Strength, Tradition, and Adaptation:
Native American Women in Pontiac's War, the Trail of Tears, and the Wounded Knee Massacre

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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Native American women have largely been excluded from American history. Although there are a few Native female figures that are highlighted, such as Pocahontas and Sacagawea, the complexities and vastness of Native female cultures have been kept in the shadows. This is unfortunate because of the beauty and strength that lies in the many different traditional Native female cultures. I believe such information should be included in the histories of commonly remembered historical events involving Native American peoples, because it would make the histories richer, more accurate, and more inclusive. Highlighting Native female roles and perspectives in historical events would also certainly empower Native women today. That is why I have chosen three events with different Native groups in different time periods, Algonquian women in Pontiac’s War, Cherokee and Choctaw women in the Trail of Tears, and Lakota women in the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 and the Wounded Knee Massacre, to focus on in my thesis and highlight the different Native female cultures and the complexities of Native female roles and perspectives during these different events.

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INTRODUCTION

Native American cultures and histories are often misinterpreted when they are included in mainstream American history, and are even sometimes excluded from the discussion entirely. The situation is worse for Native American women's history because women in general, regardless of race, receive significantly less attention than men. While women often exercised a powerful and respected role in Native American societies, their stories have nonetheless too often been ignored.[1]

This thesis participates in the broader effort in recent decades to shed new light on Native women's histories and understand their broader influence on American history. It revisits three major historical events—the Seven Year's War, the Trail of Tears, and the Wounded Knee Massacre—to ask how women influenced and were influenced by the changes unfolding around them. What positions did women take on diplomacy, war, and forced removal? How did they seek to ensure the survival of their families and communities? While each historical moment was unique, I have found that in each case women shaped the course of history and helped ensure the survival of their people by creatively blending Indigenous traditions with adaptation to European and Euroamerican ideas.

To find out more about the presence and influence of women in each context, I have drawn upon varied source material. First, I have read critically the records produced by European and Euro-American men. These records come from religious, government, and personal sources. As historian Nancy Shoemaker has explained, "although these Euro-American recorders of Indian cultures often included some commentary on Indian women, their observations were

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[1] Ed. by Susan Sleeper Smith, Juliana Barr, Jean M. O'Brien, Nancy Shoemaker, Scott Manning Stevens, *Why You Can't Teach United States History without American Indians* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

loaded with assumptions and expectations about what they thought Indians and women were supposed to be." This led to much misinterpretation of the position of Native women by the white men observing them. Consequently, references to Native women as "squaws" or "drudges" were common, and their cultural respect, power, and influence were too often minimized by observers. Yet by reading against the grain, the presence and importance of Native women in key historical events is nonetheless discernable.[2]

In addition, I have drawn upon records produced by Native women and their descendants. I use oral histories as sources because they provide a vital Native perspective often absent from historical documents. As Shoemaker states, "autobiographies can be useful documents for historians interested in understanding the changes in women's lives from their own perspective."[3] For example in my chapter concerning Cherokee and Choctaw women during the Removal Period and their Trails of Tears, I use oral histories of Choctaw women's experiences and petitions written by Cherokee women.

My analysis builds upon the pathbreaking work of other scholars. Nancy Shoemaker, a professor of history at the University of Connecticut, wrote an article in 1995 called "Native-American Women in History" that highlights how Native women have been described in U.S. history and seeks to correct misperceptions. For example, Shoemaker highlights the lack of Native American women's presence in the official version of American history that is taught in public schools. She states, "pick up any book surveying American-Indian history, white-Indian relations in the United States, or the history of a particular tribe, and there will be little mention of either specific women or of women in general."[4] In fact, the only Native American women

[2] Nancy Shoemaker, "Native-American Women in History," *OAH Magazine of History* 9, no. 4 (1995): 11.
[3] Nancy Shoemaker, "Native-American Women in History," 11.
[4] Nancy Shoemaker, "Native-American Women in History," 10.

who have ever regularly received attention in American history are Pocahontas, Sacagawea, and a couple other female figures who aided Americans in some way or assimilated to American culture. Highlighting these particular Native American women, distorting their stories, and excluding most, if not all, others from American history presents an image of Native American women that is simple and incorrect.

Shoemaker brings other Native women besides Pocahontas and Sacagawea into the conversation when she discusses Sarah Winnemucca, a Paiute woman who "served as a scout and interpreter for the United States, but later wrote her autobiography and made speaking tours to bring attention to the injustices that had been committed against her people." Of course, Winnemucca is not representative of all Native American women any more than Pocahontas or Sacagawea. However, by Shoemaker highlighting this Native woman who appeared to assimilate to American culture but was really just surviving through difficult times, it becomes easier for readers to understand the complexity and diversity in Native women's actions. Instead of changing the history of Sarah Winnemucca to make it more pleasing to white culture, Shoemaker highlights the uniqueness of Winnemucca's life. After all, Native American women have never had one overarching culture. However, as I argue below, Native women nonetheless shared certain experiences of colonization and some similarities in understandings of gender roles that make considering their collective histories illuminating. One generalization that can be made about the understandings of gender roles among many Native groups across North America, including Algonquian, Lakota, Cherokee and Choctaw peoples, is the distinct but equal and balancing roles of men and women in society. This common American Indian cultural outlook is somewhat reminiscent of the Chinese philosophy of "yin and yang." This philosophy describes how opposite forces of the world attract each other and rely on each other to survive. The duality

of negative and positive, or "dark-bright" as "yin-yang" literally translates to, creates harmony and balance. The gender roles in many Native societies function in such a way where women possess certain strengths and weaknesses in their identities as well as power and responsibilities within their communities that men did not possess, and vice versa. This was in contrast to European and Euroamerican culture and gender roles that emphasized hierarchy and patriarchal power.[5]

Recent work in Native American women's history—especially works authored by Indigenous scholars—have emphasized the connection between past experiences of colonization and the present, and stressed the need to engage with contemporary Native communities. Like Shoemaker, Devon Abbott Mihesuah also emphasizes the need to study Native women in order to understand larger processes in Native American history in *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*. As Mihesuah comments on Indian peoples: "Their lifeways eroded; bison and fur-bearing mammals were over-hunted almost to extinction, and many tribes were removed from their traditional lands and forced to migrate. Tribes were not allowed to perform religious dances. All Natives became dependent upon material items from the Old World, and although metal implements and firearms made their lives easier in some ways, Natives had to compete with other Natives in order to keep in good stead with the Euro-American suppliers of those items."[6] Native American women played a large role in the transition from hunting and gathering to trading with Europeans and Euroamericans by intermarrying with white traders and diplomats. Although Native women retained their role as horticulturalists and gatherers even as their people became enmeshed in exchange with colonial

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[5] Nancy Shoemaker, "Native-American Women in History," 11.
[6] Devon Abbott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 41.

traders, they also helped create connections with various European nations via intermarriages with their people. Native women also publicly fought against the removal of their peoples from their traditional lands multiple times. Thousands of Native women died in the struggle against removal. Native women joined in the revival of the Ghost Dance to fight against the U.S. government telling them that they could not perform dances. There are many more instances of Native women being involved in their peoples' history and culture, and I believe there is even more still to be uncovered and analyzed. Unfortunately, many Americans have not second guessed the American history they have been taught in public schools for generations which more or less excludes Native women entirely.[7]

While scholars like Mihesuah have contributed to understandings of women's role in history in some of the same ways that previous scholars did, modern scholars also have provided a useful emphasis on how history influences present day inequalities that influence Native communities and Native scholars. Many Native women struggle with modern feminism and past waves of feminism as those movement have had problematic relationship with women of color. M. A. Jaimes Guerrero, for example, has written extensively on Native American women and their relationship to different facets of their identities, including feminism, womanism, and indigenism. Also, many feminist ideas within previous and current waves of feminism are based on Euroamerican ideals and gender roles which do not always translate to Native ideals and gender roles. Although I hesitate to align myself strictly to the current movements of feminism

[7] Vine Deloria Jr., *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1975); Thomas S. Gladsky, "James Fenimore Cooper and American Nativism," *Studies in the American Renaissance* (1994): 43-53; Andrea Smith, "Native American Feminism, Sovereignty, and Social Change," *Feminist Studies* 31, no. 1 (2005): 116-132.

for these and other reasons, my thesis nonetheless engages with feminist ideals in its intent to include Native women in history and empower them in the present.[8]

I first became interested in Native American women's history because of their relative absence in the history I was taught in high school. Where were the women? How did they understand the changes unfolding around them through the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries? What roles did they play during crucial moments in Native American history? I find that the answer to these questions is indeed complicated. Yet one theme across all three situations examined below is that Native women had to survive in extremely uncertain times, and, in order to do so, they mixed adaptation to the unfamiliar with an adherence to tradition. Sometimes Native women melded different cultures into something new in order to continue to survive. These women's stories are worth telling on their own terms, as well as because of their importance in influencing history. Bringing Native women's history to light also can be valuable in the present day as a source of pride and empowerment to contemporary Native American women, children, and communities. Highlighting Native women in history would make plain the power and complexity of Native women's roles in which modern Native women could take encouragement from. Mihesuah closes her introduction by stating, "Almost all prominent female Native leaders have stated that they gain confidence and strength to persevere from the knowledge that their female ancestors also were striving for many of the same goals."[9] This is

[8] M. A. Jaimes Guerrero, "'Patriarchal Colonialism' and Indigenism: Implications for Native Feminist Spirituality and Native Womanism," *Hypatia* 18, no. 2 (2003): 58-69; M.A. Jaimes Guerrero, "Civil Rights versus Sovereignty: Native American Women in Life and Land Struggles," *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures* (1997); M.A. Jaimes Guerrero, "Savage Hegemony: From 'Endangered Species' to Feminist Indigenism," *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age* (1999).

[9] Devon Abbott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women*, xix.

also how I want to close my introduction, with hope and encouragement for Native women of the present and future to look within themselves for strength.

ALGONQUIAN WOMEN IN PONTIAC'S WAR

Pontiac's War was a direct consequence of the outcome of the French and Indian War, in which the French, who had thrived amongst the Natives in the *pays d'en haut* region for decades and had created strong bonds through intermarriage and trade with Algonquian Natives, suddenly retreated. Pontiac's War was a major uprising of Indian peoples against the British in the period immediately following the French and Indian War (or the Seven Years' War). As a result of that conflict, France ceded to Great Britain all territories that it claimed in Canada and in lands east of the Mississippi River. The cession greatly angered Indian peoples, especially those that had been aligned with the French during the war. The *pays d'en haut* region refers to the broad geographic area that French colonials called "the upper country" – the region from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River. Algonquian is an overarching term for the Native groups in the Atlantic Coast and Great Lakes areas who speak Algonquian languages as opposed to the Iroquois peoples of a similar general area who speak Iroquois. The Algonquian and Iroquois people differed because the Iroquois lived across the breadth of today's New York State from the Mohawk River to the area near Lake Erie and the Algonquians lived north, west, and southwest of them, and the Iroquois were a much more united group of people culturally and linguistically than the Algonquian who were more spread out and separate from each other. However, a good many Algonquian groups merged with one another in the wake of Iroquois attacks of the seventeenth century. The Algonquian and Iroquois had warred with each other on and off for decades in what are known as the Beaver Wars over trade with the French since 1609.

France's defeat in the French and Indian War and its subsequent imperial withdrawal from North America allowed the British to move into Algonquian territory after the end of the Seven Years War. The signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 was devastating to the Natives. The

British adopted the Native political ritual of gift-giving as the French had and fit the Native ideal of a benevolent "father" in the same way the French had until General Jeffrey Amherst became British commander-in-chief and significantly changed the British gift-giving policy. As Richard White states in *The Middle Ground*, the tribes of the *pays d'en haut* thought of them, "not as misguided brothers, but as enemies, a malevolent people bound by neither kinship nor ritual obligations."[10] Amherst's disdain for Native Americans was so great that he reduced the allowance for gift-giving at an alarming rate. When crops failed and sickness occurred, their British "fathers" and "brothers" disappointed the Algonquian people by not coming to their aid. In Algonquian culture where "witchcraft and sickness remained closely linked,"[11] this lack of help from the British made the Algonquian people suspicious of potential bad intentions. In the eyes of the Algonquians, this change in policy turned them from "brothers" to enemies.

Consequently, in May 1763, a loosely organized group of Native tribes within the *pays d'en haut*, including the Odawa, Huron, and Potawatomis, attacked Fort Detroit under the leadership of Pontiac, an Odawa war chief who was motivated by the spiritual teachings of Neolin, a Delaware prophet with a nativist vision that "left no room for European fathers."[12] Tribes from the Illinois and Ohio regions joined in the effort to expel the British and attacked many forts, including Venango, Presque Isle, and Pitt. The British fought back multiple times, most famously at Bushy Run in August 1763 in which they successfully repelled the Native advance. Soldiers at Fort Pitt handed over blankets from their smallpox hospital to the Natives there, which is believed to have started an epidemic among them.[13] However, Pontiac began to

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[10] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 275.
[11] Richard White, *The Middle Ground*, 275.
[12] Richard White, *The Middle Ground*, 279.
[13] Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies & Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988); Gregory Evans Dowd, *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations & the*

lose influence among his followers as the French did not come to their aid and many Natives left the siege and made peace with the British. Pontiac finally lifted the siege on Fort Detroit on October 31, 1763. Peace negotiations between the British and the individual Native groups involved in Pontiac's War subsequently began until Pontiac finally met with Sir William Johnson, Major General and Superintendent of Indian Affairs, to discuss peace in July 1766, over two years after the siege on Fort Detroit was lifted.[14]

Pontiac's War reflected the overwhelming rejection of the British as "fathers," a term given by the Natives in the *pays d'en haut* to describe their French benefactors. Therefore, it was a very symbolic event in Native American history. Pontiac's War basically ended in a stalemate in which neither party was truly successful in their endeavors: the Natives of the *pays d'en haut* did not expel the British from their lands and the British did not gain the Natives as their subjects under the Crown. Also, the Proclamation of 1763 was passed on October 7th of that year which rendered all land grants west of the Appalachian Mountains null and void as it had become an Indian Reserve. Not even a month later, Pontiac lifted the siege. Pontiac's War symbolizes the Native cry for an ultimately impossible return to a time before the Europeans "discovered" their lands. That is why the exclusion of Native women from this event in the primary sources is so disappointing.

Accounts of Native women's activities are not commonly found in the primary documentation during the eighteenth century when Pontiac's War occurred because the European men documenting Pontiac's War were not interested in Native women and their participation in the war. Traditional prejudices were in part to blame. But also, most of the events recorded

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British Empire (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002); Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[14] Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 438-39.

during Pontiac's War dealt with the battlefield and politics where these European men did not expect women to be. When Algonquian women do appear in primary documentation, they are usually mentioned in passing, and there is little stated about them specifically. For example, Robert Navarre, a local French notary[15] who was responsible for adjudicating land disputes and composing legal documents in the city of Detroit, recorded his eyewitness account of *The Siege of Detroit in 1763*. Navarre's account describes an important speech performed by Pontiac and then described the French's reaction: "The council came to an end and the Frenchmen withdrew, satisfied with their negotiations with Pontiac. The very same day the Indian women began work in the corn fields, and several settlers ploughed fields for the planting..."[16] In this passage, women are mentioned indirectly, briefly, and somewhat mysteriously, whereas Pontiac's memorable speech is recorded word-for-word. Most of the time, when Native women are mentioned in the primary information over Pontiac's War, it is in instances similar to this one.

However, there is ample evidence from both before and after Pontiac's Rebellion that supports the theory that Algonquian women were, in fact, heavily involved in that conflict in many different ways. Although Algonquian women are scarce in the primary sources, they are not completely absent. With the aid of much research into Algonquian culture and women's roles before and after Pontiac's War, the infrequent but revealing times that Algonquian women are mentioned in the primary sources on Pontiac's War can be analyzed, and Native women, therefore, can gain recognition in a time period when they were, more often than not, ignored by the white men who were recording these events. In this chapter, I will argue that Algonquian women possessed powerful roles in their communities and influenced the Algonquian

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[15] Richard Middleton, *Pontiac's War: Its Causes, Course, and Consequences* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 66.
[16] Milo Milton Quaife, ed., *The Siege of Detroit in 1763: The Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy and John Rutherford's Narrative of a Captivity* (Chicago: R.R. Donnelley, 1958), 100.

perspectives and decision-making process. Algonquian women were also a great source of healing during Pontiac's War and throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as Algonquian peoples continued to deal with white invaders and their growing power. Algonquian women also possessed a unique perspective that is interesting and important to share for modern Native American communities and for the study of Algonquian and Native American history in general.

The two main sources of information on Pontiac's War are French Jesuits and British military men. The Jesuits, who recorded information about the Natives in the *pays d'en haut* until 1791, had different goals than the British military in their dealings with the Natives, and, therefore, included women more commonly in their documentation. According to Susan Sleeper-Smith in *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*, "A rather singular but probably unspoken alliance joined female converts and the French priests."[17] Some notable French Jesuits in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who recorded information about Native women were Father Jacques Gravier, missionary to the Kaskaskia people (an Algonquian-language-speaking group), Father Jacques Marquette, missionary to the Odawas, and Father Gabriel Sagard, missionary to the Hurons. This alliance between Algonquian women and French priests is exemplified in their notes and letters. Because the Jesuits were attempting to convert the Natives, they were much more interested in understanding Native cultures and, more specifically, their spirituality, in which women were heavily involved.

[17] Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 29.

Therefore, the Jesuits' descriptions are more focused on the roles and actions of Algonquian women before Pontiac’s War.[18]

In fact, differing cultural ideas of gender roles was one of the major misunderstandings between Native and European cultures. Women in Algonquian cultures were respected and powerful figures within their societies. The traditional and common domestic roles women took on were not viewed as less deserving of respect than the hunting roles of men. They were simply understood by the community to be different types of communal work that needed different types of strengths. Women in Algonquian societies were considered to be strong of spirit or heart while the men were usually more physically strong. Ella Deloria, in her discussion of her peoples' (Dakota) culture in *Speaking of Indians*, states that even long after Pontiac's War in the nineteenth century, "A woman caring for children and doing all the work around the home thought herself no worse off than her husband who was compelled to risk his life continuously, hunting and remaining ever on guard against enemy attacks on his family."[19] The division of labor in this manner had been practiced for generations and was considered natural, similar to the Chinese philosophy of "yin and yang."

In the early seventeenth century, a Jesuit recording the culture of the Illinois Natives in the mid-Mississippi Valley described the division of labor between the sexes that he observed: "Hunting and war form the whole occupation of the men; the rest of the work belongs to the women and the girls, - it is they who prepare the ground which must be sowed, who do the cooking, who pound the corn, who set up the cabins, and who carry them on their shoulders in

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[18] Gregory Evans Dowd, *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations & the British Empire* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 19-21.
[19] Ella Deloria, *Speaking of Indians* (New York: Friendship Press, 1944), 40.

their journeys."[20] Father Gabriel Marest, and many other Jesuits, frequently noted upon the importance of and breadth of women's roles within Algonquian society in *The Jesuit Relations*. These women were involved in almost every aspect of Algonquian life, and, noticeably, most of their work involved nourishment, whether it was spiritual or physical.

One of the most noted, specifically female powers in Algonquian culture is that of fertility and reproduction. The ability of a woman to produce another human to keep the tribe strong made her the most valuable member of every tribe, and this fact was not taken for granted in Algonquian culture. This womanly sense of fecundity extended to food within the community as Native women were largely responsible for preparing the food, even animals that had been hunted by their husbands.[21] Therefore, growth within the community could not be achieved without a woman, and she was represented in every meal and every birth amongst the tribes of the *pays d'en haut*.

Also, the spiritual power of menstruation, obviously specific to females, is recorded in the mythologies of many Algonquian cultures. Gregory Evans Dowd, in his book, *A Spirited Resistance*, describes a Shawnee myth as an example:

> A young woman, in her menstrual seclusions, discovered a great horned serpent, a malevolent monster from the underworld. Returning to the village, she told her people about it, and the men gathered to plan an attack on the beast. During her next period, the warriors followed to her retreat, ‘singing and drumming’ as they went, probably to prevent their own contamination. They summoned the serpent toward a pair of crossed poles that they had laid at the lake’s edge. At last, the lake churned, and the serpent surfaced to rest its head on the cross. ‘You are the one,’ exclaimed the men, but it was the young woman who struck and killed the beast with

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[20] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 66 (Cleveland: Burrows Bros, Co., 1896) 231.
[21] Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1370-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), 53-60.

> her 'soiled' cloths. This was how, the myth concludes, the Shawnees discovered 'of what power it is' when a woman menstruates.[22]

This myth is important because of the powerful gift it claims only women possess. Not only does the female in the myth defeat the serpent from the underworld, a physically threatening monster, but also a group of warrior males attempt to do the same and fail. Moreover, the two genders are shown here to be starkly different from each other in their strengths but still attempting to reach the same end of defeating the threat to protect the village.

These traditional gender roles that had been practiced for generations in Algonquian culture began to change with the "discovery" of the Americas and consequent occupation of the Americas by the Spanish, French, and English, which began many decades before Pontiac's War. As Sylvia Van Kirk states in *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*, "The growth of a mutual dependency between Indian and European trader at the economic level could not help but engender a significant cultural exchange as well. As a result, a unique society emerged which derived from both Indian and European customs and technology."[23] This blending of cultures was a result of the intermarriages between Algonquian women and European men. The introduction of the fur trade led to inequalities in the amount of work and power of Native women as they dealt with the French traders and even created trade networks with the French through intermarriage with Native women. These women often sought white men as husbands in order to make use of their unique position in between their Native and white connections and relatives to protect themselves and their children.[24] In fact, Native headman often encouraged such unions because connections to colonial traders strengthened their power

[22] Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 6-7.
[23] Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 3.
[24] Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 8.

as distributors of goods among their own people. However, Native nations within the *pays d'en haut* slowly lost sovereignty as independent groups that could stand on their own and adequately defend themselves. These economic and cultural changes all greatly disrupted the traditional flow of Algonquian culture as European civilization encroached upon them.[25]

One of the most impactful differences that Native women began to face between Christian and Native gender roles was that of a woman's place in life. There were many different paths an Algonquian woman could choose for herself, and, unlike European women, her freedoms did not disappear with marriage because Algonquian family lineage was matrilineal. In general, the opinion and wisdom of women was highly regarded in Algonquian cultures. Father Sebastien Rasles, in a letter to his brother on October 12, 1723, describes an event between two young Abenaki men and an elderly woman. As the men deliberated on how to get rid of a particularly bad winter they were experiencing, the elderly woman interrupted them, told them they had "no sense," and advised them that, in order to get rid of this harsh winter, they needed to properly bury a man who had been left in the snow that the Abenaki warriors had seen but passed by. Father Rasles writes that the Abenaki men responded with, "'Thou art right, our Mother...thou hast more sense than we; and the counsel thou hast given us restores us to life.'"[26] Rasles claimed that the men did as the elderly woman told them to, and the snow cleared up shortly afterwards. Rasles understood the power that this woman had in upholding the spiritual beliefs of this Abenaki tribe, although he called those beliefs "foolish."[27]

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[25] Gregory Evans Dowd, *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, the Indian Nations & the British Empire*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Richard Middleton, *Pontiac's War: Its Causes, Course and Consequences*, (New York: Routledge, 2007).
[26] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 67, 155.
[27] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 67, 155.

In *The Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy*, Navarre describes the meeting that Pontiac held on April 27, 1763 involving the Odawas, Potawatomies, and Hurons in order to convince them to aid him in his mission to expel the British. Navarre stated that, during this meeting, Pontiac told the story of a "Wolf Indian, who had journeyed to Heaven and talked with the Master of Life," that the Jesuit relaying the meeting claimed, "contained in blackest aspect the reason of the attack upon the English, and upon the French too, perhaps."[28] In the story, which the Jesuit then described in detail, a man from the Wolf nation went on a journey to meet the Master of Life, or Great Spirit, a prominent God-like figure that was commonly referenced in nativist speeches. Towards the end of his journey, when the Wolf man had almost lost hope, he came upon a woman in the forest:

> At this juncture, not knowing what to do to continue his way, he looked around in all directions and finally saw a woman of this mountain, of radiant beauty, whose garments dimmed the whiteness of the snow…This woman addressed him in his own tongue: 'Thou appearest to me surprised not to find any road to lead thee where thou wishest to go. I know that for a long while thou hast been desirous of seeing the Master of Life and of speaking with Him; that is why thou hast undertaken this journey to see Him. The road which leads to His abode is over the mountain, and to ascend it thou must forsake all that thou hast with thee…' The Wolf was careful to obey the words of the woman…He questioned this woman how one should go about climbing up, and she replied that if he was really anxious to see the Master of Life he would have to ascend, helping himself only with his hand and his left foot. This appeared to him impossible, but encouraged by the woman he set about it and succeeded by dint of effort.[29]

In this passage, a Native man becomes lost on his journey to find Heaven and meet the Master of Life, and, in his time of need, it is a woman who appears to him. She does not directly give him the answers, but gently guides him to the next step. This passage is highly symbolic of

[28] Milo Milton Quaife, ed., *The Siege of Detroit in 1763*, 8.
[29] Milo Milton Quaife, ed., *The Siege of Detroit in 1763*, 11-12.

Algonquian women's roles in times of warfare, like Pontiac's War; their roles were subtle but vital. Also, the man did not have enough courage to continue up the mountain that the Master of Life was at the top of until the woman told him that he could succeed in his quest if he wanted to. Native women's role as a giver of wisdom was so prominent that it extended back into legends and folk tales that were a natural part of their stories. The fact that Pontiac mentioned a story like this to encourage fellow Native tribes of the *pays d'en haut* and evoke emotion from them shows the power of the female icon in Algonquian culture during the time of Pontiac's War. These examples show the strength in the Algonquian woman's voice and how men respected and welcomed her unique wisdom in making decisions for the tribe. Her opinion was not viewed as "less than" because of its feminine touch. In fact, Algonquian women were viewed as having quite different but similarly important powers to men within the community.

On occasion, Algonquian women could be and were documented fulfilling the more traditionally masculine roles of warriors and chiefs before and after Pontiac's War. One of the most thoroughly documented examples of this was in the mid-nineteenth century, which was recorded by Edwin Denig, a prominent trader in the Upper Missouri region.[30] Denig documented a young girl he observed who was naturally attracted to the more masculine roles of hunting and fighting and grew up to be a great warrior, and even a war chief at times throughout her life.[31] In Beatrice Medicine's discussion of the "manly" woman described by Denig, she states that, "Although this woman's manly-oriented life may have been exceptional, it was socially recognized and esteemed among the people with whom she lived."[32] This example shows the

[30] Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arickaras, Assiniboines, Crees, Crows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961).
[31] Edwin Thompson Denig, *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*, 195-200.
[32] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983), 273.

fluid nature of gender roles within Algonquian society. Beatrice Medicine, in "'Warrior Women': Sex Role Alternatives for Plains Indian Women," states that she participated in council decisions for her village and ranked highly as a warrior among the surrounding hundred or so tribes.[33] Warrior women are also documented in a more general sense for the North Piegan by Oscar Lewis and the Crow and Blackfoot by David McAllester without much reference to time period, perhaps indicating that warrior women existed in Algonquian culture throughout their history.[34] These women were in charge of supervising and reprimanding other women who had upset their community.[35] These roles did not exist on a hierarchy of importance but within "gender parallelism," a phenomenon in which Algonquian women did not necessarily occupy the highest positions in their societies, but there were certain high-ranking women who watched over the other women within their societies.

Robert Navarre, the presumed author of *The Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy*, a first-hand account of Pontiac's War written in French, also discusses Native women being involved in more physically violent events. While describing a scene in which a group of Natives at Detroit during the siege killed some of their English soldier captives, Navarre states: "Even the Indian women took a hand, helping their husbands to glut themselves with the blood of these poor victims by likewise inflicting a thousand cruelties upon them. They vied with one another in seeing who could cause the greatest suffering; they slashed them with knife-cuts, as we do when we want to lard beef; and some of the women mutilated them to the point of emasculation."[36] In order to emphasize the "savagery" performed by the Natives he observed, Navarre described how the

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[33] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 273.
[34] Oscar Lewis, "Manly-Hearted Women among the North Piegan," *American Anthropology* 43, no. 2 (1941): 173-187; David McAllester, "Water as a Disciplinary Agent among the Crow and Blackfoot," *American Anthropologist* 43, no. 1 (1941): 593-604.
[35] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 273.
[36] Milo Milton Quaife, ed., *The Siege of Detroit in 1763,* 115.

women acted just like the men in their violent, ritualistic display of hatred. This public and violent act is an incredible contrast to the idea of a "drudge" or "squaw" female slave that many Algonquian women were portrayed as during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In fact, there are many references to "chief" or "prominent" Native women during Pontiac's War in the letters sent to Sir William Johnson, the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1756 until his death in 1774. In a description of a meeting between the Senecas and tribes of the *pays d'en haut* in 1763, a Jesuit, who signed in his initials A.D., witnessed a belt being exchanged in a ritual between "the cheif women to ye sachims & warriors on their declareing their resolutions."[37] This exchange was a seal of approval from influential female members of the tribe that was expressed during a political ritual.

Algonquian women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were also often documented deciding the fates of captives and objecting to a decision made by war chiefs or other politically powerful members of the tribe in *Jesuit Relations*. In his description of the Montagnais people, which he observed from 1720-30, Reverend Father Pierre Laure stated, "The choice of plans, of undertakings, of journeys, of winterings, lies in nearly every instance in the hands of the housewife."[38] In *William Johnson's Papers,* in a description of the events that took place at Johnson Hall, his home and the meeting place of Iroquois, Algonquian, and many other tribes during Pontiac's War, on August 15, 1763, a representative of an Oghquagoes (Oneida)[39] tribe states to William Johnson:

> Brother – With this Belt, our Women spoke as follows to our Warriors – Brethren, Friends, & Warriors – We, with the greatest pleasure, have

[37] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 10, 946.
[38] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 68, 93.
[39] "Onaquagas," *The Occum Circlec* (Dartmouth College), <https://collections.dartmouth.edu/occom/html/ctx/orgography/orgography.html?ographyID=org0077.ocp>.

> heard your Resolutions, for which we return you our hearty thanks, and have only to recommend to you a strict Observance of them. – We, on our parts give up our Children, Husbands, Brothers &c for ever to the Disposal of our *Brother*, and friend Warraghijagey, and hope they will be ever ready to follow, and observe his directions, and shall conclude with desiring that, when he sends you on Service, you will exert yourselves, *and act like Men*, and true Brothers.

This message from the women to the men of this tribe is a public statement in which the Algonquian women expressed their opinion in a firm and confident manner that men were to assume a strong masculine presence. Therefore, even though Algonquian women were not physically present at this meeting, their collective voice was heard.

In March 1764, a "munsy, Chicola" representative stood up during a meeting with William Johnson and presented him with a belt, saying, "Brother - I have only now to acquaint you that our very Women, and Children are pleased at our Resolutions, in so much that they have strongly Recommended it to the Warriors to exert themselves in your Cause, which indeed we have in a great Measure done..."[40] This brief mention of the women supporting these warriors is very meaningful because it expresses the power that women's opinions had. Even though there were many meetings at Johnson Hall between Natives that did not physically have a Native woman present, they were often represented through the warriors and chiefs.

In fact, during Pontiac's War, Johnson himself frequently noted the influence and power that Native women had over the men in the *pays d'en haut* and thanked them if their opinion aligned with his own. In a transcription of a meeting in February 1764 between Johnson and a large assortment of Native groups, including warriors from the Algonquian tribes of the Nanticoke and Mohicans, Johnson stated to the group, "Brethren - I heartily thank your women

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[40] Milton W. Hamilton, ed., *William Johnson's Papers* vol. 11 (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1953), 89.

&c for their advice to you, and their approbation of the Measures you have agreed to pursue..."[41] Here Johnson appears to be expressing his knowledge of Native customs of the *pays d'en haut* region. The weight of the female voice in Algonquian culture is also represented here as Johnson's statement makes it clear that Native women had the final vote in tribal action and that Johnson was aware that their opinion could have changed the course of events.

Later in the negotiations, Johnson addressed the group of Native warriors again, stating, "Brethren - I cannot sufficiently applaud the Sagacity, and Sincerity of your Women, neither, shall so great, and laudable a Spirit as they have now shewn pass unnoticed, and they may depend upon it I shall not forget the friendly, and judicious part they have now acted..."[42] There is another example of Johnson's acknowledgement of Native women's influence in March 1764, when he stated in a meeting with “Chughnuts & Wialoosing” Iroquois groups, "Brethren - I highly approve of the Sagacity of your Women in encouraging the Warriors to an Exertion of their Abilities against our Enemy..."[43] The strength of the Native women who Johnson came into contact with, in and around Johnson Hall and the *pays d'en haut* region during Pontiac's War, seem to have moved him enough to make it a point to recognize and highlight the respect and gratitude he felt for them specifically.

Even the women who did not choose to step outside of more traditional roles still played a large role in warfare through means of support and control behind-the-scenes. Women supported warfare efforts by making all the tools and clothing used in spiritual ceremonies, war dances, and combat. Women fed and doctored the soldiers, while still in control of the homestead. Women were the heart of Algonquian society, and they, along with their children,

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[41] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 11, 64.
[42] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 11, 64-65.
[43] Milton W. Hamilton, ed., *William Johnson’s Papers* vol. 11, 93.

were the reason that warrior men and women fought to protect the tribe. Also, European gender expectations and Algonquian gender roles conflicted in such a way as to make Algonquian women potentially important in Algonquian military victories. Europeans' expectations of women's fragility, combined with Algonquians' acceptance of women being in the heart of battle, created a place for Algonquian women to aid in battle in these ways.

John Rutherford, the British soldier who recorded his captivity experience during Pontiac's War, describes an event in which Lieutenant Charles Robinson of the 77th Regiment and a group of soldiers came upon some Natives while traversing the Huron River in May 1763. Rutherford describes how these Natives attempted to lure the men to the shore in order to ambush them:

> They crowded about us, men, women, and children, giving us the friendly appellation of Brothers, telling us they were glad to see us, and begging us to come ashore and we should have whatever was good, the squaws or Indian women showing us fish, maple sugar, &c, in order to induce us to land…The squaws or Indian women were collected so closely upon the bank of the river, endeavoring to divert our attention by ridiculous stories and immodest gestures, that it was impossible to see what was going on behind them or what the men were talking about, who were then posting themselves behind a rising ground a little beyond us.[44]

This is a great example of Native women utilizing traditional gender roles to aid their men in conflict or battle. No more was said about these brave women but Rutherford went on to describe how the Natives were successful in their ambush, killing Lieutenant Robinson and capturing the other men. The actions of this group of Native women near Detroit were crucial in this moment. Without them as a distraction, these white men would most likely have seen what the Native men were up to and would have escaped down the river. The Native women and men working

[44] Milo Milton Quaife, ed., *The Siege of Detroit in 1763,* 225.

together in this way represents the fluidity of gender roles in Algonquian cultures, especially in times of necessity.

The Huron River attack was not an isolated event. Lieutenant James McDonald wrote to Ensign George Croghan, a well-known trader who was appointed to the Iroquois' Onondaga Council in 1746 to describe a scene during the siege of Fort Miami. In this case, Ensign Robert Holmes of the 60th Regiment was tricked to leave the fort by an Miami (Algonquian) woman who pretended, "another Woman was very sick, and begged him to Come to her Cabin, and bleed her, and that when he had gone a little Distance from the Fort, was fired upon, and killed."[45] Lieutenant McDonald offered further evidence of women's role as distractors, noting that the sergeant heard the shot and, running towards the sound, was ambushed and taken prisoner. This violent incident led to the siege of Fort Miami on May 27, 1763. This was an important victory for the Natives fighting in Pontiac's War, and, once again, was successful because of an Algonquian woman's bravery and inner strength.

A few weeks later on June 2, 1763 at Fort Michilimackinac, a group of Ojibwe and Sauk men and women were playing a ball game near the fort. They pretended to accidentally throw the ball into the fort, then rushed in to the Algonquian women inside the fort. According to Lieutenant McDonald, these women "had Tomahawks and Spears concealed under their blankets which they delivered them, and put the whole Garrison to Death except 13 men."[46] This led to the capture of Fort Michilimackinac and is another great example of Algonquian women using trickery in collaboration with the men to be helpful in a ferocious wartime attack.

[45] Milton W. Hamilton, ed., *William Johnson's Papers* vol 10, 743.
[46] Milton W. Hamilton, ed., *William Johnson's Papers* vol.10, 744.

The lack of differentiation between the two sexes in this moment is meaningful in that it also shows the fluidity of gender roles in Algonquian society, but also that it expresses the individuality that an Algonquian woman had. Algonquian women were not hindered by a society that did not allow them to express themselves, and they often did in times of both mourning and elation. Native women have been documented expressing themselves through a death wail during moments of community distress.[47] There is an example of Native women publicly and openly expressing themselves during a ritualistic killing of captives by an unnamed tribe that was documented by a Jesuit in Quebec in 1632: "I did not remain during this torture, I could not have endured such diabolical cruelty; but those who were present told me, as soon as we arrived, that they had never seen anything like it. 'You should have seen these furious women,' they said, 'howling, yelling...in short, doing everything that madness can suggest to a woman."[48] Thus, the voice of Algonquian women was not silenced during Pontiac's War, and can be found documented from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

Traditional Algonquian gender roles can be highlighted in the primary information over the events of Pontiac's War. Not even a decade later, the American Revolution began and Algonquians, as well as every other Native group in North America, moved on to the next issue they faced of aligning with either the British or the colonists/Americans in that war, in a final, desperate grab for some of the remnants of the autonomy or sovereignty they had known before the Europeans had arrived. Algonquian women used traditional Algonquian gender roles to survive and adapt to the rapidly changing political climate in the *pays d'en haut* during the

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[47] One famous example occurred after Sitting Bull died. See "Brooke Reports 'wild scene' and Chaotic Conditions," Digital Public Library of America, < http://dp.la/item/21366c1fdc142e9527fde117dd27cf61>.
[48] Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations* vol. 5, 53.

eighteenth century. Algonquian women's roles and perspectives during Pontiac's War express this balance between tradition and adaptation.

CHEROKEE & CHOCTAW WOMEN IN TRAIL OF TEARS & REMOVAL PERIOD

The Trail of Tears is one of the few events involving Native Americans that Americans today are even vaguely familiar with. Though the Indian removal policy of the 1810s through the 1830s influenced tribes in the North as well, it is the experiences of Native groups in the Southeast that is best known to the general public. Tens of thousands of Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole people were forced from their homes, and thousands died on the way to new lands in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). It is the stories of men in this history that have usually been stressed most: Andrew Jackson as the face of the pro-removal U.S. government, John Ross as the Cherokee leader fighting against it.[49]

If Native American women have long been overlooked in popular understandings of this event, scholars like Donna Akers and Theda Perdue have begun to make women's presence and importance clearer. Women intervened in political debates surrounding removal, helped their people survive the process of removal itself, and played a key role in rebuilding their nations in Indian territory. Through analysis of political petitions, census rolls, and other available primary sources, this chapter builds upon the works of Akers and Perdue to highlight the varied perspectives and roles that Native women held during the Trail of Tears and Removal Period, focusing particularly on the Cherokee and Choctaw. Southeastern Native women faced multiple challenges during this period as they navigated shifting gender roles within their communities and adapted to and incorporated new ideas into their belief systems. Blending adaptation with tradition, some Cherokee and Choctaw women expressed their views in writing and seeking to influence the political process by drawing upon the language of their colonizers. During and after

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[49] Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932.)

removal, Cherokee and Choctaw women also made possible the survival of families and their broader tribal communities, as healers, producers, and even heads of household.[50]

Native Women's Roles Before Removal

There were many factors leading up to the removal of what once were called the "Five Civilized Tribes." The main instigators towards the removal of these people to unwanted territory were (1) a sense of racial superiority that was (is?) deeply embedded within nineteenth-century American culture, and (2) capitalism and the ideology of individual wealth accumulation through land acquisition and the exploitation of enslaved labor. These factors together over a period of many years culminated into the removal of the five major Southern Indian nations to unwanted territory, mostly in what is now Oklahoma, in order for European settlers to continue westward and further into the continent. While most people associate "Indian removal" with the Act with that name passed in 1830, the history of removal began much earlier. For example, in the 1802 Georgia Compact the U.S. federal government promised to "extinguish at its own expense the Indian title within the reserved limits of Georgia as soon as it could be done 'peaceably and on reasonable terms.'"[51]

Cherokee and Choctaw people navigated the pressures on their communities in varied ways: through diplomacy, engagement with Christianity and education in English, intermarriage with Euroamericans, and by adapting their tribal governments to more closely resemble that of the United States. Choctaw and Cherokee women were at the center of this process of adaptation and resistance, even if they are not always present in the documentation centering on diplomacy

[50] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death: The Choctaw Nation, 1830-1860* (Michigan State University Press, 2004); Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).
[51] Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal*, 19.

between men. As Theda Perdue has explained: "In the public debates over removal, or indeed any political issue, the voices of Cherokee women were largely absent."[52] Yet this is not to say that Cherokee and Choctaw women did not play an important role in internal Cherokee debates that white observers were not privy to, including decision-making about how to engage with the U.S. government.

To better understand the roles that Cherokee and Choctaw women played before, during, and after removal, it is helpful first to understand how Southeastern Native peoples' understandings of gender roles differed from those of Euroamericans. At first glance, there were some similarities between Native and white American understandings of women's place in the home. For example, because of Cherokee women's traditional roles within their societies of focusing on mainly domestic responsibilities of cooking and watching over the children, they did not often leave the home and hearth for extended periods of time unless they were assisting Cherokee men in a hunting expedition. There were also important differences, however, as Cherokee and Choctaw societies saw women and men's spheres as equal and complimentary rather than hierarchical. As Akers explains, "Women had access to power, not only through their traditional roles at the center of Choctaw society, but also in a number of other forums: they could choose to be warriors, they could engage in sports, and they could choose to become healers."[53] Despite these various avenues to utilize feminine power within these communities, it was generally uncommon for a Cherokee or Choctaw woman to step outside of their traditional roles because the female connection to the earth, and specifically corn for both Cherokee and Choctaw, was deeply ingrained in their cultures. "The connection between women and corn gave

[52] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1995), 122-123.
[53] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 5: A Perfect Picture of Chaos."

women considerable status and economic power because the Cherokees depended heavily on that crop for subsistence."[54] This did not make Cherokee women more or less equal than men on some hierarchical scale often present in American culture, but was one of the avenues utilized by women to create balance. Theda Perdue believes "the balance that Cherokees sought to achieve between…men and women may not have permitted equality in a modern sense, but their concern with balance made hierarchy, which often serves to oppress women, untenable. Men did not dominate women, and women were not subservient to men. Men knew little about the world of women; they had no power over women and no control over women's activities. Women had their own arena of power, and any threat to its integrity jeopardized cosmic order. So it had been since the beginning of time."[55] In this excerpt from *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835*, Perdue's use of the word "modern" portrays her own subjectivity and bias towards her American background, as it appears to assume "modern" to mean "mainstream" or "white." However, her description of the difference in dynamics between American gender roles and Cherokee gender roles expresses how different they really were. The entire construction of both Cherokee and Choctaw gender roles were based off of a sense of balance in all aspects of their cultures, while American gender roles, as well as many other aspects of their culture, was based on a hierarchy in which almost no one was equal.

Cherokee men and women's relationships to the land differed in many ways. Cherokee women usually farmed while men hunted, traded, and battled. This was the structure of traditional Cherokee gender roles because of the female connection to Selu, the original Cherokee woman who sowed the first crop, corn. As Theda Perdue explains in *Cherokee*

[54] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 25.
[55] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 17.

Women, "Cherokees associated women with the earth and its bounty. When the Cherokee council referred to 'Mother Earth' in 1801, they gendered their homeland…the crops that took root in the earth had a clear cosmological association with women through Selu, whose blood soaked the ground and germinated corn. Men had no such mythical connection to the land…men went abroad in search of game while women stayed home, hoed their corn, and became Selu's heirs."[56] These women worked together and built strong connections to the land based on matrilineage, meaning women of the same family inherited the land and its bounty.

The connection to their traditional lands was a vital connection for both Cherokee and Choctaw women that had roots generations deep. As Akers states, the connection to the land for Choctaw women was also represented through a spiritual ancestral figure: "Most important Choctaw ceremonies centered on an agricultural motif, often emphasizing corn. The earth was fertile and feminine, as was the Bringer of the gift of corn from the Great Spirit – *Ohoyo Osh Chisba*. *Nanih Waiya*, the birthplace of the Choctaws, was the Mother Mound."[57] Akers explains the balance between gender roles found within Choctaw society and the Green Corn Ceremony: "The duality basic to the Choctaw worldview provides a glimpse of why women of this Nation enjoyed greater esteem than those in other societies. Women's female power was a mysterious, fertile, ancient power going back into antiquity, beyond the consciousness of human beings. The feminine power of women balanced the power of men. In the Green Corn Ceremony, the most important ceremony of the year, the Choctaw people ritually purified themselves. The Green Corn Ceremony cleansed the fundamental categories in the Choctaw worldview, the most important of which was gender roles."[58] Therefore, Choctaw people not only respected, but

[56] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal*, 136.
[57] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 5: A Perfect Picture of Chaos."
[58] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 5: A Perfect Picture of Chaos."

celebrated a balance in gender roles that was heavily symbolized through the Green Corn Ceremony and emphasized in everyday life.

Cherokee women were able to be individuals within a strong support system on their ancestral lands. The balance between Cherokee men and women allowed for every member of the group to protect and serve each other. Although these actions looked different depending on the gender of the Cherokee individual (usually, but not always – ex: Warrior Women[59]), there was balance in expression and action between the two. The Cherokee origin story involved a woman, Selu, and a man, Kana'ti, who sat side by side as equals in the afterlife. Cherokee culture based their gender roles on these two figures and sought to also create balance in their own lives and tribes. As Theda Perdue explains, "The concept of balance was central to their perceptions of self and society, and the responsibility for maintaining balance fell to men and women."[60] This pertained to all areas and aspects of Cherokee life, including war. However, because most of the primary sources concerning the removal of the Southeastern nations were documented by white American men, women were documented as subservient, lesser "squaws."

The frequent use by white Americans of the term "squaw" for Cherokee women reflected their misunderstanding of Southeastern Native groups' gender roles. The term "squaw" was originally derived from the Algonquian word for "woman." It was usually deployed in a derogatory fashion, however, reflecting the false idea that Native women were slaves to their men. After all, "Men spent many summer hours gambling, smoking, or talking while women worked in the fields. And in winter, most women stayed in warm winter houses while men traveled great distances in bitter cold to search for game…A person's job was an aspect of his or

[59] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women.*, 17-40.
[60] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women.*, 15.

her sexuality, a source of economic and political power, and an affirmation of cosmic order and balance."[61] American observers of Cherokee and Choctaw culture and their record of what they believed they understood was usually only half the picture. The balance that existed between Cherokee and Choctaw men and women was cyclical and meaningful in its subtlety and was not something that would always be plain to an outside observer. Another important example of this is the importance of matrilineal inheritance and family relations in both Cherokee and Choctaw cultures. Akers explains this importance from the perspective of a Choctaw woman: "Women enjoyed many rights and an autonomy unlike anything experienced by Euro-American women in the United States. Husbands and wives usually kept their property separate, and until late in the century, a strong tradition of matrilineal property continued."[62]

Once the importance and uniqueness of the gender roles within Cherokee and Choctaw cultures are better understood by the observer, these Native women suddenly step out of the shadows. Their actions become as important as the men's if their network of relationships is better understood. Cherokee and Choctaw women's connection to traditional land and family relations was a source of power that these women used to their advantage and wanted to keep. However, this did not necessarily align with American ideals of "civilization" and acceptable gender roles.

Moreover, even within Cherokee and Choctaw communities, ideas about gender, family, and property were in flux. During the eighteenth century with the increasing amount of trade between Native groups and colonials, Cherokee men's traditional roles of hunting and politics became much more emphasized. As Theda Perdue states, "The increasing importance of war and

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[61] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women.*, 17.
[62] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 5: A Perfect Picture of Chaos."

trade in the eighteenth century had magnified this division and shifted political power to men. The adoption of Anglo-American political institutions, in which women did not participate, further excluded them from the political arena."[63] However, Cherokee and Choctaw women's absence in their peoples' rapidly expanding political arena did not exclude them from cultural power in general. Moreover, some Cherokee women chose to participate in the political arena if the circumstances seemed to require it.

In an attempt to survive rapidly changing circumstances, some Cherokee and Choctaw people incorporated aspects of white American culture. Cherokee and Choctaw people were led to believe that this would be what pushed Americans to respect them and their culture because of an unending stream of promises made by the American government. Others chose a different path. Small groups of Cherokee people began abandoning their traditional lands and moving westward during the early part of the nineteenth century including those who relocated to what is now Arkansas. Cherokee and Choctaw people were beginning to split based on their attitude towards removal and what to do about it.

Protest and Intermarriage: Women's Varied Strategies in the Removal Era

As people began to relocate, some Cherokee women felt the need to speak out against it. This was the context in which Beloved Cherokee women were heard before their National Council in both 1817 and 1818. In Cherokee culture, Beloved Women were "entitled to speak in councils and to decide the fate of [war] captives."[64] The majority of Beloved Women had most likely at one time also been War Women who had reached menopause and were considered to be

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[63] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal*, 123.
[64] James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee* (Washington: Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Part I, 1900), 14.

wise within Cherokee culture.[65] Although all women aided in preparing warriors for battle and caring for them upon their return, some Cherokee women joined the men in the physical fight as warriors. They were known as War Women. Nancy Ward, the "legend…who had been the mother image of the Cherokee Nation since 1755,"[66] was a great source of leadership and inspiration during both of these Cherokee women's councils. Originally named *Nanye'hi*, which is a word used to describe Cherokee mythological "spirit people," she came to be known as Nancy by the Americans who knew her personally or had heard of her. Her uncle was Attakullakulla and her great uncle was Old Hop, both influential warriors, diplomats, and First Beloved Men, or chiefs, in their own times who influenced Nancy to become a leading figure in Cherokee history. Ward "played most dramatically the role of mediator during the period of turbulent relations between Cherokees and colonists in the latter part of the eighteenth century."[67] During the Battle of Taliwa in 1755 against the Creeks, Ward expressed her strength by standing up and fighting after her husband died in battle. It was a successful battle for the Cherokee, and afterwards Nancy was awarded the title of Ghighau, or "Beloved Woman." Clara Sue Kidwell, in "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," states "By personal valor and lineage she was an extraordinary woman."[68] I agree, Nancy Ward was an extraordinary woman in many ways. She was able to utilize a traditionally female avenue of power, her people's matrilineage, and took her husband's place as a warrior in battle when necessary, which was a traditionally masculine role. This earned her great respect among her people and her legacy was even well-known among many Euroamericans. Also, Nancy Ward married a white trader, Bryan Ward,

[65] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 17-40.
[66] Ben Harris McClary, "Nancy Ward: The Last Beloved Woman of the Cherokees," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1962): 352.
[67] Clara Sue Kidwell, "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," *Ethnohistory* 39, no. 2 (1992): 102.
[68] Clara Sue Kidwell, "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," 102.

after the death of her first husband in battle, and they had two daughters. Ward was one of the many Cherokee women who intermarried with white men to increase their influence. Ward's influence also increased with the marriage of her two daughters to white traders.

Theda Perdue summarizes Ward's achievements succinctly when she states, "Ward had rallied the warriors after her husband's death in battle in 1755. She subsequently aided the patriot cause during the American Revolution and addressed the Hopewell Treaty Conference in 1785. Now the elderly Ward and other women turned their attention to land cession and removal."[69] Ward could sense the influence of American society and government on her own people's government, and, in May of 1817, the Cherokee National Council had another meeting. Ben Harris McClary, in his article over Nancy Ward's life and legacy, states: "To the last meeting of the Council in May, 1817, Nancy Ward, aged and too ill to attend, sent her distinctive walking cane to represent her. With it went her approval of the republic which was about to be born, but it was also accompanied by a written plea that the new government hold on to the remaining Cherokee land in the face of growing pressure from the white man."[70] In this moment, Nancy Ward, the last Beloved Woman of the Cherokee, was representative of what many Cherokee and Choctaw women were thinking at the time while accepting the realities around the Cherokee and Choctaw's current political situation was necessary, traditional ways of life were vitally important to ensure the continuation of their people in the unknown but grim future that the Southern Indian nations faced during the Removal Period. According to a diary from Springplace Moravian Mission, a Cherokee outpost, "Several old respected women, who were still the

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[69] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal.*, 123.
[70] Ben Harris McClary, "Nancy Ward", 361.

successors of the former 'beloved women' had gathered at Hiwassee" to draft this petition on May 2, 1817.[71]

In this letter sent to the National Council, Ward drew from traditional Cherokee understandings of women's roles in order to seek to influence Cherokee decision-making. In particular, Ward referred to Cherokee women's role of motherhood, including the mothers of the "head men of the Cherokee nation."[72] Cherokee women were responsible for raising the children of their tribe and ensuring that they become strong, true, and loyal to their people and helped them to survive. This meant motherhood was an extremely important role for Cherokee and Choctaw women. In the statement: "Therefore, children, don't part with any more of our lands but continue on it & enlarge your farms," Ward emphasized that Cherokee people needed to continue to stay on their traditional lands, create children and grow in numbers in order to resist growing pressure from Americans to relocate. Ward referred to the traditional lands on which Cherokee women raised their children, produced fruit and vegetables, and made clothing to ensure the prosperity of their people. In Ward's closing statement, in which she declared, "Your mothers, your sisters ask and beg of you not to part with any more of our land. I have great many grand children which I wish them to do well on our land," Ward invoked many different roles of Cherokee women, that of mother, sister, and grandmother, in order to represent the many different faces of Cherokee women and also to draw connections between the men who heard Ward's petition and the women they were matrilineally connected to. Her ideal she was emphasizing here was the importance of family connections and the gender roles within Cherokee culture. Ward also emphasized her fear that selling off the land will ultimately result in

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[71] Rowena McClinton, ed., *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees*, vol. 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007): 148.
[72] Andrew Jackson Papers, Library of Congress, XLIV, Book 29, 6452.

the destruction of Cherokee culture because of how important the land is to the Cherokee world view and the construction of its gender roles. As Tiya Miles states in "'Circular Reasoning': Recentering Cherokee Women in the Antiremoval Campaigns," "Women – the rearers of children, owners of cabins, and traditional tenders of fields – would suffer a particular hardship if Cherokees lost their land."[73] Without this connection to the land, Cherokee women feared they would lose much of their traditional cultural power and independence.

A second petition voiced by Cherokee women the following year was again against removal, and also expressed their opposition to the allotment of Cherokee traditional lands – the breaking up of communal lands into individually owned tracts. This petition is believed to have been authored by Nancy Ward as well.[74] In this petition on June 30, 1818, Cherokee women declared the sacred, righteous claim to the lands they had lived on for generations in the statement: "The land was given to us by the Great Spirit above as our common right, to raise our children upon, & to make support for our rising generations." Here these women were attempting to reach the large portion of the Cherokees at the time who were resistant to removal and/or change from traditional Cherokee culture in general. These women attempted to conjure religious images of the Great Spirit and the origin of their peoples, an event in which the First Woman and mother of corn, Selu, had a prominent place. These Cherokee women again emphasized the female role of motherhood. As in the first petition, these Cherokee women

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[73] Tiya Miles, "'Circular Reasoning': Recentering Cherokee Women in the Antiremoval Campaigns," *American Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2009): 223-224.
[74] Jillian Moore Bennion, "Assimilationist Language in Cherokee Women's Petitions: A Political Call to Reclaim Traditional Cherokee Culture," *All Graduate Plan B and other Reports* https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/gradreports/838 (2016): 838.

highlighted the fact that they were mothers, life-givers and nurturers, to "our beloved children, the head men & warriors" of the Cherokee people.[75]

The Cherokee women who affirmed the second petition made a foreboding statement when they claimed: "Our Father the President advised us to become farmers to manufacture our own clothes, & to have our children instructed. To this advise we have attended in every thing as far as we were able. Now the thought of being compelled to remove the other side of the Mississippi is dreadful to us, because it appears to us that we, but this removal shall be brought to a savage state again, for we have, by the endeavor of our Father the President, become too much enlightened to throw aside the privilege of a civilized life." This shows the extent to which Cherokee women had assimilated aspects of Anglo-American culture. Cherokee women had been at the forefront of Cherokee assimilation to "civilization" before the Trail of Tears. They were led to believe that "civilization" emphasized female power and would be beneficial to Cherokee society. However, it is interesting to speculate how much of this cultural shift occurred simply out of necessity for survival. Cherokee women held a responsibility to carry Cherokee culture into the next generation and to make sure that their people endured because of their power and gift of reproduction that they took very seriously, as was common in most other Native cultures, including the Algonquian and Lakota. This petition makes evident Cherokee women's frustration because of efforts to "civilize," convert to Christianity, go to American schools, etc., that were not fruitful in the end. The language in this petition was strategically used by Nancy Ward to emphasize that the Cherokee should not have to go through removal because they had done what the U.S. government asked of them in the way of "civilization." In fact, although both of these petitions were presented to the National Council, the language used

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[75] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal*, 126-127.

throughout indicates that these petitions were not just being issued to reach a Native audience but also the Euroamerican society closing in around them. To further prove this point, the first petition is found in the Andrew Jackson Presidential Papers and the second petition in a letter from American Board missionaries to a missionary headquarters in Boston.[76] Although the impact of these Cherokee women's petitions is uncertain, they were seemingly important enough to be recorded, sent to American officials, and were being read and shared among Americans at the time.

Cherokee women expressed their collective difference in perspective from Cherokee men in the second petition when they stated: "There are some white men among us who have been raised in this country from their youth, are connected with us by marriage, & have considerable families, who are very active in encouraging the emigration of our nation. These ought to be our truest friends but prove our worst enemies." This is an interesting viewpoint as it seems to allude to men like John Ridge and John Ross who were products of the intermarriage between Cherokee women and white men that increased during the mid- to -late eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. With this statement, Nancy Ward, the author of the second petition as well, expressed her concern as the Cherokee people were beginning to split politically about how to handle removal. Here, Ward represented Cherokee women who were trying to warn their people against the dangers of too much engagement with white society, including inviting "white men among us." This is an interesting juxtaposition from the previous statement highlighted in the last paragraph in which Cherokee women were listing their peoples' achievements of "civilization" in the eyes of the U.S. government. Ward's statement is also interesting because of her own second marriage and those of her daughters to white traders. This tension between

[76] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal*, 124.

emphasizing civilization and warning against inviting in whites reflects different intended audiences. The former statement was designed to highlight Cherokee appeasement of U.S. demands as a means of influencing U.S. decision-making. The second statement was intended more for an internal Cherokee audience.

Within Cherokee culture, women were responsible for more of the domestic/agricultural work while Cherokee men usually hunted and fought in battles with Native foes and other enemies, namely the growing number of white settlers that intruded on their lands during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Unfortunately, in the eyes of the U.S. government, the last step to civilization for the Cherokee and Choctaw, as well as the other Southern Indian nations was the selling of their traditional lands. Theda Perdue claims that, "Meigs, Hawkins, Jefferson, and other 'civilizers' linked the cession of hunting grounds with the civilizing process. Herdsmen and farmers presumably no longer needed vast forests, and so the United States looked forward to the acquisition of the Indians' 'surplus & waste lands.'"[77] Cherokee women held a unique perspective then because they advocated for the aspects of civilization they had been presented, that of "agriculture, animal husbandry, and domestic manufactures," but were also against the selling of their traditional lands and their removal to unwanted lands for the same reasoning, which was to protect the home and hearth. Cherokee women knew their culture's connection to the land was of the utmost importance to many of their own roles within that culture, and without that connection much of their power would be lost. Carolyn Ross Johnston explains Cherokee women's connection in *Cherokee Women in Crisis*: "Cherokee women's power traditionally originated in their roles as mothers (bearers of life) and as cultivators of the earth (sustainers of life). Because removal and the forced cession of lands were direct attacks on

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[77] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal*, 119.

Cherokee women's power, they protested the loss by appealing to their people through their authority as mothers."[78] Because of their gift of reproduction, one of the greatest and most important of Cherokee women's gender roles is that of family and home. The communal property traditions of Cherokee and Choctaw culture have kept Cherokee and Choctaw women safe and strong with a network of other women close by for constant support.

Cherokee women continued to publicly petition against the selling of their lands. In 1825, Cherokee women "presented a string of shells (of wampum) to General William Clark, urging him to resist the policy and to 'pursue in our undertaking and not give it up.'"[79] By the "policy," Johnston is referring to the policy of removal. William Clark was an American explorer and Indian agent of the Louisiana Territory, appointed by President Thomas Jefferson in 1807. At that point, Clark was also former governor of Missouri. Although he was more sympathetic to the plight of the Southern Indian nations because he seemed to be able to comprehend the differences between their culture and his own, Clark was most likely a calculated target by these Cherokee women, who did not often openly address political figures in an official setting.[80] This is another example of Cherokee women intellectually navigating the public political sphere with calculation. However, because of the changing times, their message was again overlooked and the process of removal of the Southeastern Natives and the allotment of their lands continued.

Even as some Southeastern Native women critiqued the role of white traders within their nations, others intermarried with them. Like other actions pursued by Cherokees and Choctaws during this time, such as political petitioning, intermarriage was seen by some as a strategic

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[78] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 56.
[79] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 60 (referencing: Rayna Green, *Women in American Indian Society*, (Chelsea House Pub, 1992), 46).
[80] Jay H. Buckley, *William Clark: Indian Diplomat*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), xvi.

means of navigating the threat of white society by turning white people into kin. Cherokee and Choctaw women had already been intermarrying with European and American individuals for generations at this point. However, the scale of intermarriages between Cherokee and Choctaw women and American men in the nineteenth century compared to earlier time periods increased as these women sought to keep their traditional rights of landholding and matrilineage with their people and to protect their future generations. Through intermarriage with white men, Cherokee and Choctaw women continued to hold power by means of property and land ownership and matrilocal family ties. Also, Cherokee headmen often supported the marriage of their daughters to influential white men. This led to men like John Ross, Major Ridge, his son John Ridge, and nephew Elias Boudinot being born and becoming prominent members of Cherokee society during the Removal Period. Although Major Ridge was entirely Cherokee by ancestry, his wife was a Cherokee woman of mixed ancestry. As Theda Perdue states, "their impact on Cherokee society in the nineteenth century was profound. Normally bilingual, many also were bicultural. From their mothers, these children learned the Cherokee language and received clan affiliations and lineages; from their fathers, they acquired European names and the English language."[81] Because of these advantageous qualities and a "good" education growing up with other Cherokees of white, usually wealthy fathers, John Ross and John Ridge became quite wealthy and politically powerful at young ages leading up to the Removal Period.

John Ross, John Ridge, and the growing portion of "mixed" Cherokee they represented spoke at many conventions concerning white encroachment onto traditional Cherokee lands. Because of their bicultural and bilingual background, they became powerful representatives of the Cherokee people in general. Ross was even appointed chief in 1828. Unfortunately, as

[81] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 65-85.

pressure from surrounding Americans intensified after the American Revolution, the Cherokee people split politically in their decision on how to keep their sovereignty during the Removal Period. Ross came to represent the National Party which opposed removal and focused on keeping the land as it was a vital connection to their culture. Major Ridge led the Treaty or Ridge Party which was more focused on preserving their traditional rights on paper in an attempt to work within the American system that surrounded them. In 1835, Ridge began to favor removal, which he regarded as a necessity forced upon his people.

On December 19, 1829, multiple laws were passed in Georgia that made all Cherokees within its boundaries responsible to the state instead of their own governments, claimed Cherokee land within the boundaries of the state, and declared that a Native could not testify in court against a white citizen. The final blow was that Native people were no longer allowed their freedom of speech that they most certainly had within their own governments. If a Native person was rumored to even be discussing plans with another Native person about refusing to leave their ancestral lands, they could be imprisoned.[82] These laws went into effect on June 3, 1830, the same day that another law was passed under the governor at the time, George R. Gilmer, which claimed all the gold and the mines that were located on Cherokee territory. Also, only a week or so before on May 28, 1830, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, which, as Grant Foreman states in his book *Indian Removal*, "did not itself authorize the enforced removal of the Indians, and did not in terms appear to menace them; but it announced a federal policy favorable to Indian removal, and placed in the hands of Andrew Jackson the means to initiate steps to secure exchanges of lands with any tribe 'residing within the limits of the states or

[82] Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal*, 229.

otherwise.'"[83] Through open trickery, men like Gilmer, Jackson (who was the President of the United States from 1829-1837 and was heavily involved in the removal of the Southeastern nations), William Carroll (governor of Tennessee from 1821-1827 and again from 1829-1835), and other influential white men of the federal and state governments were able to wrench these sacred lands from the Cherokee people. As Akers summarizes, "'Indian Removal'…was simply the only way white America could take possession of the Indian lands in the eastern half of the United States without bringing in the army and killing every native man, woman, and child."[84]

There was one more petition voiced by Cherokee women that was supposedly conducted in 1821. However, Theda Perdue has concluded that "The third petition printed here is almost certainly from 1831, rather than 1821, the date attached to it. The letter was written in October and published in the *Cherokee Phoenix* on November 12, 1831. A typographical error in the *Cherokee Phoenix* could easily could have turned what should have been '1831' into '1821.' In 1821, the Cherokees were not under any particular pressure from Georgia or the 'general government' to remove."[85] The *Cherokee Phoenix*, founded in 1828, was the first newspaper printed in the United States in a Native language. It was part of the Cherokee effort to "civilize" and was edited by Elias Boudinot, the nephew of Major Ridge and an Irish-Cherokee man aligned with John Ridge's political ideologies during the Removal Period. Both men were strong advocates of their people retaining their lands. The difference in language and mood between the earlier two petitions from 1817 and 1818 and this third petition is such that I would agree with Perdue. President Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act into law on May 28, 1830. This gave the United States government power to purchase and then exchange land with any Native

[83] Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal*, 21-22.
[84] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Preface."
[85] Theda Perdue, *The Cherokee Removal*, 124.

peoples in existing states of the time for unsettled land in the West on the other side of the Mississippi River. The Cherokee were told that officials of the state of Georgia would come onto their traditional lands to survey it and that the president would do nothing to prevent this or to help the Cherokee in any way. Less than one year after the Indian Removal Act was passed, the Cherokee went to the Supreme Court to prevent the state of Georgia from enforcing its laws on their people. However, on March 5, 1831, the Supreme Court dismissed the Cherokee case because the Cherokee Nation "was not a foreign state within the meaning of the Constitution and therefore could not bring a suit in the supreme court." This decision was a double-sided coin for the Cherokee because while it denied that they were a "foreign state," it also recognized that "the tribe was a political entity capable of managing its affairs, and that it had rights under the law which in proper proceedings should be protected."[86] In Worcester v. Georgia, John Marshall ruled that Georgia could not lawfully extend its jurisdiction over the Cherokees and their lands within that state's borders. This was the surrounding context of the third Cherokee women's petition against removal. Since the first two women's petitions came about by Cherokee Beloved Women, I believe "We the females, residing in Salequoree and Pine Log," refers to the Beloved Women of that area as opposed to those who had already moved from their traditional lands.

No more talk of "our Father the President" is seen in this petition. This letter is much more somber as it is focused on the "present difficulties and embarrassments under which this nation is placed" over a decade after the first two petitions and into the Removal Period. This third petition amounted to one final public cry of refusal by Cherokee women as they continued to be forced from their lands in violent ways and then forced to endure a physically grueling journey with little aid. Instead of referring to the U.S. government as "our Father the President"

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[86] Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal*, 234.

as Cherokee women did before, these Cherokee women, “residing in Salequoree and Pine Log,” used a different term multiple times, “General Government.” The overall difference in perspective towards the U.S. government between 1817-18 and 1831 is evident here. In fact, the sentiment was not unique to Cherokee women but was pervasive throughout general Cherokee culture as the ties and “treaties” that built their relationships crumbled in the face of greed and “unutilized” land claimed by “uncivilized” people.

In the third petition, Cherokee women stated their awareness of the traditional lack of female presence in political settings while proclaiming their equality in accordance to the gender roles within their community with the statement: “Although it is not common for our sex to take part in public measures, we nevertheless feel justified in expressing our sentiments on any subject where our interest is just as much at stake as any other part of the community.” In this statement, these Cherokee women collectively acknowledged that their realm of power did not lie within politics, and therefore they were usually not actively involved. However, it is evident here that many Cherokee women felt that, in order to preserve their traditional ways of life, they must step out of traditional cultural boundaries and voice their opinion on this important matter publicly. It is likely that this group of Cherokee women was aware of previous female predecessors and took inspiration and courage from their fellow Cherokee women. The difference in language between this petition and the first two also emphasized that this petition was meant for the Cherokee people instead of the U.S. government.

The Cherokee people had a split in leadership between the recognized Principal Chief John Ross and John Ridge, the new leader of the Treaty Party in the mid-1830s. Ridge appeared to personally capitalize on Indian removal as is evidenced by his family’s property exemption

from the land lottery by the governor of Georgia.[87] The Treaty Party was formed to represent a small group of Cherokee under the influence of John Ridge and his cousin Elias Boudinot who believed that their removal from their sacred lands was inevitable and that the Cherokees must negotiate with the United States government. The party under Principal Chief Ross and the Treaty Party met with the National Council who rejected Ridge's treaty of removal. However, this did not stop Ridge, and he proposed another meeting at the old Cherokee capital in New Echota in Georgia. Principal Chief Ross and the rest of the Council did not attend to this meeting which allowed Ridge and the rest of the Treaty Party to approve the Treaty of New Echota, which "provided for the cession of all the Nation's lands in the East, additions to Cherokee lands west of the Mississippi in what is today northeastern Oklahoma, payment of five million dollars to the Cherokees, arrangement of transportation to the West, and subsistence aid from the U.S. government for one year."[88] Although Ross and his party pleaded with the U.S. Senate to reject this treaty, it is was ratified in 1836 and the vast majority of Cherokee were compelled to move to what is now Oklahoma.

Choctaw Women and the Armstrong Rolls

As the Cherokee faced their trail of tears, pressures for removal mounted on the Choctaw as well. United States censuses of Indian communities in the context of removal provide a snapshot of indigenous societies during this time, illustrating in the process dynamics of change and continuity in women's place in Native societies on the eve of removal. They also illustrate U.S. efforts to reform Native understandings of family and property to fit a Euroamerican patriarchal model. Particularly illustrative in this regard are the Armstrong Rolls, a census of

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[87] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women.*, 20.
[88] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 20.

Choctaw people that occurred as a result of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek of 1830. In historian Grant Foreman's words: "By the terms of this treaty the Choctaw ceded to the United States the entire country owned by them east of the Mississippi river and agreed to remove on the domain within the Indian Territory which the government promised to convey to them in fee simple; the Indians were given three years to emigrate."[89] The vast majority of Choctaw were against the signing of this treaty. However, similar to the Cherokee, one group of Choctaws led by a wealthy, influential man named Greenwood Leflore, who was the product of intermarriage between his Choctaw mother and American father, signed the treaty into action. The Armstrong Roll collected information on Choctaw landholdings and heads of households to determine how to divide land on a reservation after their removal.

While women are often obscured in censuses because they are counted as part of their husband's household, the women who are listed separately in the Armstrong Rolls reveal how common it was for women to own land and head households within the Choctaw nation. Next to a Choctaw person's name, there was sometimes a note added explaining more specific information about the person listed. Because of this, I was able to find evidence of Choctaw women who were in possession of their own land and the terms by which they were identified by the white men who recorded the Armstrong Roll. The majority of women listed were identified as widows, from the 71st person listed, "Eliah, (widow)" to the 2341st person listed, "Tamaiahokti (wid.)." Throughout the Armstrong Roll, women can be seen in this way as the head of their households and owners of their land. Some of these Choctaw women's names were even followed by their late husbands' names. Some examples of this are the 2164th person listed is "Bachatona, (widow of Wachi)," the 2226th person is "Ishtonachi, (widow of

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[89] Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal*, 28-29.

Chahtaishonaki)," and the 2319th person is "Wakatima, (widow of Red Wolf)." Although there is no further information about these widowed women or their late husbands in the Armstrong Roll, I believe these more specific listings are written this way because of the perceptions of the white men who recorded the Armstrong Roll. These Choctaw women were most likely given more specific descriptions because their husbands had been noteworthy to the white men recording them. However, the descriptions of their land holdings listed next to their names were not more or less than the other people listed. For example, the 2226th person listed Ishtonachi, the "widow of Chahtaishonaki," is recorded to have had 80 acres of land, while the 2223rd person Ishtimolahoki, 2213th person Tohpaka, and 2202nd person Imahoka, all listed as widows without further description also possessed 80 acres of land. This indicated that the ownership of acreage was similar to most others.

There was also one Choctaw woman who was specifically listed as a mother in the Armstrong Roll. The 508th person listed is "Sukkia, (captain's mother)." Once again, although Sukkia was related to a noteworthy man, according to the white men recording the Armstrong Roll, Sukkia's landholding is described as "Poor land." However, her role as mother to a strong man was important enough to be acknowledged and recorded for eternity in the Armstrong Roll. I was only able to find one "mother" specifically listed as such. However, Sukkia was surely not the only Choctaw mother but was the only female listed as a head of household with a note attached describing her as a mother. Many women's names or descriptions were not specifically written in the Armstrong Roll as they were included simply as a number under their husband's name.

Surprisingly, there are also many Choctaw women listed in the Armstrong Roll seemingly in their own right. Actually, the 2nd person listed was "Lapaha, (woman)" with no

other notes associated with her. There are many Choctaw women listed as such throughout the Armstrong Roll all the way to the 2336th person listed, "Hotema (woman)." These Choctaw women, with no title or further information attached to their names or land, were frequently listed in the Armstrong Roll and a close second in number to Choctaw women who were listed as widows. It is interesting and exciting to speculate how some of these seemingly independent women came to be listed as their own head of household with their own land with no apparent or noteworthy reason (from the perception of the recorders) included in the Armstrong Roll.

There is also much evidence in the Armstrong Roll of the intermarriage between Choctaw women and American men. There are quite a few instances of people listed in the Armstrong Roll being noted as a "half breed." Examples of this are the 94th person, "Thomas Walls (half breed)," 251st person "John McKinney, (half breed)," and 322nd person listed "Levi Pickins, (half breed)." This is the most common type of evidence of intermarriages between Choctaw women and American men in the Armstrong Roll. All those listed as a "half breed" were most likely men because there were not additional notes that referred to them as women. The 448th Choctaw listed includes a more specific note: "Nukatacha, (wife of Pidgeworth)." Although there is not any additional information in the Armstrong Roll, I assume that "Pidgeworth" is an Euroamerican name as opposed to a Choctaw name, based on all my research on this subject and all the other names listed in the Armstrong Roll. There are other listings which describe American men married to Choctaw women, such as the 332nd person, "Hartwell Hardeway…(has an Indian wife)," 325th person "Abner Morris…A white man Indian wife," and the 481st person listed "William H. Buckes…His wife, a Choctaw." All of these examples show the different ways intermarriages between Choctaw women and American men were noted in the

Armstrong Roll. This shows the prevalence of intermarriages between Choctaw women and American men during the Removal Period.

All of these examples of women included in the Armstrong Roll reveal the ways Choctaw and other Southeastern Native women navigated the removal period. They show the different ways Choctaw women lived and that not all Choctaw women thought and acted the same. In fact, many Choctaw women were not listed at all because they were now technically dependents under their husbands, according to the American government and its census. On the other hand, many other women are listed with white husbands, and others still as widows or mothers to Choctaw men. Choctaw women used various avenues within the gender roles in their culture to adapt to the severe changes that were happening all around them and within their own communities.

The Armstrong Roll also illustrates efforts by the United States to change Native societies. More particularly, it illustrates efforts to disrupt the traditional practice of female inheritance by appointing individual Choctaw men as heads of groups of families, which greatly disorganized and confused Choctaw society in general. For generations and generations, Choctaw women took care of and watched over the family households as well as the surrounding fields which Choctaw women also cultivated themselves. Akers continues to emphasize the destructive nature of the structure of the Armstrong Roll when she states, "Women were listed as dependents, as was the norm among Americans of European descent. However, the traditional Choctaw matrilineal kinship collided fully with the patriarchal assumptions of the whites…In imposing a completely different order that ignored the tribal power and authority of women, the

Americans dealt the traditional Choctaw matrilineal kinship system a terrible blow."[90] The result of the United States government assigning responsibility to Choctaw men over their families and land created chaos in Choctaw life which had utilized matrilineal family and land practices for generations. Some modern Choctaw and other historians, Akers included, believe this was a key aim behind the creation and implementation of the Armstrong Roll. Akers states: "By deliberately imposing an alien form of kinship with which the Choctaws and others were forced to comply in order to secure any claim to the communal land holdings, the Americans succeeded in dealing a deathblow to the traditional organization of Choctaw society and culture."[91] This proved to be chaos within Choctaw communities after the Trail of Tears. Many Choctaw men were irresponsible with their new landholding powers and often easily sold their new landholdings to encroaching Americans. Government supplies were handed out to the official head-of-household, which according to the Armstrong Roll, had to be a Choctaw man. Because of Choctaw men's lack of practice with distribution of supplies, much of it was misused and many Choctaw women and children had to survive with less food, clothing, blankets, etc. than they were used to.[92] Sadly, when the dust cleared and all the confusion and devastation of the Removal Period had settled in the mid-1860's and the vast majority of the Choctaw and Cherokee traditional lands had been taken, both peoples were left with little or nothing within a confused and mournful society surrounded by a foreign landscape that, over time, would become vastly populated with their oppressors.

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[90] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 6: A New Life in the Land of Death: Decade of Despair."
[91] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 6."
[92] Donna L. Akers, *Living in the Land of Death*, "Chapter 6."

Native Women and the Experience of the Trail of Tears

Although obviously all Cherokee and Choctaw people suffered during the Removal Period and the Trail of Tears, Cherokee and Choctaw women had a unique experience and fulfilled a unique and vitally important role. As Carolyn Ross Johnston states, "in some respects, removal weakened certain aspects of women's autonomy. On the Trail of Tears women faced more hardships than men, because they were more vulnerable to rape and because many of them were pregnant."[93] Therefore, although Cherokee and Choctaw women were a necessary source of strength during the Trail of Tears because of their traditional roles of fertility and motherhood, their journey was unfortunately also painful in a unique way because of these same traditional roles. Carolyn Ross Johnston describes a scene put together from a primary source recorded by Daniel Sabin Butrick, a missionary from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions or ABCFM from 1817 to 1851: "Butrick described a scene in which the soldiers at the camp caught a married woman, who was a member of the Methodist society, and dragged her about and forced her to drink liquor. They then 'seduced her away,' and most likely raped her. Butrick commented that the woman had become an outcast even among her own relatives, and he lamented, 'How many of the poor captive women are thus debauched, through terror and seduction, that eye which never sleeps, alone can determine.' He described a number of incidents in which women had babies on the road, while in the middle of a company of soldiers. In one incident he wrote that 'a woman in the pains of childbirth, walked as long as possible, and then fell on the bank of the river, when a soldier came up, and stabbed her with his bayonet, which together with other pains soon caused her death.'"[94] However, the close, matrilineally connected

[93] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 57.
[94] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 67-68.

support system that thrived within traditional Cherokee culture meant that these women looked to each other, their sisters and mothers, for aid.

Outside of primary sources written by white men of the nineteenth century, there are multiple oral histories which, unfortunately still to this day, receive less attention and notoriety in research over the Trail of Tears and other historical events involving Native Americans. Luckily, however, these oral histories reveal women's presence. One such oral history was written by Lillian Lee Anderson, who told the stories of her grandfather and other relatives who endured the Trail of Tears during an interview. "Anderson's grandmother's sister, Chin Deenawash, survived the trip. Her husband died shortly after they got out of Georgia, leaving her to battle her way through the rest of the journey with three small children, one who could not walk. Anderson recalled: 'Aunt Chin tied the little one on her back with an old shawl, took one child in her arms and led the other one by the hand; the two larger children died before they had gone very far and the little one died and Aunt Chin took a broken case knife and dug a grave and buried the little body by the side of the Trail of Tears. The Indians did not have food of the right kind to eat and Aunt Chin came on alone and lived for years after this."[95] The inclusion of this primary source is not meant to prove that Aunt Chin was more durable or stronger than her husband and children and was, therefore, able to outlive them. It is instead meant to show the perseverance of many Cherokee women in spite of these horrific circumstances which unfortunately were commonly experienced on the Trail of Tears and during the Removal Period in general.

Another oral history comes from Bettie (Perdue) Woodall who told the experience of her mother as it was told to her. "Her mother told her that not a single woman rode in the wagon

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[95] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 72.

unless she was sick and not able to walk."[96] She also relayed how her mother watched a soldier kill a Cherokee woman's baby because it would not stop crying. Cherokee women refusing to not work as hard as everyone else on the Trail of Tears unto the point of illness shows the importance of their role and how much their presence and strength were needed at this moment. Woodall's recollection of her mother witnessing another Cherokee woman's horrific experience with a soldier and her child shows the connection these women had with each other during their journey. There are a few other oral histories that describe Cherokee women's experiences on the Trail of Tears and the different things they observed that have been relayed by their grandchildren and other, younger relatives. However, these other oral histories do not describe events in which women were particularly highlighted or described.

During the Removal Period, Cherokee and Choctaw women were a source of strength and life that were absolutely necessary for the Cherokee and Choctaw to survive their journey, fittingly described as the Trail of Tears. Carolyn Ross Johnston claims that, although the processes of removal and allotment were destructive to traditional Cherokee gender roles, "Cherokee women's traditional skills became even more essential both on the journey and when they arrived in Indian Territory: they needed to fall back on their traditional skills for survival. Much of the burden of removal fell on women, and this underscored their centrality in Cherokee culture."[97] Because of the importance of Cherokee women's roles of fertility and motherhood, they felt a heavier burden than Cherokee men to keep their children and other members of their families together and alive. However, this was not seen as a burden by these women but more of a natural action for them to fulfill. As has been previously stated in this essay, Cherokee gender

[96] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 72.
[97] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 57.

roles had been in place for generations and were connected to Cherokee spirituality via the female figure Selu. Although Cherokee culture and perspective were rapidly changing during the Removal Period, traditional Cherokee culture and gender roles were what were needed during the Trail of Tears. "Women's experiences differed from men's: they bore children while in the stockades and on the road; they carried their children, alive and sometimes dead; and, along with the elderly and very young, they were more susceptible to disease and death. Yet, in a sense, their roles were less disruptive than men's because they were able to continue to function as mothers."[98] Therefore, the Trail of Tears was largely an event carried out by Cherokee women as the status of health of their people was also largely their responsibility.

It has sometimes been suggested that Native women lost much of their power via their traditional cultural roles during the Removal Period and thereafter. However, women were a major source of community strength during the Removal Period, as is evidenced by the multiple petitions issued by Cherokee women which constantly refer to their role as mothers, and also the Trail of Tears, when they continued their traditional roles as caregivers, nurturers, and sustenance distributors as the Cherokee people fought for their very survival. As Theda Perdue states in *Cherokee Women*, "the story of Cherokee women, therefore, is not one of declining status and lost culture, but one of persistence and change, conservatism and adaptation, tragedy and survival."[99] Through the experience of the Removal Period and the Trail of Tears, Cherokee women were able to mix adaptation with traditionalism to preserve the traditional Cherokee way of life while also surviving outside the mainstream society of the United States.

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[98] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 57-58.
[99] Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 195.

Carolyn Ross Johnston, in *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907*, states: "A gendered approach to Cherokee history fundamentally alters our understanding of the process of change in Native American societies and radically revises the way we interpret removal, tribal factionalism, identity, sovereignty, and allotment."[100] My research lends further weight to her findings, as well as the work of Akers and Perdue. A focus on Native women is essential to understanding Native American culture and gender roles and the people and the events in American history that have involved them. In the case of Choctaw and Cherokee women in the Trail of Tears we see a disruption of traditional gender roles that Choctaw and Cherokee women adapted to in multiple ways, by issuing public petitions against the removal of their peoples, intermarrying with Euroamerican men to maintain their matrilineal and landholding powers, and ultimately enduring the Trail of Tears and melding the two clashing cultures together in order to survive.

[100] Carolyn Ross Johnston, *Cherokee Women in Crisis*, 2.

LAKOTA WOMEN IN GHOST DANCE MOVEMENT & WOUNDED KNEE MASSACRE

In 1896, ethnologist James Mooney published a remarkable history of what historians now refer to as the Wounded Knee Massacre. In *The Ghost-dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890,* Mooney—at this point having been employed on the staff of the Bureau of American Ethnology for over a decade, and in the midst of a career studying Native Americans that spanned four decades—offered profound insight into the religious practices at the center of the event, compiled testimonies of observers, even diagrammed the site of the massacre (or "battlefield" in his parlance) itself. One understudied element of this fascinating document is Mooney's clear reference to the participation of women in the ritual event that so unnerved US government forces, the Ghost Dance. In his description of one ceremony at No Water's Camp on White River near Pine Ridge, he indicated that "a young woman standing within the circle gave the signal for the performance by shooting into the air toward cardinal points four sacred arrows." At another point, he referred to the presence of a woman "holding a sacred redstone pipe stretched out to the west, the direction from which the messiah was to appear."[101]

The Ghost Dance was a religious movement which began in 1889 with a vision had by a Paiute shaman named Wovoka. This vision told him that the white people would leave traditional Native lands if Indians lived an honest and religious life and practiced this dance which was a variation of the circle dance, a ceremonial dance done by many Native groups for various reasons.[102] In contrast to Mooney's observations, reams of government documents from the 1890s and historians and journalists' studies of the Ghost Dance since the Wounded Knee

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[101] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).
[102] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion.*

Massacre ignored the presence of women altogether. Published in 1891, *Recent Indian Wars* by James P. Boyd is the earliest publication about this specific event not written by an eye-witness.[103] As one can imagine for someone in Boyd's day and age, Boyd does not mention women at all in the entire section over the Ghost Dance, instead discussing the politics behind getting the natives to become more "civilized" and the violent acts committed by the Natives without paying attention to any aggression from the United States. For example, the chapter in his book, *Recent Indian Wars,* which examines the Ghost Dance titled, "Messiah Craze and Ghost Dance," is very derogatory towards the Natives. The chapter begins with, "Even with Indians, a war must have a reason", and goes on to call the natives who were willing to live on reservations and become more "civilized," by farming in a more Americanized style with herds of cattle enclosed in fences and taking their children to American schools, as "the respectable portion of the [Sioux] tribe."[104] He refers to the natives as "savages" throughout and heeds no mind to the violent deeds performed by Americans unless he is defending those actions.

The invisibility of women has not been limited to the distant past, however. Raymond J. DeMallie is another highly respected anthropologist who studied the Ghost Dance of 1890. In fact, in the latest edition of Mooney's published work over the Ghost Dance, there is an introduction written by DeMallie. Long after Mooney's work was written, in 1982, DeMallie published the article, "The Lakota Ghost Dance: An Ethnohistorical Account."[105] This article is a valuable source of information over the Ghost Dance, and DeMallie thoughtfully analyzed the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 in the most unbiased manner. However, women are not

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[103] James P. Boyd, *Recent Indian Wars* (1891) (Digital Scanning, Incorporated, 2000).
[104] James P. Boyd, *Recent Indian Wars*, 175-176.
[105] Raymond J. DeMallie, "The Lakota Ghost Dance: An Ethnohistorical Account," *Pacific Historical Review* 51, no. 4 (1985): 385-405.

mentioned at all here either. DeMallie does discuss at length the misunderstandings between whites and natives about what the Ghost Dance and ritual dancing in general meant. For the Lakota, the Ghost Dance was not violent in any way and was a spiritual ritual that had been adopted from the Sun Dance, a dance which had been performed for centuries before Europeans ever set foot in the New World. The Ghost Dance was interpreted as a threat by the American government, however, during the religious movement in the 1890s.

According to DeMallie, the American government believed the revitalization and spreading of the ghost dance among Sioux tribes was an "epiphenomenon of social and political unrest."[106] This was seen as potentially threatening to the American government because they were in the midst of attempting to "civilize" the Natives at the Pine Ridge Reservation. As Rani-Henrik Andersson states in *The Lakota Ghost Dance of 1890*, "any investigation of the Lakota ghost dance necessarily begins with an understanding of the relationships between Lakotas and whites in the late 1880s."[107] Most Sioux people had already been living on reservations and had lost their traditional homes and livelihood, "where the U.S. government expected them to abandon their traditional way of life, learn how to support themselves by farming, become educated, and adopt Christianity – in short, to become civilized."[108] Although of course all Lakota people and women more specifically did not have the same response to this process of "civilization," many Lakota people responded by adopting the teachings of Wovoka. Wovoka was a Pauite prophet who had seen a hopeful vision of the future in which white people were eliminated by an earthquake and peace would return to Indian lives. Andersson states multiple times in his publication that "there is no evidence whatsoever that the Lakota delegates called for

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[106] Raymond J. DeMallie, "The Lakota Ghost Dance" 386.
[107] Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance of 1890*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 271.
[108] Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance*, 271.

taking up arms against the whites; on the contrary, they emphasized that the only thing required of the Indians was to dance, pray, and believe…This is typical of revitalization movements throughout the world. When the ghost dance was inaugurated among the Lakotas in the spring of 1890 it was no more hostile toward the whites than the ghost dance among any other Indian tribe."[109]

Many scholars now conclude that the Wounded Knee Massacre was the result of a progression of misunderstandings between the two cultures. DeMallie gives the Sioux and the U.S. equal representation when he discusses these misunderstandings. DeMallie's attempts to understand the Lakota reflects a move away from the defensive and prejudiced stances of the earlier histories. He states that, "Through the teachings of the ghost dance, and statements about it by Lakotas recorded from 1889 until about 1910, it is possible to proliferate evidence to demonstrate the peaceful intentions of the leaders of the ghost dance. The historical record does not support the accusation that the Sioux 'perverted' the ghost dance doctrine of peace to one of war."[110] The debate concerning the peaceful or violent intentions of the Ghost Dance continues into the modern era of Native American history implicitly because of the limited amount of evidence for either argument that exists. However, as can be discovered when researching Native American women, the historical record is not always entirely accurate or complete by any means.

Though it is not particularly surprising that women therefore were so long omitted from the male-centered perspectives of late-nineteenth and twentieth-century bureaucrats and scholars, the discrepancy begs the question of just how central Lakota women were to both the Ghost Dance and to the massacre at Wounded Knee that ended the religious movement. By examining

[109] Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance*, 271.
[110] Raymond J. DeMallie, "The Lakota Ghost Dance," 395.

the nature of traditional Sioux society and the place women held within it, the changes that occurred with white expansion into Sioux territory that preceded the Ghost Dance movement and women's resistance to it, and examining the events leading up to the Wounded Knee Massacre with an eye to reading past the prejudicial gaze of those who documented those events, the significance of Lakota women can be uncovered. I focus on Lakota women and culture in this chapter because they were the most heavily involved group during the Ghost Dance Movement and Wounded Knee Massacre. The Lakota and Dakota are two divisions of the Sioux tribe, but many of the authors of the primary documentation, as well as many historians used in this thesis, refer to those involved in these events as the Sioux. Because of this, I use Lakota and Sioux throughout this chapter depending on which tribal or indigenous name is being referenced.

In this chapter I will argue that Lakota women thrived in their traditional environment but had to adapt to the changes in their environment brought by their "discovery." As Lakota men and their roles within their society began to be emphasized and paid more attention to by the Europeans and later Americans, Lakota women stepped out of their traditional gender roles in many ways by joining in the Ghost Dance Movement in 1890. This unusual level of participation reflected Lakota leaders' desire for the greatest amount of spiritual energy or power possible, so that they might invoke their ancestral spirits to their aid. Lakota women displayed their spiritual value and their equality with Lakota men as they stepped out of their traditional gender roles and joined in the sun dance, wore the traditional dancing shirt, and wore eagle feathers in their hair – all ceremonial practices traditionally reserved for Lakota men. However, even though Lakota women were highlighted in the primary documentation concerning the Ghost Dance Movement because of their "unusual" participation in these events, Lakota women also upheld and preserved traditional gender roles in many ways that were not explicitly documented.

Before considering the specific roles women played in the Ghost Dance, it is helpful to provide a basic introduction to gender roles within Lakota/Sioux culture. There is a saying among the Cheyenne that claims, "A nation is not conquered until the hearts of its women are on the ground."[111] This statement also rings true for the Sioux. Ultimately, Sioux women were the heart of Sioux culture. Sioux women's focus centered on their spirituality, family, and tribe.[112] They had domestic cooking and cleaning roles, but they were also at the root of all Sioux ceremony and religion. They made the ceremonial clothing used during ritual dances, including the Ghost Dance. The clothing made for the Ghost Dance was a large white shirt they called *ogle wakha ki*.[113] Women also commonly made all the tools and instruments required for the ritual. However, women's roles changed when necessary. There were not rigid boundaries to what women could do to provide for their families and tribe. Therefore, women could have also been seen tanning hides and other work that would have been considered masculine by the white men observing them.[114] However, more often than not, women provided and maintained the hearth which was the backbone of Sioux culture, while men’s work was concentrated outside communal home areas where they were fighting, hunting, trading, etc. In their study of Plains Indian women, Patricia Albers, a professor of American Indian Studies and Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Minnesota, and Beatrice Medicine, a well-known and respected female Lakota anthropologist, state, "The symbolic difference between men and women might be seen to center around courage, or 'hardness of heart.' This in turn is a reflection of the division of labor, men's concerns being directed outside the camp and women's concerns

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[111] Tarrell Awe Agahe Portman & Roger D. Herring, "Debunking the Pocahontas Paradox: The Need for a Humanistic Perspective," *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, vol. 40 (2001): 188.
[112] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 237-266.
[113] Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance*, 31-100.
[114] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 237-266.

within the camp."[115] Generally, Sioux men and women understood and respected these gender roles. A Sioux man knew he could not fulfill a woman's role, and vice versa. Beatrice Medicine describes it as the, "'dynamic, dyadic interplay of both genders in the ongoing enterprise that allows indigenous societies to exist."[116] However, unlike in American culture, the Sioux did not believe male gender roles were necessarily more important than female gender roles. Gender roles within the community were very well established, understood, and, most importantly, equally respected. This is shown especially through the fact that both men and women could be shamans and create art and music, which were powerful and expressive roles to fill.[117] Women were not subordinated as they were at the time in American culture, but were celebrated in their own, specific, and gendered way. Sioux culture embraced an understanding of the necessity of all jobs to keep their tribe healthy and happy.

The Lakota's respect for women is also shown through their representation in Lakota spirituality. Lakota spirituality consisted, at the time, of two parental gods, one male and one female who are responsible for all creation, which is similar to the Biblical story of Adam and Eve. This harkens back to the Lakota people's gender roles and understanding of the importance of, but distinct differences in, both male and female roles within their society. However, unlike the ancient Hebrew parable of Adam and Eve in which Eve is created from Adam's rib, in Lakota mythology the female figure was created first. Mary Crow Dog describes the legend:

> As Leonard told it in his medicine talk, this First Woman was given power by the Spirit. She was floating down to the world in a womb bag and, as Leonard put it, she was four-dimensional - all the Creation rolled into one human being. She came into the world with a knowledge and with a back-carrier and in it she had all our people's herbs and healing roots. First

[115] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 237-266.
[116] Beatrice Medicine, *Learning to Be an Anthropologist & Remaining "Native"* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 154.
[117] Beatrice Medicine, *Learning to Be an Anthropologist*, 98.

> Woman had a dream and in her vision the Grandfather Spirit advised her: 'On your left side, where your hand is, there is a stone.' And when she awoke she found a piece of worked flint in her hand, the first tool ever. And then she had another vision in which a voice told her: 'To the right there are some bushes. Go there! You shall bring up the generation!'[118]

Therefore, in Lakota mythology, the First Woman used the first tool, flint, and the fruit, leaves, and branches of the bush to start a fire and cook the first meal. The First Woman was also given the tools necessary for healing the tribe. Lakota women were at the heart of all work done within and for the tribe.

Traditionally, the spirituality of the Sioux people included many other female figures, so Lakota children learned from a young age that women were important and valuable. The Lakota people had a few influential female deities specifically, but there were, most notably, two important ones: Wohpe and White Buffalo Calf Woman. According to traditional Lakota beliefs, Wohpe is the daughter of the Moon and Wi. Wi was an important deity, the sun god that has often been compared to the Christian God by historians. Wohpe is a symbol of peace and is in many of the legends about White Buffalo Calf Woman, who is arguably the most influential deity in Lakota spirituality. The White Buffalo Calf Woman brought the gift of the ceremonial pipe to the Lakota people which is used in the ghost dance ceremony and most other dancing rituals which are vital aspects of Lakota spirituality, once again showing that women were instrumental to Lakota culture. Albers and Medicine state that, "Symbolically, the Lakotas believed their society to be no stronger than their women. No better argument can be made for this than to remember that the pipe, the primary means by which Lakota men gained power from the spirits, was the gift of a woman, the White Buffalo Woman...The purity, industry and

[118] Mary Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes, *Lakota Woman* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990), 242-260.

goodness of Lakota women were the safeguards of society."[119] Lakota women were instrumental to Lakota culture. They provided nourishment within their society, even crafted the tools that were used during rituals of spiritual nourishment, and, therefore gave meaning to all aspects of Lakota culture, even war. Mary Crow Dog calls the White Buffalo Calf Woman, "our greatest culture hero - or rather heroine."[120] The White Buffalo Calf Woman also showed the Lakota people the seven sacred rites, including Canupa, the Sacred Pipe Ceremony, and Wiwangwacipi, or the Sun Dance, which the Ghost Dance is a version of.[121]

Another sacred rite given to the Lakota by the White Buffalo Calf Woman was *Ishna Ta Awi Cha Lowan*, or “Preparing a Girl for Womanhood.” When Lakota girls started their first menstruation cycles, they were promptly introduced to their adult lives through this ceremony. Lakota women secluded themselves during this time. A woman during her "moon time", as the Lakota call it, is viewed as powerful, not dirty or tainted. Mary Crow Dog remembers, "One old man once told me, 'Woman on her moon is so strong that if she spits on a rattlesnake, that snake dies.'"[122] This shows that not only the women, but Lakota men were openly discussing what they believed to be specific female power. Also it is notable to mention that there is not a "coming of age" sacred rite for boys that is included in the seven sacred rites.

The Lakota people's comfort with these gender roles comes from Sioux traditions of giving the boys weapons and the girls dolls in their early childhood. Children of the opposite sex were not even allowed to play with each other after the age of seven. Upon reaching adulthood, Sioux men were taught to be brave, strong, and resilient. On the other hand, women were taught

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[119] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 237-266.
[120] Mary Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman*, 55-72.
[121] For more information on Lakota spirituality: James R. Walker, *Lakota Belief and Ritual* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1980).
[122] Mary Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman*, 55-72.

generosity, kindness, and sexual modesty.[123] However, as was mentioned earlier, these ideals were not set in stone. Although usually Sioux women did not physically participate in war, there were times when they would break that unspoken rule and join in the battle as warriors. Successful female warriors even had a separate title, winoxtca.[124] In his essay "Male and Female in Traditional Lakota Culture," DeMallie states, "In symbolic terms, the distinction between male and female was the single most important attribute for defining an individual in Lakota culture. Sex differences were emphasized in virtually every aspect of life. Masculinity and femininity were marked most importantly by behavioral differences. Sexual division of labor was very rigid and it may be said that behavior itself was the most important criterion differentiating male from female."[125] This goes to show that action, more than physical appearance, was more important when determining the gender of a Lakota person.

Despite the variation of roles that Sioux women can fill, surprisingly the domestic role held the most power. In Lakota culture especially, the woman's ability to have babies was viewed as an extremely strong power to possess. Also, women would often influence the men in their lives and the decisions they made for the tribe behind the scenes. If a Sioux woman did not like a decision made by tribal leaders, she could, and often would, refuse to cook for her husband. Also, Sioux women often had influential opinions about what to do with captives. Sioux women were known for being vengeful, and they would often pressure their husbands into going into battle or stealing from the white settlements that had wronged them. Sioux women actually played a large role in bolstering men up for battle in general in order to help protect the tribe.[126]

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[123] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 237-266.
[124] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 267-277.
[125] Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half*, 237-266.
[126] Beatrice Medicine, *Learning to Be an Anthropologist*, 134.

Women also were the main upholders and enforcers of traditional Sioux gender roles, once again in an effort to take care of their family and tribe.[127]

Gender roles play such an integral part in Lakota culture that, without it, the entire structure would, and in fact did, crumble. In his essay, DeMallie states that, "Without women to protect and honor, the entire system of warfare lacked justification, for the ultimate aim of all the men's glorious activities in war and hunting that took them far from the comforts of camp was the continuation of society."[128] While their actions were not always directly visible, Lakota women played a role in nearly all important areas of life. They influenced or participated in every major decision.

However, after French trappers and traders arrived and began to spread, the Sioux tribes were forced to adapt. The Sioux first came in contact with Europeans during the seventeenth century Iroquois Wars. According to Guy Gibbon in *The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations*, "The first recorded contact between Sioux and Europeans was apparently with Pierre Radisson and his brother-in-law, the Medart Chouart de Grosseilliers, who visited Wisconsin and possibly Minnesota in the winter of 1659-60."[129] These first European men were French, and their contact with the Lakota and surrounding tribes during the Iroquois Wars and afterward mostly consisted of trade. The British continued this tradition in 1763 "with their Hudson's Bay Company…when France ceded Canada to Britain at the conclusion of the Seven Years' War."[130] The fur trade became a popular way for the men to provide for their families, and women became extremely dependent on this trade with Europeans. This dependence dropped Lakota women's ranking

[127] Raymond J. DeMallie, "The Lakota Ghost Dance," 237-266.
[128] Raymond J. DeMallie, "The Lakota Ghost Dance," 237-266.
[129] Guy Gibbon, *The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations*, (Malden, Mass. And Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 48.
[130] Guy Gibbon, *The Sioux*, 49.

within the tribe to less than that of men, as they were forced to focus more and more time on tanning hides which were, in turn, given to their men who traded with the Europeans. This diminished Lakota women's status because, instead of helping the tribe in their own way, independent of their husbands, women were now working under them.

European trade also diminished women's standing, as Native men began to focus more on trade and less on their traditional gender roles. Because Lakota gender roles were balanced and reciprocal in many ways, women lost their independence as they began to rely more heavily on their men to trade with European men. Beatrice Medicine states, "as the Europeans emphasized separation between the sexes, a 'subtle subordination' was forced upon Lakota women."[131] This imbalance in gender roles via the fur trade and general contact with Europeans was continued by the American government and its people after the American Revolution.

After Wovoka had his first vision in 1889 that the era of white expansion would soon be over (the vision that began the Ghost Dance Movement), a chance to regain some of that lost female power opened up for Lakota women. The Lakota women joined in the dancing ritual as equals to the men, an unprecedented act in Lakota history because before the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 women did not participate in the actual dances alongside men. In fact, there are many aspects of the Ghost Dance that are performed specifically by females, which will be detailed later. After a while, whites attempted to ban the Ghost Dance from being performed because of its perceived threat to the United States government and the Americans living near the Sioux.

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[131] Beatrice Medicine, *Learning to Be an Anthropologist*, 143.

This chain of events really emphasizes why Lakota women were so insistent on traditional Lakota ways of life and why they were more involved in the Ghost Dance than other traditional dances. Many different sources over Lakota women highlight the emphasis they made (and continue to make) on continuing to uphold traditional ideals and ceremonies throughout this foreboding period of rapid, traumatic change.[132] Their participation in Ghost Dance ceremonies was a fight for a return to their everyday lives, plus the respect given to them in traditional culture, which kept their status and future secure. Traditional Sioux culture kept the women safe and happy; they were protected by their men who hunted and fought, while they pulled the strings in many ways behind the scenes. This is why women were more active in the Ghost Dance than in any other ritual beforehand. The culture of European traders brought pressure on Sioux traditional culture as everything changed with the introduction of the fur trade and the loss of land. Women thrived in the traditional Sioux environment, so, as it began to crumble around them, women stepped out of their traditional roles to join their brothers, sons, and fathers in joining in the dancing ritual and resisting the white man.

Unfortunately, Lakota customs and traditions, as well as those of all other Native American tribes, were forever changed by European influence. This is why Lakota women's inclusion in the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 was so important, because it was a time when

[132] For more information on Lakota women's roles: Patricia Albers, "The Role of Sioux Women in the Production of Ceremonial Objects: The Case of the Star Quilt" ("Star Quilts", Native Arts West: 1980), Raymond A. Bucko, *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), Mary Crow Dog & Richard Erdoes, *Lakota Woman* (New York: Grove Press, 1990), Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* (University Press of America, 1983), Carolyn Reyer, *Cante ohitika Win (Brave-Hearted Women): Images of Lakota Women from the Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota.* (University of South Dakota Press, 1991), NAUMAN FILMS, INC., *Lakota Quillwork: Art and Legend* (Sun Dog Distributing: Custer, 1985), Raymond A. Bucko, *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 1998).

Lakota women were reclaiming some of their traditional power. Not only were women involved in the actual dancing, but they were also allowed to wear the ceremonial feathers in their hair, which before this critical juncture had not been customary in Lakota culture.[133] Traditionally, only the men were allowed to wear feathers in their hair. They used eagle feathers, which symbolized the connection between all the Lakota people and the unity within their community, and the crow feathers, which symbolized the past and aided the men during a hunt. However, the Ghost Dance required all members of the tribe to participate to create the most powerful cry to their ancestors, and the women had the crow and eagle feathers in their hair and wore the ceremonial white shirts alongside the men.

Although women were making strides toward gender role equality as they had traditionally experienced in Lakota culture, their representation in the photographs and documents created about the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 and the Wounded Knee Massacre marginalize Lakota women and their roles in both events. The Lakota woman and all of her cultural significance and power was a difficult concept for whites to grasp, and, unfortunately, this is where the majority of the available primary documentation comes from over these events. Therefore, all the information that can be gathered from these documents and photographs must be filtered for this Christian, American perspective. White men often viewed the native women they observed as one of a few stereotypical options: the prostitute, princess or servant.[134] Their own cultural biases had mostly forced white women to fit into these limiting and unrealistic categories as well. As is evident upon viewing the primary sources, most of the people documenting these Lakota women view them as servants, because when they are mentioned or

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[133] Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance*, 31-100.
[134] Beatrice Medicine, *Learning to Be an Anthropologist*, 108-109.

photographed, they are usually with other women or their husbands and are usually taking care of children or are “behind the scenes” in some way.

(Granger, NYC "SITTING BULL, 1882)

This photograph was taken of Sitting Bull next to a white woman, Catherine Weldon. However, the native woman sitting next to Sitting Bull, who most likely just happened to be in the picture because she was sitting next to an important male figure, has a child on her back and another one sitting almost in her lap with two other young children next to her. All look to be in her care as they are closest to her and Sitting Bull does not look interested in them, as he is slightly turned away from them and appears to be more interactive with the white woman next to him. This shows the “behind the scenes” position that many Lakota women had that often appeared servile to the white observer.

("Early Picture of Oglala Sioux Indian at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota")

In this image, women are huddled around the hearth, talking amongst each other and watching the children. One of the women is holding a child's hand, while they all look out towards something in the distance, constantly watching over their community. This image expresses the ways in which women were strongest at the hearth or homestead. Lakota women were the look-outs for their communities by watching over the children and watching the horizons for incoming invaders or other enemies. Lakota women were also very close to each other and their dwellings were established matrilineally. Therefore, it is probable that this image shows a group of Lakota women of the same matrilineal lineage from the eldest to the young child looking toward the camera.

These images contain some of the most detailed information on Lakota women during the Ghost Dance Movement. Much of the written documentation excludes Lakota women totally from the picture or story like James Boyd’s *Recent Indian Wars*, as was discussed at the beginning of the chapter. *Life of Sitting Bull and the History of the Indian War of 1890-1891* by

Willis Fletcher Johnson, was published in 1891. However, unlike Boyd whose book was also published that year, Johnson does in fact mention women's participation in the Ghost Dance of 1890. Johnson claims, "The women also were painted, and, what is rather strange in Indian life, every woman had a white feather tied to her hair. The Indians regard feathers as a sign of masculine superiority and prowess, and do not allow women to wear them. There seems to be something about this [Messiah] craze that invests the woman with greater importance, and it supposed that in case of hostilities the women would fight as the men."[135] In this statement Johnson is generalizing all Native American culture as one by stating this was an abnormal phenomenon in "Indian life", but by simply recognizing women as an important aspect of the religious movement, he seems more attentive than Boyd. This is important to note because their work was published in the same year. Also, although Johnson is defending the American government's involvement in the Wounded Knee Massacre by claiming that women's participation was necessary for them to become warriors like the men if they were needed to attack the white man, his understanding of women's role in the Ghost Dance Movement, not just as noteworthy but as powerful, demands attention.

The nineteenth-century Indian agent and scholar James Mooney, introducted at the beginning of this chapter, stood out amongst this crowd of American white men in the late nineteenth century. In his collection of notes and interviews, Mooney commented on the equality in the roles of both men and women in his recollection of a ceremony:

> At the beginning the performers, men and women, sat on the ground in a large circle around the tree. A plaintive chant was then sung, after which a vessel of some sacred food was passed around the circle until everyone had partaken, when, at a signal by the priests, the dancers rose to their feet,

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[135] Willis Fletcher Johnson, *Life of Sitting Bull and the History of the Indian War of 1890-1891*, (Philadelphia: Edgewood, 1891), 172.

> joined hands, and began to chant the opening song and move slowly around the circle from right to left.[136]

Mooney's reference to the presence of women at the crucial beginning of the dance shows how important they were to the Ghost Dance Movement; such participation was unprecedented in Lakota culture up to that point. In fact, the Sioux are one of only a few Plains tribes that use a tree in the ceremony, and as Mooney described his experience, the tree was used specifically by the women. Mooney stated that the Sioux were unique in their use of the tree, and that a woman began the Ghost Dance ceremony by giving:

> the signal for the performance by shooting into the air toward the cardinal points four sacred arrows, made after the old primitive fashion with bone heads, and dipped in the blood of a steer before being brought to the dance. These were then gathered up and tied to the branches of the tree, together with a bow, a gaming wheel and sticks, and a peculiar staff or wand with horns. Another young woman, or the same one, remained standing near the tree throughout the dance, holding a sacred redstone pipe stretched out toward the west, the direction from which the messiah was to appear.[137]

Mooney's description shows that the Lakota people thought that women's participation in the ceremony was so important that they altered the Sun Dance to include them. In fact, according to Beatrice Medicine, the Sun Dance is an important part of a woman's life from the moment they are born into adulthood:

> A Lakota mother, upon birth of a female child, would follow certain prescriptions to ensure the child's indoctrination into the proper role of a "good" Lakota female and the guarantee of wakan powers and protection. As with the son's, in this "male dominant" warrior society the afterbirth was placed in a tree as an offering to the Wakan Tanka (Great Sacredness). This act was indicative of the sacredness of the tree as a symbol of the Sun Dance, in which the tree is seen as a mediator between earth and sky - persons and *wakan* (powerful sacredness). Furthermore, in the Sun Dance Ceremony, the highest honor for a virgin maiden was to be chosen to symbolically 'cut'

[136] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 824.
[137] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 823-824.

the sacred tree. Placing the afterbirth in the tree put the individual in proper relationship with the *wakan* (power that permeated the universe).[138]

"A photograph of the Rose Bud and Lakota "war dance" at Pine Ridge, December 25, 1890"

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[138] Beatrice Medicine, *Learning to Be an Anthropologist*, 193.

"The Ghost dance by the Ogallala [sic] Sioux at Pine Ridge Agency"

Although both of these images depict a Sioux performance of the Ghost Dance in 1890, they tell different stories. The drawing, created by the American artist, Frederic Remington, depicts a scene where the men are participating in the ceremony while the women stand off away from the ceremony and with, seemingly, no interest in it. Another group of women can be seen to the far center right. They are not participating in the ceremony, either, but they are observing it. However, the woman in the center of the drawing is stomping her feet and looking up at the sky as she gets drawn in by the energy of the ceremony. On the other hand, the photograph depicts a blur of Sioux people, equipped with feathers and pipes and dancing together in small hubs. It is impossible to distinguish the individual genders of the people in the photograph. Given the descriptions of women’s place in the ceremony though as well as their high numbers among the final death counts, Lakota women were almost certainly present in the image. In fact, the large death toll of women during the Wounded Knee Massacre is blamed upon the fact that the

American soldiers could not tell the Lakota men and women apart.[139] The photograph was also created by an American by the name of C.C. Pierce. Remington, who produced the drawing afterwards, created a more gendered image than the photographer at the event actually captured.

However, even though Remington saw the women as apart from the men, his drawing does show women making different choices about how to react to the Ghost Dance. Instead of making the Lakota women into the same stereotypical morph, he chose to present them in a variety of ways. Women are huddled together in different groups, some of them are alone. They are spread out through the area where the dance is happening. There is even one woman who is dancing by herself outside of the crowd. This lack of conformity speaks to the power behind being female in Lakota culture. Remington noticed the women enough to appreciate the fact that they are diverse people with freedom to make their own decisions, not just servants to their husbands.

A woman named Mrs. Z.A. Parker was a witness to a Ghost Dance and discussed her observations with James Mooney who recorded them and titled it, "Mrs. Z.A. Parker, description of a Ghost Dance observed on White Clay creek at Pine Ridge reservation, Dakota Territory, June 20, 1890." Parker noticed the inclusion of women in the ghost dance and even said about one-third of the crowd were women. Parker highlighted the fact that the sacred shirt worn by the participants in the Ghost Dance was actually created by a woman. Parker claimed, "The wife of a man called Return-from-scout had seen in a vision that her friends all wore a similar robe, and on reviving from her trance she called the women together and they made a great number of the sacred garments." Not only were women participating through making of the ceremonial

[139] Rani-Henrik Andersson, *The Lakota Ghost Dance*, 128-161.

garments, but it was a woman's design, from a message she alone had received. Even if women were not always the dancers, their handcraft and visions were present in every ceremonial garment worn in every Ghost Dance. Parker also described the Ghost Dance in a way that expressed the equality and respect between male and female Lakota which allowed them to come together as one during the ceremony. Parker created a very fluid image when she stated, "They would go as fast as they could, their hands moving from side to side, their bodies swaying, their arms, with hands gripped tightly in their neighbors', swinging back and forth with all their might. If one, more weak and frail, came near falling, he would be jerked up and into position until the tired nature gave way. The ground had been worked and worn by many feet, until the fine, flour-like dust lay light and loose to the depth of two or three inches."[140] This, and the statement by Mrs. Parker that "seventy men and forty women" were there and wearing the same ceremonial white shirts, creates an image of beautiful unity of tribe members, regardless of gender, during the Ghost Dance.[141] That the unity of the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 could lead to the Wounded Knee Massacre is tragic. The root of the tragedy lay in the misunderstandings between Lakota and American culture and gender roles.

Of course, many modern historians blame the Wounded Knee Massacre on unfortunate misunderstandings between the two groups of people with two very different, and apparently irreconcilable, cultures. The United States government took the Sioux religious revival as a threat and perceived the Ghost Dance to be a type of war dance. The United States Cavalry came upon a group of Lakota near Porcupine Butte on the Pine Ridge Reservation who were heading toward another group of Lakota after the murder of Sitting Bull by American soldiers. Women

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[140] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 908-917.
[141] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 908-917.

can also be seen in this tragic event as military men reported to their superiors, like in this telegram written after Sitting Bull's death.

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THOS. T. ECKERT, General Manager. NORVIN GREEN, President.

NUMBER	SENT BY	REC'D BY	CHECK

Received at Pine Ridge Agency, S. D. Dec 20 1890

Dated 8 P.M.

To Pioneer, Deadwood - S.D.

Expedition friendlies after Bad land hostiles just departing. Wild scene. Squaws death chant heard in every direction. Think hostiles may be brought in. ~~Situation~~ Troops and Pine Ridge Indians impatient at long delay; civilians indignant. Leave for home tomorrow. B

34

"A telegram from Pine Ridge Agency reporting on the response to Sitting Bull's death, December 20, 1890." It reads: "Dec. 20 1890 8 P.M To Pioneer Deadwood J.D. Expedition friendlies after Badland hostiles [sic] Just departing. Wild scene. Squaws death chant heart in every direction. Think hostiles [sic] may be brought in. Troops and Pine Ridge Indians impatient at long delay; civilians indignant. Leave for tomorrow. B"

Just before the Massacre, the famous Sioux chief Sitting Bull was killed by a government agent. In a telegram describing the deteriorating scene, one observer, a soldier named Brooke highlighted the presence of women. The mention of "squaws death chant heard in every direction" conveys a terrifying and sorrowful image and seems to have spooked the man writing this telegram. However, this detail really expresses the deep sorrow that was felt by the Sioux after Sitting Bull was killed by a U.S. soldier while trying to arrest him for his alleged participation in the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890. All Sioux people were full of sorrow over

this great man's tragic death. However, the man writing the telegram only mentioned the women sobbing loudly in mourning. This is because the women were the heart of Sioux culture. They conveyed emotion for the entire tribe in a communal outward expression with the other women of the tribe. These "death chants" were part of Lakota death rituals and traditions in which women possess many important roles that helped their people mourn. Their dramatic expression of emotion was not criticized or shushed by the men in the tribe, because they understood and respected women's role within their culture. Therefore, women were active in their reaction to Sitting Bull's death, and, even though it was only documented as a kind of complaint, it can be understood once the white, Christian lens is lifted. The Unites States Cavalry ushered the group of Lakota who witnessed Sitting Bull's death a few miles over to Wounded Knee Creek and attempted to take all weaponry from them. The source of the first shot is unclear, but the rest is history and a blood bath ensued at Wounded Knee Creek.

Lakota women can also be found in statistical information, like a census or death count, in publications on the Wounded Knee Massacre. An excerpt from the *Semi-weekly interior journal* in Stanford, Kentucky on January 20, 1891 reads:

> Elaine Goodale, who is a supervisor of education at Pine Ridge, charges that the battle of Wounded Knee was a massacre of unoffending women and children. An irresponsible Indian boy fired and the soldiers sent a fearful volley into the Indians. The men were all killed about Big Crow's tent, but the dead bodies of women and children were found in ravines and strewn along the roads for a mile or two from the scene of the trouble. The savages themselves were never more guilty of an atrocious act.[142]

The author of this passage has an interesting viewpoint towards the situation as he expresses his disgust toward the American soldiers' actions. However, Natives were referred to as "savages"

[142] *Semi-weekly interior journal* (Stanford, Ky.), 20 Jan. 1891. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Lib. of Congress.

here and the massacre was called a battle in this passage. Calling it a battle makes it appear like a fair fight, and a fight that was premeditated, which the Americans believed it was at the time. Also, the way in which women are described here as powerless victims, their dead bodies cast aside all throughout the reservation after the Wounded Knee Massacre, right alongside their children even in death, says a lot about how little the Americans thought of them. Only in death were the women described in such detail. Also, the author blames an “irresponsible Indian boy” for starting the massacre when this information is still unknown to this day.

Also, in *Recent Indian Wars,* while describing the events of the Wounded Knee Massacre, James Boyd claims:

> ...62 dead Indian men were counted on the plain where the attempt was made to disarm Big Foot's band and where the fight begun; on other parts of the ground there were 18 more. These did not include those killed in ravines, where dead warriors were seen but not counted...This accounts for 92 men killed and leaves but few alive and unhurt. The women and children broke for the hills when the fight commenced and comparatively few of them were hurt and few brought in.[143]

In this account, which was written the year after the Wounded Knee Massacre, women are hardly considered, even among the dead. Boyd was not attempting to elicit sympathy and paint a dramatic picture like the newspapers at the time by describing their unnecessary and tragic deaths. This seems to be the reasoning behind most other mentions of Lakota women during and after the Wounded Knee Massacre. *Recent Indian Wars* was written in 1891 by a white American man of the 1890s. These two accounts of the Massacre both describe Sioux dead in the ravines. But Boyd's account suggests they were "dead warriors" which appears to just mean unidentified native people, as he does not go into further detail; clearly his description was

[143] James P. Boyd, *Recent Indian Wars*, 954.

part of a strategy to make the event look less like a frightful slaughter. Boyd mentioned women as part of the group of injured and dead but only to make it appear as though the American government were the ones aiding the women who managed to survive.

The main, if only, role Lakota women have ever been acknowledged for during the Wounded Knee Massacre is that of the victim. However, this emphasis on the amount of native women killed during the Wounded Knee Massacre comes not only from the white government officials voice but is also often reflected in the accounts of Lakota themselves. Mooney recorded the statements of a handful of influential Sioux men, American Horse and Dewey Beard Lakota, about their thoughts on the event, and even they helped perpetuate women's place in the Wounded Knee Massacre to be pitiful, similar to a "damsel in distress" scenario. Mooney recorded American Horse's description of the massacre to be quite tragic:

> AMERICAN HORSE: There was a woman with an infant in her arms who was killed as she almost touched the flag of truce, and the women and children of course were strewn all along the circular village until they were dispatched. Right near the flag of truce a mother was shot down with her infant; the child not knowing that its mother was dead was still nursing, and that especially was a very sad sight. The women as they were fleeing with their babes were killed together, shot right through, and the women who were very heavy with child were also killed.[144]

Even though this man only mentions women to induce pity and to show the unjust way the United States government was treating them, this man is doing so for different reasons than the white men discussing the event. As was mentioned earlier, Sioux men were the protectors, the warriors, the leaders. This slaughter of Lakota women and children during the Wounded Knee Massacre displayed the Sioux man as inept and brought a great sense of failure for the tragic loss of their women, who were believed to be the continuation of their society from the beginning

[144] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 885-886.

with Buffalo Calf Woman. Another statement by American Horse harkens back to the central idea of women being the heart of Lakota culture and how influential they were to the decisions of Lakota men: "Of course we all feel very sad about this affair. I stood very loyal to the government all through those troublesome days, and believing so much in the government and being loyal to it, my disappointment was very strong, and I have come to Washington with a very great blame on my heart. Of course it would have been all right if only the men were killed; we would feel almost grateful for it."[145] This shows the great sorrow and sense of regret and failure that the Sioux men felt after the Massacre. American Horse expresses his personal sense of guilt, but also the betrayal and anger felt by the Sioux people towards the United States government as a whole.

Dewey Beard Lakota, another Native man who shared his sentiments with Mooney, emphasizes the Lakota people's disgust with the way the American soldiers acted at Wounded Knee by discussing the atrocities they committed in detail:

> ...I was badly wounded and pretty weak too. While I was lying on my back, I looked down the ravine and saw of lot of women coming up and crying. When I saw these women, girls and little girls and boys coming up, I saw soldiers on both sides of the ravine shoot at them until they had killed every one of them...Going a little further, (I) came upon my mother who was moving slowly, being very badly wounded...When (I) caught up to her, she said, 'My son, pass by me; I am going to fall down now.' As she went up, soldiers on both sides of the ravine shot at her and killed her.[146]

The total lack of respect for Lakota women, children, and the elderly, expressed here by Dewey Beard, was deeply offensive to the Sioux as it did not make sense in their culture, which required

[145] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 886.
[146] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion*, 886.

men to protect women and to never harm any living being weaker than themselves, unless during a hunt or battle.

Overwhelmingly, Lakota women are not given agency in the histories of the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 and the Wounded Knee Massacre. Women are mentioned in passing; they are at the edges of images or their deaths are recalled in detail for political reasons. They are seldom given any active participatory role in any violent event dealing with their own people and the encroaching white Europeans. Lakota women possessed a powerful and unique role during the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890. They joined in the ghost dance and wore garb during the ghost dance that was typically reserved for Lakota men as the Lakota people believed this would make their ghost dance even more powerful. Lakota women's roles and perspectives during the Ghost Dance Movement and Wounded Knee Massacre of the late-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries are valuable and impactful to their surrounding peoples during these events and to modern Lakota women today as they express the strength and uniqueness in female Lakota history.

CONCLUSION

American history has too often been fraught with exclusivity and embellishment, especially when it comes to any mention of Native American history. By exclusivity, I mean Native women are commonly excluded from the historical account in any meaningful way. Although there have been many publications concerning Native American history in the past 40 years, it is still relatively uncommon for Native American women to be focused on in the three events that I have focused on in this thesis. In fact, there are relatively few events in which Native Americans enter the picture in the official historical record that is utilized in public schools across the country. After polling many friends, colleagues, and instructors, I came to the conclusion that the most common of these events that American citizens remember something about are Pontiac's War, the Wounded Knee Massacre, and the Trail of Tears. However, in the descriptions of these events in the mainstream American historical record, Native women are rarely if ever mentioned. In fact, when Native women are mentioned, it is usually in a way that misrepresents them. As Susan Shoemaker discusses in her historiography mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Native American women are commonly represented in American history via stereotyping and exclusivity. Native American women like Pocahontas and Sacagawea are the most commonly referenced Native American women, and their histories are watered down by the white observers of the past recording instances in their lives. This all stems from a basic misunderstanding in gender roles between white and Indigenous cultures that continues into the present.

The inclusion of Native American women into the historical record is valuable because it makes the historical record more accurate and it also empowers modern Native American women to look to their own roots for strength and vitality. As Mihesuah discusses in her book,

many Native American communities struggle with the juxtaposition between white and Indigenous culture in the present. To live in modern day America as a Native American means facing pressure to conform to different cultural ideals that oppose each other in many ways throughout each day. Although I am not suggesting that I know what Native American women or society in general needs in the modern day, I do hope that my research focusing on their traditional gender roles and detailing specific events in which Native women participated and aided in a unique way from Native men helps encourage Native women in today's world.

In order to accomplish these things, this thesis focused on three commonly referenced American historical events that included Native Americans and looked at the specifically female roles and perspectives of particular groups of Native Americans during these events. Algonquian women during Pontiac's War expressed themselves outwardly in ways foreign to and misunderstood by white soldiers and their hierarchical culture. By this I mean that even when Native American women were recorded during the three events I focus on in this thesis, there actions were sometimes misinterpreted. For example, when Native American women worked on cooking and farming the land, white people referred to them as slaves to their husbands when this was not the case. There gender roles were being misinterpreted. However, Native women utilized this misinterpretation to their advantage by hiding weapons in their clothing and getting close enough to white men at a political meeting to be able to cause harm. In fact, Algonquian women expressed their familiarity with violence throughout Pontiac's War. Cherokee women expressed their sentiments about selling their traditional lands and moving to new territory openly multiple times, imploring Cherokee men to be mindful of many traditional aspects of their culture that could be lost by the loss of their territory. Cherokee and Choctaw women experienced individual Trails of Tears in which they invoked their traditional roles of healing

and nurturing while attempting to help their people survive the devastating changes during the Removal Period. Choctaw gender roles were severely disrupted when Choctaw men were given responsibility for their families under the Armstrong Census. Lakota women adapted to the changing political climate of the late nineteenth century by joining in the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 as equal counterparts to the men in the traditional ceremonial dance. Lakota women were also overly represented in death in order to invoke sympathy from white society because of the misunderstanding in gender roles.

Native American women differed in cultures, perspectives, and experiences from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. However, there were commonalities in some of these perspectives and gender roles that helped Native American societies persevere to this day. One commonality is that Native women in all these historical events merged traditional gender roles with varying levels of adaptation to "civilization" in order to help their peoples survive as white society encroached on North America.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Burton, Mary Agnes (editor). *Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy 1763*. (Detroit: Published by Clarence Monroe under the Auspices of the Michigan Society of the Colonial Wars, [1912]).

This is an eye-witness account of Pontiac's Rebellion by an anonymous person who wrote in French, most likely a Catholic priest. The author of this journal details conferences with Pontiac and seems comfortable, or at least familiar, with the way that native government worked at the time. He also details everyday activity at the fort in Detroit, and is therefore a valuable source.

Granger, NYC. "SITTING BULL, 1882". <https://www.granger.com/results.asp?image=0031171>.

This is a photograph of Sitting Bull with his wife and children.

Hamilton, Milton W. (editor). *William Johnson's Papers* vol. 10-11 (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1953).

This source contains a detailed description of the events that occurred at Johnson Hall, William Johnson's home and the meeting place of many Native groups in the *pays d'en haut*. The letters come from many different important British military men and are therefore able to express an array of opinion over the Native groups. This source is also great because it includes the Native voice. Word-for-word transcriptions of meetings in which a Native spokesperson is speaking are included in Johnson's papers and they are extremely valuable in understanding the insight of the different Native groups of this time. There seemed to be much confusion between the Native groups and the British, and this source greatly helps to understand exactly how everything happened.

Jackson, Andrew. “Transcript of President Andrew Jackson’s Message to Congress ‘On Indian Removal’ (1830).” *The Our Documents Initiative.* http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=25&page=transcript

Many of Andrew Jackson’s public statements and actions directly relate to the Trail of Tears and other instances of Indian removal. He was one of the presidents of the United States during this time period and was particularly ruthless when it came to Indigenous relations. This excerpt is one of the more pertinent ones for my thesis, however, it does not mention women particularly. I am reading through more of his statements currently, searching for something that might more directly relate to Cherokee women.

Jesuits, *Jesuit Relations and allied documents.* (Cleveland: Burrows Bros, Co.)

This source is extremely valuable in my research because of the immense span of years it covers and the amount of detail it gives to everyday life in many different Native groups. This helped to find multiple different Algonquian groups who were representing a certain aspect of Algonquian culture.

Johnson, William, Sir. "An account of conferences held, and treaties made, between Major-General Sir William Johnson, Bart., and the chief sachems and warriours of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas...[etc.] Indian nations in North America, at their meetings on different occasions at Fort Johnson in the county of Albany, in the colony of New York, in the years 1755 and 1756."

This, as well as many other documents by William Johnson will greatly aid my understanding of what relations were between the Natives and the Europeans during the Seven Years' War. Johnson dealt with many Native men and women and his home provided a meeting space time after time for many historic events between natives and whites during the Seven Years' War.

Lumpkin, Wilson. *Mass Violence in America: the Removal of the Cherokee Indians from Georgia.* New York, NY: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969.

Wilson Lumpkin was the governor of Georgia from 1831 to 1835, and, therefore, was greatly involved in Indigenous removal and relocation in Georgia, including the Cherokee that were forced to endure the Trail of Tears. This particular volume is a collection of his letters to his children and, is basically a glorification of his deeds during his political career. Lumpkin's description of the event, and those leading up to it, is valuable because of its stark contrast to the Cherokee point-of-view.

Mooney, James. *The ghost-dance religion and the Sioux outbreak of 1890.* Washington: US Bureau of American Ethnology, 1896.

James Mooney was an ethnographer who lived with the Cherokee for many years. His most notable studies are *The ghost-dance religion* (1896), *The Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees* (1891), and *Myths of the Cherokee* (1900). During his stay with the Cherokee, he collected many "artifacts" which are currently in many museums and government organizations across the nation, including the Smithsonian Institution and the National Anthropological Archives. This source by Mooney is extremely valuable because of his up-close and personal experience with Cherokee culture. His descriptions of people, places, and events are much more detailed than most other accounts of the time from the government. Also, Mooney saw much more of

Cherokee society outside of what they said and did in a political setting. Because women were much more involved at the homestead instead of in battle and council, Mooney's work is valuable in a different way than most other Euro-american sources from this time period.

Pierce, C.C., "The Rose Bud and Sioux War Dance at Pine Ridge, South Dakota, December 25, 1890." Digital Public Library of America. <http://dp.la/item/2e89eac5db87c49e6090af46bd600c00>.

A candid moment is captured here as a group of Indigenous people perform a ghost dance. This is a good photograph to compare to the drawing mentioned below.

Remington, F. (1890). "The Ghost dance by the Ogallala [sic] Sioux at Pine Ridge Agency...Dakota/Frederic Remington, Pine Ridge, S. Dak." Dance South Dakota, 1890. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/90707734/>.

This drawing of a scene by an artist who saw it in person can say a lot about the person drawing that picture. In this case, a comparison of this image drawn by a white man and a similar photograph of a ghost dance in action makes a valuable statement about the way in which certain Indigenous acts are perceived by Euro-americans.

Semi-weekly interior journal (Stanford, Ky.), 20 Jan. 1891. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.* Library of Congress.

This journal expresses the opinion of a white female teacher at the Pine Ridge Reservation who was particularly upset about the way the Indigenous women were treated during the Wounded Knee Massacre.

Ward, Nancy. "Petition. May 2, 1817," "Petition. June 30, 1818," "Petition. October 17, 1821 [1831?]." *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents.* Ed. And Intr. Theda Perdue & Michael D. Green. Boston: St. Martin's Press, 1995.

Nancy Ward, or *Nanyehi* in Cherokee, was a *Ghigau* or "beloved woman" within her tribe, which made her a strong political figure. She helped make decisions in council meetings and used her political position to push for peace between the Cherokee and the Euroamericans leading up to the Trail of Tears. She died before the actual event, however. These public speeches she helped organize and perform were extremely impactful. The power of women's opinion within Cherokee, and the majority of other Indigenous tribes in North America, culture is expressed here in rare fashion.

Winfield, Scott. "Gen. Winfield Scott's Address to the Cherokee Nation." *GeorgiaInfo: An Online Georgia Almanac.* http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/topics/history/article/antebellum-era-1801-1860/gen-winfield-scotts-address-to-the-cherokee-nation

Winfield Scott was a general for the United States army and was responsible for imposing the Treaty of New Ochota, in which, according to the United States government, the Cherokee Nation had forfeited its land and decided to move to Indian Territory in modern-day Oklahoma. Scott had similar temperament to that of Jackson, and his opinion of Indigenous peoples, therefore, was horrifically low. This particular speech is a particularly cruel one and is valuable because it effectively expresses the situation in Georgia.

"Brooke Reports 'wild scene' and Chaotic Conditions," Digital Public Library of America. <http://dp.la/item/21366c1fdc142e9527fde117dd27cf61>.

This source describes the scene after Sitting Bull's death. It expresses the tension in the situation from both the Euro-american and Indigenous perspective.

"Early Picture of Oglala Sioux Indian at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota" <http://www.re-member.org/pine-ridge-reservation.aspx>.

This is a photograph of a group of Sioux females with a child on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

"Excerpts from William Trent." 1763. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

This source is a soldier's perspective of Pontiac's Conspiracy. It emphasizes the misunderstandings in culture between the English and the natives when Trent emphasizes, at one point, that they needed to go tell the natives how to treat their women and children, as if they were doing it wrong. This is a good source for citing an example when I discuss European ethnocentrism in primary documentation of North America in the eighteenth century.

"Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, voicing the proclamations of the 'Master of Life,' 1763." Smithsonian Source.

This source is valuable because it is a record of Pontiac, himself, mentioning women, if only for a sentence or two. This speech is powerful and consists of Pontiac telling a group of his followers how to live as a "Master of Life" would, and, while doing this, he mentions women, which really shows the value of women within their society.

Secondary Sources

Akers, Donna. *Living in the Land of Death: The Choctaw Nation, 1830-1860*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2004.

Akers's book was very important to my interpretation of Choctaw women's perspectives before, during, and after the Trail of Tears. Akers's interpretation of the Armstrong Roll was enlightening and educational.

Andersson, Rani-Henrik. *The Lakota Ghost Dance of 1890*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.

Andersson's book gave me valuable insight into the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890. He also closely examined other accounts of the Ghost Dance and the Wounded Knee Massacre in order to more fully understand the reasons behind the movement and the massacre.

Albers, Patricia & Beatrice Medicine. *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women.* Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983.

Patricia Albers is a Professor of American Studies and Department Chair at the University of Minnesota. She has published two other books over Indigenous peoples: *Santee & Plains Ojibwa* (2001) and *Labor and Exchange in American Indian History* (2002). She has also been participating in outreach activities to teach the Dakota and Ojibwe language since 1998. Beatrice Medicine was an anthropologist and professor at the California State University at Northridge. She was a Lakota woman of the Sihasapa and Minneconjou tribes. She was awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the American Anthropological Association in 1991 among many other awards. She even received an honorary doctorate from Michigan State University in 1998.

The Hidden Half is a collection of short essays over Plains Indian women, including Lakota women. Although there is not a focus on the Ghost Dance of 1890 specifically in this collection, there is much about female identity and status within Lakota culture at the time before and during the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee Massacre. There is also a critical evaluation of the lack of Native American female agency in the work of historians who discuss Native Americans. The point is made that most of these historians are men and white, which is most likely at the root of this issue because of not only cultural differences but also gender differences and the subsequent misunderstandings that ensue.

Boyd, James P. *Recent Indian Wars* (1891) (Digital Scanning, Incorporated, 2000).

Boyd's book is important to my thesis because of the closeness in publication to the time period I was studying. His perspective compared to other, more modern historians is interesting and informative in that it shows how much the field has grown and become more representative and inclusive since Boyd's time.

Brave Bird, Mary & Richard Erdoes. *Lakota Woman.* New York, NY: Harper Perennial, 1991.

Mary Brave Bird was a Lakota author and activist who participated in the American Indian Movement in the 1970s and was involved in the "Wounded Knee Incident" in 1973 when she was only 18 years old. She lived in the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Although *Lakota Woman* is a modern memoir, the point-of-view of this modern-day Cherokee female activist is valuable and further displays the resilience in Cherokee culture and Cherokee women. This book won an American Book Award in 1991.

DeMallie, Raymond J. "The Lakota Ghost Dance: An Ethnohistorical Account." *Pacific Historical Review* 51 no. 4, 1982.

Raymond J. DeMallie is an anthropologist and Professor of Anthropology at Indiana University in Bloomington. DeMallie participates in an outreach program that teaches the Sioux and Assiniboine languages at their respective reservations and the university. DeMallie has also published "The Sioux at the Time of European Contact: An Ethnohistorical Problem" (2006) and "Tutelo" (2004).

DeMallie breaks down the important differences between native and American culture that allow for more traditional gender roles in Lakota culture. Most scholars conclude that women were viewed as less than because they were not allowed to participate in government or fight in battle. However, DeMallie states that just because the roles for men and women are different and entirely separate from each other in Lakota culture, this does not mean that one is more important than the other, only that one is more visible and believed to be more important by the white men who observe and document them. DeMallie claims that there is much evidence to support an alternative idea that Lakota men actually understood the importance of the female role and that they would not survive without them, just the same as if there were suddenly no more men to fight and defend the tribe.

Denig, Edwin Thompson. *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975.

Denig's perspective was unique because he was a fur trader married to an Indian woman. Denig observed and recorded an abundance of information about the Indian peoples around him, including Algonquians.

Dowd, Gregory Evans. *War Under Heaven: Pontiac, The Indian Nations & The British Empire.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

This book does an excellent job of presenting the facts of Pontiac's War in a different way that makes the reader think about the Anglocentric story that is most popular. Dowd explores the idea that Native people were fighting more for status than for things, that this relationship was most important to Native culture.

Foreman, Grant. *Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932.

Grant Foreman was a leading historian in Oklahoma during the early years of the twentieth century. During this time, he worked with the Indigenous peoples in the Three Forks area in eastern Oklahoma. Foreman co-founded the Muskogee Historical Society in 1920. In 1924, he became a member of the Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors. Some of Foreman's most popular publications are *Indian Removal* (1932), *Advancing the Frontier* (1933), and *The Five Civilized Tribes* (1934). Foreman also helped create collections of primary sources, including the Oklahoma Historical Society's Indian Archives and the Indian-Pioneer Papers.

The information in *Indian Removal* serves as a sound base of information on the topic of Indigenous dispossession in the United States. Foreman's work goes much farther into detail than this portion of my thesis will require, but it is still useful in order to help understand the bigger picture or surrounding context of Cherokee women during the Trail of Tears. Also, Foreman's book is a great source of primary information for this portion of my thesis. I also use one of his books for the section over Algonquian women's role in Pontiac's War.

Gibbon, Guy. *The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations*. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Gibbon's book provided a larger overview of Lakota history than other books concerning the Lakota people. This allowed me to more intricately understand the Lakota people and what led them to the Ghost Dance Movement of 1890 and the tragedy of the Wounded Knee Massacre.

Jennings, Francis. *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988.

Jennings's book was informative because it presented an overall timeline of the Seven Years War in much detail. This was helpful towards the general organization of my chapter on Algonquian women and Pontiac's War.

Johnston, Carolyn Ross. *Cherokee Women in Crisis: Trail of Tears, Civil War, and Allotment, 1838-1907.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003.

Carolyn Ross Johnston is a Professor of History and American Studies at Eckard College in St. Petersburg, Florida. She is also the Elie Wiesel Professor of Humane Letters. Johnston was heavily involved in the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and '70s, and has since then been nominated for a Pulitzer prize and has received a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship and a Danforth Fellowship.

One of Johnston's main points in *Cherokee Women in Crisis* is that women are symbolic of the cultural resilience that exists in Indigenous culture, and that this is especially evident

during the Indigenous peoples' most tragic period, after the "discovery" of the "New World." Although Johnston's period of focus, 1838-1907, is much larger than mine, which is roughly 1830-1850, this particular emphasis is also stressed in my thesis. We ultimately are using different events (as well as a broader scope of people, in my case) to emphasis similar points. Also, both of our studies use the Trail of Tears, so her research here is extremely valuable to my work. Also, her book serves as a good template for how to organize such an argument.

Kidwell, Clara Sue. "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators." *Ethnohistory* 39, no. 2 (1992): 97-107.

Kidwell's article was important to my thesis because she discusses Nancy Ward's life and what she meant to the Cherokee people.

McClary, Ben Harris. "Nancy Ward: The Last Beloved Woman of the Cherokees." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1962): 352-64.

McClary's article was important to my thesis because he discusses Nancy Ward's life and what she meant to the Cherokee people and how she represented them during a tumultuous time.

Medicine, Beatrice. *Learning to Be an Anthropologist and Remaining "Native."* Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

This book is a compilation of essays written by Medicine throughout her career. Her chapter concerning Native gender roles was very important to my thesis.

Middleton, Richard. *Pontiac's War: Its Causes, Course, and Consequences*. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Middleton's book is mostly military and/or diplomatic history of Pontiac's Conspiracy. This book is a good source of the Rebellion from the Great Lakes and Ohio River Valley native point-of-view. Middleton uses Richard White's "middle ground."

Mihesuah, Devon Abbott. *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003.

Mihesuah's book is unique in its focus on the complexities in Native female culture. Each essay is focused on a different issue that Native women have dealt with from their inclusion in history to activism and politics. This collection of essays by Mihesuah are all about education and empowerment, which is similar to my own goals in my thesis.

Perdue, Theda. *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1995.

Perdue's book is highly important to my chapter on Cherokee women's perspectives and roles during the Removal Period because it includes all three Cherokee women's petitions that occurred before the Cherokee Trail of Tears.

Perdue, Theda. *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

Theda Perdue has written many books, some of the most relatable to my particular topic being *Cherokee Women* (1998) and *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears* (2007). *Cherokee Women* won the Julia Cherry Spruill Award and the James Mooney Prize for work in women's history and anthropology, respectively, in the South. Perdue has received many fellowships, from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, among many others. Perdue was the president of the Southern Association for Women Historians from 1985 to '86 and the American Society for Ethnohistory in 2001.

Cherokee Women focuses on Cherokee women's roles and how they changed in relation to European contact. Therefore, Perdue also focuses on a much larger period of time than I do. Perdue ends her analysis in 1835, when Cherokee removal was occurring. This gives great contextual, background information on Cherokee women, presenting an image of Cherokee women up to the point of the Trail of Tears.

Shoemaker, Nancy. "Native-American Women in History." *OAH Magazine of History* 9, no. 4 (1995): 10-14.

Shoemaker's article discusses the inclusion of Native American women in historic events and why Native women like Pocahontas received much more attention than other Native women. Even then, the information about Pocahontas and other often-highlighted Native women is distorted and not representative of the complex nature of their lives. Shoemaker's article was important to my introduction as her purpose was similar to mine – bringing Native women out of the shadows in American history.

Sleeper-Smith, Susan. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

This book was important to my thesis because it provided information about the intermarriages between Indian women and European men and the incentives behind this. Sleeper-Smith's analysis provided insight into why Native women married European men and how this practice of intermarriage was part of the middle ground between Natives and European peoples.

Van Kirk, Sylvia. *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983.

Similar to Sleeper-Smith's work, this book shed light on the subject of intermarriages between Indian women and European women. This book detailed the roles that Native women took as the fur-trade became more and more popular among Native peoples. This book also goes into detail about the lives and perspectives of the children of these intermarriages and how their lineage worked to their advantage.

White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815.* New York: Cambridge, 1991.

White's book is a great source of primary information, as well as a general understanding of quite a few indigenous populations and the relationships between those natives and the Europeans attempted to trade and negotiate land through alliances and gift-giving. This book is a necessary part of any research involving this time period and location.