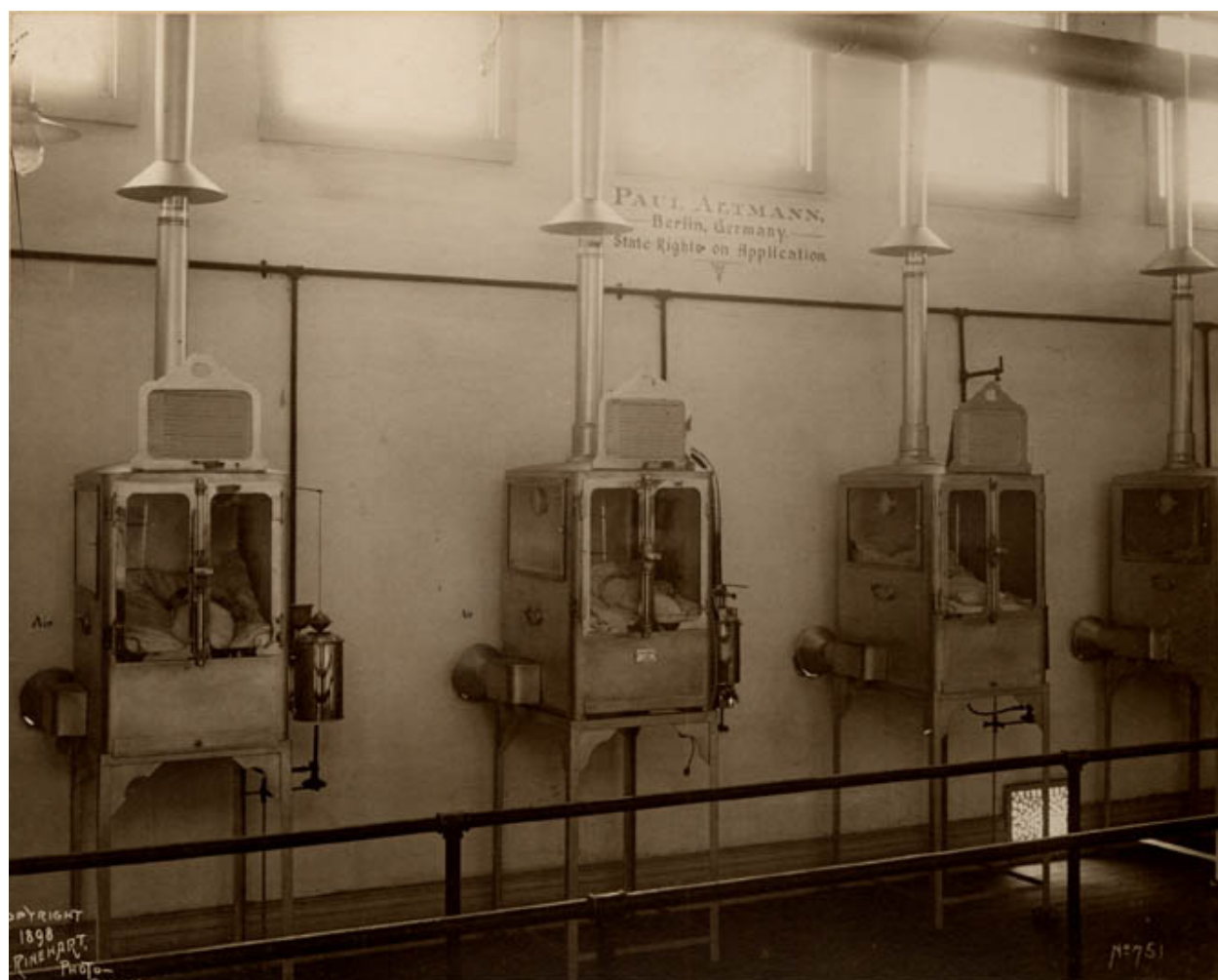


Figure 8

Baby Incubators

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch

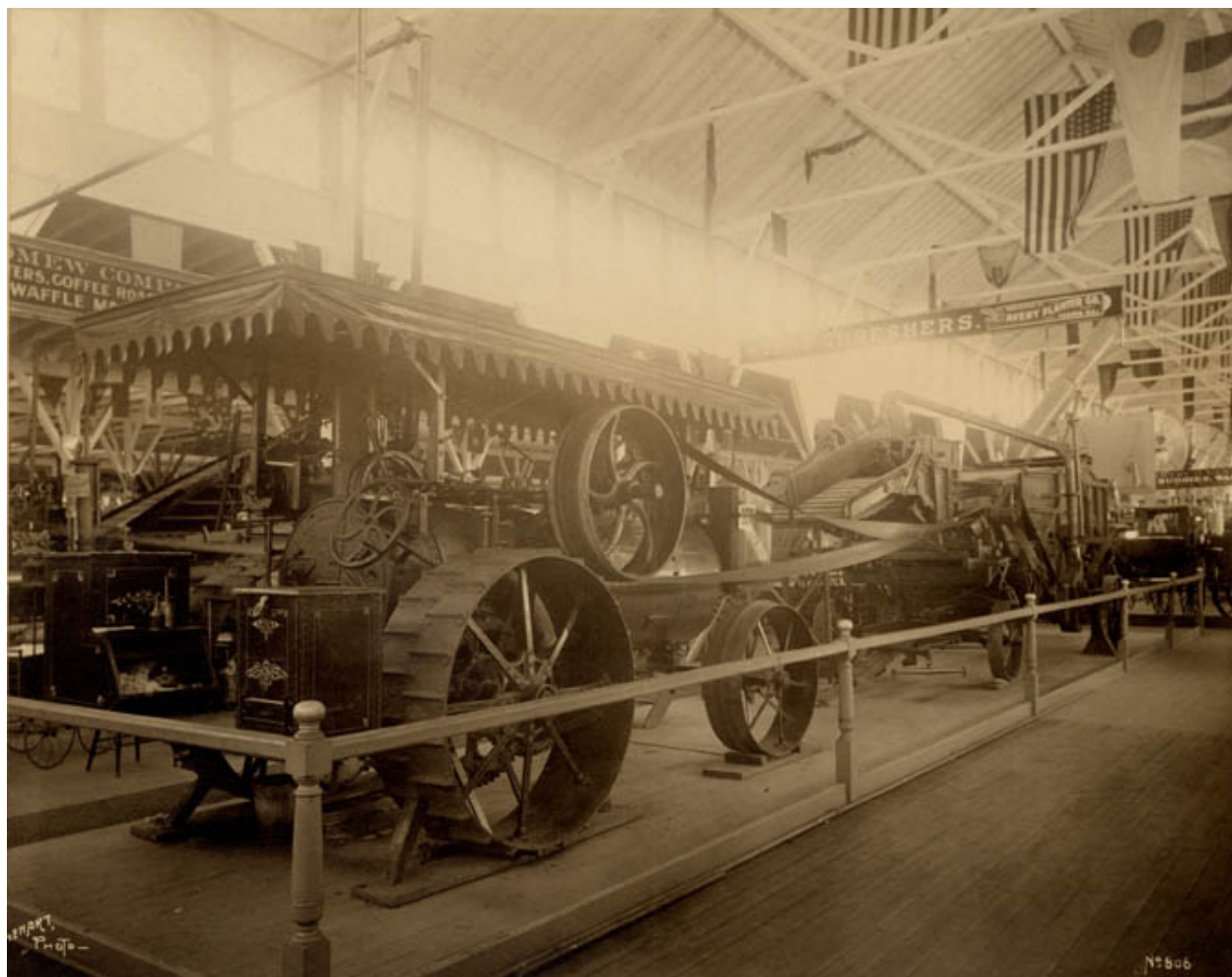


Figure 9

Threshing Machines

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 10

Good Road Girl (Assiniboin), Frontal

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 11

Good Road Girl (Assiniboine), Profile

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 12

Blanket or Miles Spring (Blackfoot), Frontal

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 13

Blanket or Miles Spring (Blackfoot), Profile

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 14

Blanket or Miles Spring (Blackfoot), Back

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 15

Geronimo (Apache)

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 16

Reviewing Stands and Crowd

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 17

Naiche and Family (Chiricahua Apache)

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 18

Poor Dog and Family (Sioux)

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 19

Red Dog, Subchief; 8 others (Assiniboiné)

Frank A. Rinehart

1898

Gelatin silver print

Omaha Public Library, W. Dale Clark (Main) Branch



Figure 20

Take A Picture With A Real Indian, Performance Still

James Luna

October 11, 2010

Union Station, Washington D.C.

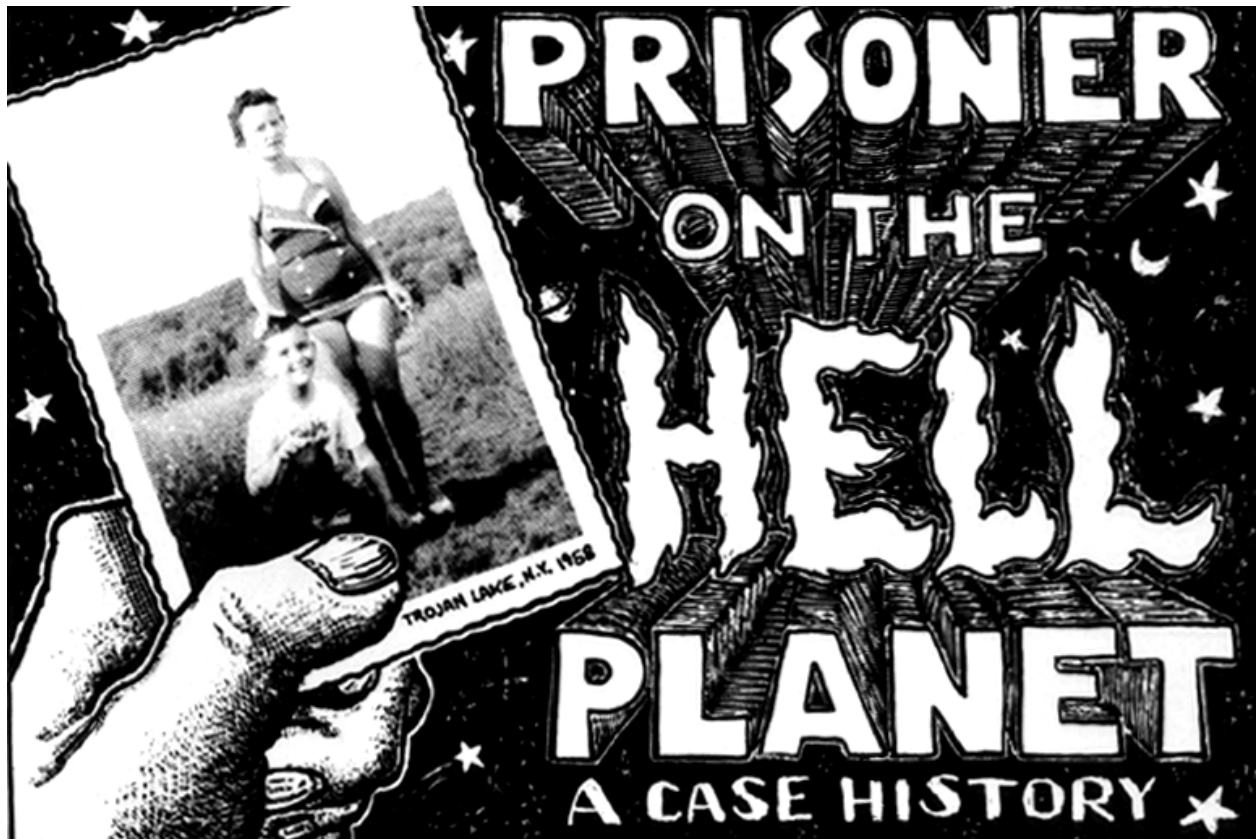


Figure 21

Prisoner on The Hell Planet

Art Spiegelman

Maus

1991



Figure 22

Columbus Fountain

Lorado Taft

1891

Union Station, Washington D.C.



Figure 23

Take A Picture With A Real Indian, Performance Still

James Luna

October 11, 2010

Union Station, Washington D.C.



Figure 24

The Vanishing Race

Edward S. Curtis

1904

Gelatin Silver Print

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