LONG IN THE TOOTH: THE COMMODIFICATION OF TEETH, LAND, AND CHARACTER; RESISTANCE TO BRITISH ORAL CULTURE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN, IRELAND, AND THE AMERICAS 1770-1900

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DISSERTATION
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DEDICATION

In Memoria of Hector Avalos Torres. Thank you for believing in me all those years ago.

This dissertation is dedicated to my blood and chosen family, my comrades, and to my dear friend Rohini Eligeti and my long-time advisor Dr. Gail Turley Houston. Gail and Rohini, without you going above and beyond to support my decision to return to graduate school, I might not have pursued the PhD that I had dreamed of. Gail and Rohini are both incredible women who have been endlessly supportive of my life and work, and I appreciate your gentle nudges in the direction of really going for it all.

Sometimes writing is generational healing, as I know I’ve begun during this PhD and dissertation writing process. I honor my grandparents in this dissertation, especially the late Bill and Alice Groethe, who helped raise me with the values of justice I have held so firmly to. They encouraged me to fly instead of nest; even though they needed my assistance and could have personally benefited from me staying in Rapid City, they looked out for what was best for me, supported me fully, encouraged my independence, and showed me what unconditional love looks like. I hope you can see this work from the spirit world and understand that you have guided me still.

To my late Pop-Pop, I feel like I understand you better after the growth it took to write this dissertation, and I wish we could have gotten to speak more about some of these texts and ideas during your life, to reflect with you instead of about you as I wrote. I hope that the ideas in this dissertation and how I will mobilize them in the world may help repair some of the pain you went through and prevent future human rights abuses for people experiencing colonization. We are all the products of our families, and I am grateful to the strength and fortitude that mine has modeled throughout my lifetime despite all our traumas. Thank you to my family for raising me. I love you.

To Joy Harjo, thank you for the generous conversations about reclaiming spaces, finding the right pens, the ethics of heart transplants, and the possibility of graduate school that you shared with me in the early 2000’s. Your words, in that time and now in memory, about writing and the reasons for writing, really made a difference. You told me to come to UNM. Thank you, Joy, for all your outstanding performances over the years and for walking around campus with me. You showed me that my instincts and interests were valid. Thank you for telling me to pursue a higher degree, and for telling me to listen to my heartbeat. Thank you for seeing that I am a writer, but also for telling me in a gentle, yet firm way, to write. Whatever it takes. This dissertation is also dedicated to you.
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We are only as good as the scholars who came before us and people who come into our lives by choice and by chance. This project has been a mixture of serendipity and at times almost angelic guidance, spiritual tests of will, emotional endurance, proactive collaboration, and public knowledge-sharing. I would not be where I am today without teachers who were extra supportive to me throughout my life. This dissertation builds on the work that my predecessors, professors, and mentors have done publicly and privately before even meeting me to develop their lineages of thought and their commitment to education. All who have shown me kindness or offered critique through the years are reflected in this project. The only reason that I have been able to do this work is because many of you have encouraged me when I needed it the most, whether with a smile, an edit, a hug, or an email. During this dissertation, I have lived and worked in Albuquerque, NM, which lies on unceded Tiwa territory and Rapid City, South Dakota, which lies within the unceded He Sapa, or Black Hills, stolen land in treaty violation of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota people. That place, and the water that runs throughout it, has supported my entire life and remains my center.

So many of my most helpful supporters have been women and queer folks who have helped me in and beyond academia. Additionally, having support from family, friends, mentors, organizers, and graduate worker colleagues over the years from many departments and walks of life has been an immeasurable but critical part of the success of this project, and those relationships, past and present, contribute to my motivation to complete the PhD. I would also like to acknowledge that many women and feminine folks have mentored me formally and informally throughout my BA, MA, and Ph.D. Many offered their knowledge and support through the years, and I believe that at their core, most of our beloved academic ideas and progression of our society would not be possible without the invisible labor of women, (especially Black women and working-class women of color).

Institutions unfairly benefit from all kinds of invisible labor from the working class. This includes the University of New Mexico, and while it has been my privilege and honor to pursue an advanced degree, I must also acknowledge that many other persons before me sacrificed and offered their own invaluable time and energy so that this path could even be an option. I can write and speak more freely in my field because of prior work, and I vow to remember this collaborative spirit through my own projects, to risk more, to push myself and my field. This institutional experience has pummeled me but has also often rewarded me. I realize that some of the most progressive voices for change in the academy come first from marginalized academics who often do not receive enough recognition for their contribution. I plan to remain dedicated to questioning the ways in which my treatment remains better and different than scholars with darker skin and more radical approaches and listening to those who have more stake in conversations about contemporary university politics and historical figures from the Victorian period, even as academic freedom is increasingly attacked by austerity, neoliberalism, corporatization, and fascism. It is my goal to be generous with my colleagues and with my own students despite academic pressures and institutional cruelties, and to continue to subvert the capitalist model of education, the hetero patriarchal and racist systems of oppressions within and beyond the university in order to continue the legacy I’ve been directly shown by scholars helping one another, helping their graduate students, and creating more space for anyone who feels like an impostor in this field and academia more generally.
So many scholars and academics who have community ties and obligations to marginalized community groups do not get materially recognized for their labor within their lifetimes, even if we have benefited from the great personal and professional risks, they have taken to bring their works to life. Many scholars who contributed to the seminal feminist text *This Bridge Called my Back* are cited in feminist courses and upheld as pillars of radical truth, critical race tradition, and feminism. However, in their own careers, many of them were forgotten, neglected at the time they were writing these now much cited texts. As Dr. Andrea Mays mentioned in my first class of Feminist Theory, “Gloria Anzaldúa died without tenure or health insurance.” I just want to say that I highly value the contribution of many under-recognized writers, thinkers, scholars, and people outside the academy, such as Erika Heart and their partner Ebony P. Donnley from Instagram and the podcast “Hoodrat to Headwrap.” Some of these educational voices I have found on my own time, but many resources outside academia are people I have learned about from other underrecognized scholars. Their contribution to gender and women’s studies, and to my praxis as an activist-scholar, must be acknowledged.

While not every person who has supported me has been femme, most of the people who have given generous time and above and beyond effort at various points have primarily been women, transgender, queer, or non-binary people; I need to acknowledge that reality since it has structured my career thus far. The men who have given me the most of their time in academia have often been multi-marginalized men, men of color, and Black men. I have had some very important masculine academic role models, especially through creative writing and critical theory. Academia often unreflectively perpetuates gendered expectations of labor and the heteronormative timeline, but I hope that throughout my life I see the conditions of our society and our universities change to value emotional work more fairly, interpersonal work, kindness, and the type of time and deep analysis that marginalized people within the Humanities bring with us into our fields.

Material resources are competitive and difficult to procure in the humanities, especially in the first transition years of graduate school. Because of this, the funding that I received throughout my time at UNM and especially during the final years of my graduate study have helped me tremendously. Thank you especially to the American Conference for Irish Studies national fellowship committee for honoring me at your 2022 conference and for bestowing the Krause Research Fellowship to allow me another chance to return to Ireland to continue in person research and attend the SSNCl (Society for the Study of Nineteenth-Century Ireland) conference at UCD; the American Conference for Irish Studies West (ACIS West) Jordan-Potts Award Committee of 2021; the Larry Morris Memorial Scholarship committee of 2021; The Gallagher Scholarship for Study in Ireland and Europe scholarship committee of 2019-2020; the UNM Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) travel and professional development grant funds; the Bilinski Educational Foundation’s Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowship; the Department of English Language and Literature at UNM travel and teaching awards, and many other wards. I am grateful for wonderful faculty and staff advisement with moral and material support over the years. The Gallagher Scholarship Award (2020-2021), which supported my more intensive travel to Dublin, Belfast, Edinburgh, and London -without this award, my dissertation would be an entirely different project and include much less historical depth. Additionally, I would like to thank Dan Mueller and the Bilinski Fellowship Committee for seeing the value of my dissertation project and creating the possibility of focusing primarily on my writing and
research without any teaching obligations for the last year of my degree program. Without this generous 15 months of funding between 2022-2023, I would have taken at least another year, if not two, to complete my research and dissertation writing. It has been an honor to receive these awards and to work so closely with the scholars who have supported me in applying for such awards.

My committee members and committee chair have been outstanding. It was important for me to choose scholars whose work I admire and who have shown a material dedication to my growth. Additionally, I made the conscious choice to have an all-woman-led committee for a variety of reasons, including the feminist praxis of my dissertation project.

Thank you substantially to my chair, Dr. Gail Turley Houston. Dr. Houston brought me back to UNM through her invitation and warm words throughout the years and never gave up on my work. We have worked at least nine years together. After receiving my MA, I had a very long break where I was unclear of my path and attempting to survive in Seattle, WA. Gail reached out to me to ask about plans for returning to the PhD since she had never forgotten my work on gender and nation in Elizabeth Gaskell and E. Pauline Johnson’s works. I would likely never have returned without her direct encouragement and belief in me. Gail has always seen the potential I bring and has believed in what I could contribute to Victorian Studies. She has also spent copious amounts of time and patience working with me as both a feminist theory mentor, writer, editor, and professor, and has been a role model in my life starting in 2009; she pointed out to me (a very unsure student with massive imposter syndrome and then later the trauma of losing the person I was doing research for to murder) repeatedly throughout those two years that I had a worthwhile approach, reassuring me that my ideas and methods were valid and worthwhile. I primarily have Dr. Houston to thank for my reliance on archival materials both in the MA and PhD, as well as an increased trust in openness to my own scholarly intuition. Additionally, her use of an outstanding mix of pedagogical tools including performance in the classroom for more direct understanding the “structures of feeling” in a text has greatly assisted in my tools for analysis. Thank you, Gail, for agreeing to be my chair in your transition to retirement. I would also like to thank you for sharing your library and books with me and Sinae after leaving UNM, which has aided in my writing and feels very special. I appreciate the opportunity of working with you all these years, and it has been my honor to have you as my committee chair.

My committee member Dr. Sarah Townsend was one of my first Irish Studies professors. She opened my world up to theorists like Agamben and Mbumbe. For the first few years of my PhD experience, Sarah was my only committee member who was physically present on campus. She offered me tea and answered my many questions when I returned from Ireland for the first time, extraordinarily confused and curious (I had gone in 2018 with little to no historical or cultural knowledge). Sarah made time for me throughout this PhD experience to explain the behind-the-scenes considerations and concrete strategies for getting writing work accomplished. Sarah, thank you for helping me think strategically about opportunities and funding applications and for helping me gain some ground on my material needs. She helped connect me with other Irish studies scholars at UNM and beyond, challenging my preconceptions about academia, helping me organize and structure my workflow, and shared resources with me. Thank you, Sarah, for your commitment to accessible breakdowns of opaque institutional structures for your students, and the understanding you bring to your classroom and office hours. Thanks again for encouraging me to apply for the ACIS conference and for supporting collegial travel to those conferences
in fun and accessible ways—those are some of my favorite conference experiences. It has been wonderful to get to know you better, to take very interesting classes with you, and I appreciate that you have stuck with me and with this project.

My committee member Dr. Sarah Hernandez has been an immense source of comfort and has showed me kindness since she started working in our department. She has modeled that archival work and deep commitment to community can lead to better writing and profound pedagogy through her praxis in the classroom and beyond. Her feedback on my third chapter about Good Star Woman was invaluable and formative in my thinking because of the time crunch for that chapter, and her book *We Are the Stars: Colonizing and Decolonizing the Oceti Sakowin Literary Tradition* that was published in February 2023 led me to Linda Clemmons’ work and to Good Star Woman. Sarah’s participation in the Oak Lake Writers Society, and the forging of community relationships with some of the Native literature and Critical Indigenous studies scholars whom I most admire has created hope that me that these types of connections are still possible within a tenured position. Thank you, Sarah, for your support and for helping make me feel more at home in academia. It was a breath of fresh air when you arrived at UNM and I saw your job talk, and I have been happy to work with you as one of my mentors here ever since. Thank you for your willingness to meet up, whether it be over zoom or face to face on a coffee shop patio. Our conversations have been encouraging and helpful for me throughout the end of this long and at times very difficult process, and being able to talk more deeply about back home and Oceti Sakowin academic and literary topics has meant the world to me. I wish our department had gotten a tenure line earlier for you to join us at UNM, because your presence there has been a lifeline.

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So many scholars were influential to me at UNM and beyond since 2016. The scholars associated with the Karasu Society have assisted my intellectual growth over the years and have materially supported me. Dr. Adriana Arellano Ramirez, whose skill for dissolving binaries and bolstering methodologies, and whose cheerleading and mentorship during my experience pursuing a women’s studies certificate were incredibly helpful. Adriana, your words have been a continuous inspiration and source of strength for me. Dr. Jennifer Nez Denetdale, whose quick wit, honest demeanor, and attention to historical detail had me feeling at home in Critical Indigenous Studies. I appreciate that you invited me to IFAIR and events of interest to me, being willing to meet for coffee and prune cookies, and being blunt about your experience. Thank you, Jennifer, for your willingness to assist me as a member of my comprehensive exam committee, and for sharing your knowledge of your field with me. Dr. Belinda Wallace modeled balance and taught me that praxis is possible
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still to do to change Victorian Studies, but I feel more comfortable in the field now that I have met Ryan. Thank you also to my NVSA mentor, Dr. Jason R. Rudy of the University of Maryland, College Park for publication advise and feedback about Catlin, Washkamonya, and to the NVSA mentorship program for assisting me in transitioning between being a student writer and a published writer.

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Librarians are the superheroes of academia and society, in my opinion. The work that they were doing during Covid times to digitize and preserve important historical records, and the work they have done throughout time to keep information freely available through censorship and wars historically really deserves to be named. Many of the archival images and texts that I work with would not be available to me (and possibly not in existence) if it were not for archivists and librarians. The Fine Arts and Design Library was especially helpful during my years of graduate school, especially during the PhD. I hope that it can reopen on weekends for future students. I would like to thank most of my K-12 teachers and librarians, but especially Mrs. Hengen, Mrs. Allum, Mr. Schultz and Mrs. Batchelder who encouraged my curiosity, suggested books, and helped me get into college. Thanks to you both for believing in me.

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LONG IN THE TOOTH: THE COMMODIFICATION OF TEETH, LAND, AND CHARACTER; RESISTANCE TO BRITISH ORAL CULTURE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN, IRELAND, AND THE AMERICAS 1770-1900

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is about teeth—rather, how they are portrayed in British colonial discourses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and their development as a commodified material object associated with purity, lands, and visceral emotionality. What do teeth specifically, and orality more generally, mean to eighteenth and nineteenth-century readers in relation to the logics of white possession? How did objectified subjects react to and respond to the affective tension created by this objectification? Teeth are represented in relation to feminine purity throughout British writing from at least the 1600’s. However, between 1770-1900, teeth gain additional cultural meanings, most often appearing within commentary about the diets, consumption, land-resources, and perceived sexual-moral purity of those whose common lands were targeted for resource extraction and enclosure. This was primarily true of people whose land-based spirituality, including Irish Peasants and Indigenous people of the Americas, stood in opposition to British imperial agricultural and resource gains. Teeth and their affectively-charged presentation within texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth century began to symbolize power exchanges where human and land bodies were ‘dispositioned’ through phrenology, dentistry, and agricultural discourse of “use value”
versus “waste value.” As a fetishized commodity, the teeth of colonized and working-class people were stolen or sold to fill aristocratic mouths, whose voracious hunger for resources was projected onto those they villainized and objectified. The project examines how teeth gain increasing cultural and medical significance simultaneously as increases in colonization, industrialization, and traces from the discourse of “the savage” are circulated in Britain, Ireland, and the Americas and how the value system behind the discourse is responded to.
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INTRODUCTION – “Lack in the Teeth of the English”

Long in the Tooth: The Commodification of Teeth, Land, and Character, the rise of Resistance to British Oral Culture in Nineteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and the Americas 1770-1900

Victor: “I think there’s something wrong when you don’t see a guy’s teeth”

Song: John Wayne's teeth, John Wayne's teeth
Are they plastic, are they steel?
John Wayne's teeth, John Wayne's teeth
Are they plastic, are they steel?
John Wayne's teeth, John Wayne's teeth
Are they plastic, are they steel?
John Wayne's teeth, John Wayne's teeth
Are they plastic, are they steel?

~Victor’s quote, Song from Eaglebear Singers, “Track 13” soundtrack from the Miramax film Smoke Signals (1998)
As Nassir Mufti argues in his article “Hating Victorian Studies Properly” it is odd that “scholars of race rarely, if ever, turn to Victorian studies for their research” and that “although Victorian studies came into being in the age of decolonization, Third Worldism, and the Civil Rights movement, and is devoted to the study of the century in which the modern concept of race was invented and institutionalized and made ubiquitous, the field lacks a theory of-- or even a debate about-- race in the nineteenth century” (392). He turns to thinkers from the pan-African movement such as C. L. R. James to see how they utilized Victorian literature and theory to help with their decolonial aims and asserts that these thinkers have been rarely cited and often overlooked despite their heavy engagement with the Victorian period. I agree with this assertion from what I have witnessed at conferences and in publications; there is so much untapped potential for scholars within and beyond Victorian studies. The field has a long way to catch up from this large blind spot in the way that people made “other” in the Victorian period are still largely left out of the field in both in subject analysis and in practice. While there has been a shift in recent years because of George Floyd’s public murder, it has been difficult to reckon with the whiteness and middle-upper classness of the field which sometimes is a very radical and progressive space, with the traditionalism and sometimes the refusal to adapt to understand the ways in which our field may contribute to contemporary problems with capitalism, colonialism, and race.

This dissertation seeks to work with Victorian texts in a way that undermines ongoing systems of commodification that permeate North American and British culture, inherited largely from colonial and capitalist logics of colonialism. While I do want to understand the affect of Victorian writers, characters, and thinkers, I also think that we need to do better (me included) to listening through the texts for embodied affects and expressions
that we don’t get to hear or understand as easily. Pamela Gilbert’s method of the “ascendant mode of reading” in terms of turning to the “interpretation of the body and its affects” within the nineteenth century in her work on skin and its public readability is one key to this improved practice of listening (2). Both British subjects and everyone in the world who has interacted with or who has been affected by Western imperialism are people whose affects should be studied as part of this practice of listening. Some might argue that because of that multiplicity and complexity, there will never be an easy reading of any text from the nineteenth century, an easy reading of teeth or expression or a straightforward metonym of their meaning, and that our studies and attempts are pointless. However, I believe that it just means that in each metonym of British imperialism, there are countless layers of meaning to be uncovered¹.

We can see how Britons used teeth as metonymy and for purity of character and simultaneously hear that this usage was continuously and directly undermined by the people they were trying to silence or mark as “savage,” impure, or base. Hearing these echoes in the texts helps us appreciate whose orality and affect they attempted to and failed to control and to better understand how they felt about this attempt to regulate and assign meaning to their oral space, as well as the material extraction that occurred because of this labeling. The primary underlying argument of this dissertation is that the notion of ‘perfect’ teeth” is a smaller part of a colonial, gendered, classed, and white supremacist value system that yet still

¹ As the British Empire expanded throughout and beyond the timeframe of this dissertation, the insistence on a coherent national culture continued failing and be challenged by the existence of other lifeways. Mary Poovey outlines how the most pertinent phrase to describe “cultural formation” is “making a social body” and argues that in the 1830’s especially, it is not static but that this formation is instead “never fully formed, never achieved as a unified, homogenous whole” and is later termed “process of homogenization”(1-2). She also states that even when declarations were occurring widely about a unified Britain, “we can identify the persistence of competing cultural strains within the kingdoms.” In this dissertation, I identify some of these competing strains. It is a goal of this dissertation to outline not only the ways in which colonial violence operated, or resistance to this violence, but to outline the broader cultural and economic pressures that the actors in these situations were acting within.
represents white “pure” teeth as indicative of noble character, as indicative of class status, and as a marker of whiteness. Using teeth as an entrance into this discussion was a choice that I made because of their significance and is one part of what Aileen Moreton-Robinson calls for scholars to expose- a larger “logics of white possession.” My dissertation project does this through attempting to understand the commodification of character via teeth.

According to Ryan Sweet’s Bakhtinian discussion of teeth as metonymy in literary studies, “in literary studies as in medicine, you learn a lot by turning attention to the mouth” (83). In addition to Sweet’s assertion that teeth are representative of “the dwindling condition of Britain’s imperial forces” in the late nineteenth century literature, I would argue that teeth act as a much deeper and longer fixation within British culture which spans the entirety of the nineteenth century and long before, which unconsciously, emotionally, and consistently influences literature, culture, land tenure, coloniality, medicine, sexual politics, national identity, and proto bioethics from at least the 16th century onward. It is my hope that this dissertation will allow scholars of culture and history a wide range of access points to view teeth in cultural texts (including literature) as both self-conscious symbol of character purity and assessment, and as literary metonymy. Sweet states that “we can read false teeth as a metaphor of an empire that presented itself as well formed and intact but behind the veneer was weakened and unhealthy.” While this is partially true, it is not the whole truth. It elides the brutal realities of colonialism. In other words, we cannot just look at British feelings about their own teeth without understanding the long history of direct comparisons of teeth and associations with character, grave robbing, British dental history coinciding with the expansion of a colonial Empire itself, of a national identity obsessed with control of lands and the foods and resources on those lands, obsessed with controlling the sexuality of people
viewed through their teeth (largely women, working-class and racialized people), and the
dehumanizing objectification that occurs as both a symptom and consequence.

I am less concerned about the insecurities and anxieties of English dental experience
(which was by and large extremely miserable) and affect surrounding purchased teeth than I
am with the reasons that affect, anxiety, and self-consciousness occurred in the first place and
the effects these English emotions had and still have on the commodification of teeth.
Therefore, splitting from Sweet’s assertion that teeth represent self-consciousness, I argue
that what teeth represent for Britain as a nation in its cultural texts is much more complex
and socially powerful. Instead of purely individual insecurity as it relates to teeth, English
insecurities about the purity of their own mouths left a lasting and violent legacy in places
targeted for colonial resource extraction.

By looking at how teeth are discussed in the periodicals of the nineteenth century,
(often in a fetishized, racialized, sexualized, and dismembered marker of character\(^2\)) we can
also see how bodies and contributions were viewed, and what role teeth as a symbol may
have played in terms of class, gender, race, nationality, or sex (Williams). Teeth were
collected for dentures and were considered highly valuable as a marketable commodity, but
they were also symbolic of “the savage” especially in contrast to “civilized” teeth, which
were often described as decayed, discolored, and rotting (“Cleanliness,” Nisbet). Teeth are a
contested ideological space in terms constructing and deconstructing the notion of savagery,
both through what Judith Butler terms “grievability,” the notion that some lives are valued
more than others when they are lost, and Marx’s concept of use value or the economic value
of a person or objects productivity under capitalism (Frames of War, “ Bodies, Capital, “A

\(^2\) Further discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.
Simultaneously, teeth of colonial people became fetishized as a commodity, became a larger part of the “noble savage discourse,” while remaining a primary site of fear of “the animal” in people (associated with lands) disregarded by industrial imperialism (“Teeth”). Their potential to respond to the injustices done to their bodies through both their physical and metaphysical teeth is directly correlated to their perceived “affective orality,” or their potential to express resistance through uncontrolled emotion and frequently the bearing of teeth in plays, poems, and novels (Scoffern). David Lloyd has argued that mouths and orality are a “space” that were heavily colonized during the Victorian period in Ireland, and the impulse to regulate orality of the Irish was a driving force behind colonization of Irish speech, consumption, sexuality, oral tradition, and land (“Indigent Sublime”). My work takes this notion of “oral space” to focus more on the specific discourses around teeth and the politics of teeth during the long nineteenth century, while critically examining assumptions about people who were othered through the discourse of “the savage.” The term “savage” begins appearing in periodicals much more after 1750, but that it spikes in the early 19th century to discuss people who were not English. I link this spike in usage with colonization and desire to exploit land for capital, as well as marketed tours such as George Catlin’s tours.

Generally, the pattern I have found in literature and other cultural production representing teeth within the discourse of the “savage” before and after 1770 shows that teeth were used to determine social, national, and sexual purity especially of women or perceived impurity, yet as colonialism expanded, teeth took on an additional symbology in their metonymic representations regarding the perceived use or waste value of their bodies’
resources in relation to British settler colonialism and land/land-resource control\(^3\). I will be expanding this conversation by looking at teeth of both the living and the dead, false and alive teeth, the history of dentistry, dentures and apple scoops, and a long history of dental fixation British textual presentation that increased with the commodification of character and land in the nineteenth century. Teeth are not just a metonymy for understanding British literary symbolism or the conditions that authors may have been writing under in terms of their own teeth, but they are instead a larger symbolic affect, a weapon of colonial identity and resistance, and a core part of many eighteenth and nineteenth-century cultural discussions of character which impacted the lived realities for any group seen as “impure” and therefore disposable.

This study builds from David Lloyd’s operational term “oral space” as a site of colonization, expanding the purview of this term to include study of how colonization and decolonization operates within the Americas and within Scotland in addition to Irish oral resistance. My study leans more towards the materialism of teeth and the focus on teeth as both part of the body (and the oral space) and as a fetishized commodity within a capitalist marketplace. My work diverges from current scholarship on orality, teeth, and Romantic and

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\(^3\) Additionally, when we focus only on the social novel, we also ignore these other literatures and proliferating narrative that co-existed in the nineteenth-century social space. There are so many widely circulated texts in dialogue with the canonical and middle-class writers in Sweet’s study, a way to analyze what those authors are saying. We must engage with some of these texts through a different method if we are to contribute to the retributive history of racism’s damage and teeth’s place in that history (questions readers should ask themselves from my dissertation then include, how can people who have the teeth and bones of people outside of their families, where there was an uneven and violent power dynamic, return those bones to the tribes and places they originated)? Eve Tuck and K Wayne Yang assert that “decolonization is not a metaphor” and instead needs to include repatriation of Indigenous land to Native stewardship, while Sarah Hernandez argues that “to fully challenge and disrupt settler colonialism, [...] decolonization must address the loss of Indigenous land–externally as well as internally” through reclaiming the land on various levels, including the physical, spiritual, and ideological (8-10). Hernandez also asserts the importance of re-asserting Lakota and Indigenous land-values and narratives and to challenge the settler colonial land-paradigms which shifted land to “mere property” instead of the living and relational force of importance it holds to the Oceti Sakowin (10). In other words, just acknowledging the relationship that colonial land models hold for our current understandings of and relationship to Indigenous lands in the Americas and other regions affected by British and broader European colonialism is not enough: we need to directly undermine and contradict the conscious and unconscious ways that land has been part of Aileen Moreton Robinson’s critique of the “logics of white possession,” and to center the counter-narratives and more holistic relationship to land of Indigenous women.
Victorian literary historiography on Native American women writers and nineteenth-century travelers to England because of the use of Critical Indigenous Studies scholarship instead of performance or visual studies scholarship. Although Native travelers who toured in the London “Indian show” with Catlin have been known for years and are referenced by eighteenth and nineteenth century historical and literary scholars (including Sami Lakomäki, Coll Thrush, Kate Flint, and Tim Fulford), it is difficult to find many studies that focus primarily on the travelers themselves or that go deeply into the material conditions of the tribe.

My decision to treat Washkamonya and Good Star Woman’s oral narrative as textual representation of their own skills as warrior and storyteller varies from the existing texts which, despite title choices, tends to cite only canonical texts and historical scholarship from European authors and does not include context-based analysis or tribally specific analysis. Two notable examples are Coll Thrush’s text Indigenous London, which does give more voice to Native perspectives than many of the other texts written about this time period, and Sami Lakomäki, whose text Gathering Together further emphasizes that the Shawnee were right at the center of 18th century Atlantic culture, nation-building, and played an integral role in the commerce of both England and the Eastern US (15). Ryan Fong’s article “The Stories Outside the African Farm: Indigeneity, Orality, and Unsettling the Victorian” additionally deals with recovery work in a more Indigenous-centered way than projects of representation coming out of Victorian studies. Additionally, while much of the work in literary studies tends to focus on explication of canonical literature, I am choosing to highlight some of the archival research and underrepresented texts or voices. I hope to pursue each of these texts through future study that would deepen my interaction with each figure,
especially Good Star Woman, Washkamonya, and the patients at Richmond Hospital like Mary McGuiness, which would require more funding, time, and research travel. While in this dissertation, I use teeth as an avenue to better understand colonial capitalism, settler colonial “logics of white possession,” and to highlight the ways in which this was critiqued by people who were objectified via their teeth by British discourses of savagery during imperial land-resource theft, there are so many more examples of this resistance that I was unable to write about because of the space and time limitations of this project.

TEETH AS SYMBOL

If oral space was viewed as an unruly site of desired conquest by colonial powers as David Lloyd has argued in the context of Irish nineteenth century colonial politics, then teeth are the powerful affective fortress preventing entrance to that coveted space. Although we see teeth as a symbol throughout British writing from at least Chaucer onward, they gain increasing cultural value as colonization and industrialization become more prominent in the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth. Teeth are a contested ideological space in terms of their use in constructing and deconstructing the notion of savagery, both in terms of Butler’s “grievability” and Marx’s “use value.” Characters in novels and people met in travel narratives through the early nineteenth century are often, if not generally, described through their teeth within the first physical description. Whether one's teeth were straight, intact, white, frail, long, or pearly, they were described for the primary purpose of indicating their character. Although this began as a marker of sexual purity, it became a more prevalent pattern in narratives about encounters with colonial Others during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.
Most often, teeth are described by narrators upon encounter and first description. One example is from a short story review in the Wesleyan-Methodist magazine in London, 1888, titled “The Wild West; or Life in Connaught” where the English (middle class and we are told well-traveled) narrator meets a Irish peasant girl and immediately describes her teeth in a way that is representative of this pattern in texts from this time onward that connects her with the discourse “savage” and therefore “unfeeling” character through her mouth and teeth:

The eldest born of Paddy’s numerous progeny was a girl-- a tall, good looking, and as yet, bone-displaying damsel of sixteen, with masses of magnificent but totally unkempt auburn hair, and the whitest teeth that I ever saw in a human mouth. Not an atom of vanity, nor indeed, as far as I could discover, of any other feeling, did this handsome young creature possess (57). This description of her shockingly white teeth as an important moment of contact, alongside general character description, is typical in English encounter narratives, but most often a fixation when describing people connected with occupied or desired lands, or people of “questionable” character. This pattern also occurs within the discourse of the “savage,” and the desire to own or control the bodies of people described as “savage.” Made to seem animalistic (see the word creature in the passage above) and as unfeeling. However, English people were simultaneously observing throughout the time of colonization that all the spoils of the Empire (sugars and large variety of modernized foods) were rotting out their own teeth, and as Matthews points out, sugar’s cultural meaning in 1813 was inseparable from the slave trade. Imperialists and their operators coveted not only the lands, but the bodies on those lands they were trying to exploit through colonization. This becomes clear through lustful depictions of teeth and of scientific articles stating that the best practices of keeping one’s teeth intact were coming from other places, such as India, Africa, and the Americas (The Teeth). Although teeth were used in the earlier time to villainize and animalize
racialized populations, they became increasingly fetishized and desired, later becoming a huge part of the “natural diet” and the “noble savage” trope and discourses (ART. IX).

In the Victorian period and the years leading up to it, we increasingly see teeth employed as a site of transit for intersections of race, class, and land in addition to the existing usage to connote gendered sexual purity. While through the early modern period and into the mid-eighteenth century, teeth are used to describe female characters and female sexuality, by the turn of the early nineteenth century, teeth additionally become a marker to sexualize and racialize people around the globe in literature, periodicals, medical texts, and advertisements, especially those seen as having a connection to land-based spiritual practices. Although their relationship to women’s sexuality is somewhat overt in earlier texts such as Chaucer’s “The Wife of Bath” (1400) and her infamous gap tooth, which has been connected to her desire for sexual liberty. In the eighteenth century, we see an increase in this usage. One example is shown in the novel “Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure” (1749) when Fanny describes in detail how white and pure her teeth are and how much she takes care of them to show that she is not “stained” by her profession to another character within the first few pages of the book. The presentation of her teeth through the character’s own first-person narration is an important rhetorical move that clears her

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4 E.g: Disraeli, Benjamin, Earl of Beaconsfield, 1804-1881. The Wondrous Tale of Alroy: The Rise of Iskander. London: Saunders and Otley, 1833; introduces Black people through their teeth and as having no religion or pagan spirituality. For example, “his mouth small, and beautifully proportioned; his lips full and red; his teeth regular, and dazzling white” (158); Hall, Louisa J. (Louisa Jane), “Miriam: a Dramatic Poem,” Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and company, 1837. talks about Pagans vs Christianity and the “savage” murderous and bloodthirsty. Accuses pagans of being untrustworthy, saying “we have good cause/ to doubt a Pagan, when he talks of peace/ or mercy for his Christian foes […] Pagan, I know Thou fear’st not death” (99). She says this is because they do not pray and instead scream; Goodrich, Samuel G. 1793-1860 “The Manners, Customs, and antiquities of the Indians of North and South America” (1844)

5 Storm, Mel. “Speech, Circumspection, and Orthodontics in the Manciple’s Prologue and Tale and the Wife of Bath’s Portrait.” Studies in Philology, vol. 96, no. 2, Spring 1999, p. 109. This article outlines how the Wife of Bath’s teeth are portrayed and discusses her clear desire for liberty of various kinds as related to her mouth, teeth, and speech.
character of the association with acts that she participates in throughout the text. However, although the cultural meanings of teeth in English literature change throughout time and with increased spread from 1770-1900, the metonymy with purity remains intact. Additional imperial meaning is included and the use of reference to teeth as determinate of character increasingly intersects with class, race, and colonial land purity nearer to the nineteenth century.

Although depictions of teeth were used in from the 1750’s to the 1840’s to invoke fear of the “ignoble savage” and notions of animality in popular discourse, of over-consumption, of monstrous orality of the Irish for example, of notions of criminal character and the fear of biting and fear of powerful affect, they were later used (starting around 1850’s) to romanticize the “noble savage.” Even in late eighteenth-century dental texts and treatises, African teeth were considered the “most perfect” by early dentists like Pierre Fauchard and were often described as beautiful, stunning, and striking throughout travel writings and medical texts through the mid-Victorian period, but the number of articles that started to circulate when the notion of the “noble savage” entered England (largely through George Catlin). The existing reliance on teeth and their appearance to notate difference of race, class, and gender combined with increased dental research meant that when British teeth began to decay, so did their confidence that they were better than the “savage” other. The discourse of “the savage” developed at the intersections of conversations about “efficiency” and “industry,” adding to portrayals of people who lived on coveted lands and

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6 This is additionally relevant to Fanny’s participation in commerce and capitalism, which according to Norbert Schürer, the commodification of her body, and the way that the sexual instinct has simply become a symptom of “a world where even the most intimate of human activities […] is a commodity” (59). Schürer, Norbert. "Fanny's Fortunes: Sexuality and Commerce in Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure," Eighteenth-Century Life, vol. 43 no. 2, 2019, p. 58-75. Project MUSE.

7 See Chapter 2
the increasing practice of dentistry and the sale of teeth. Within the discourse of the “savage” and the “wild” people often had the most beautiful and fascinating teeth, coveted in their whiteness and purity by British people whose teeth were rotting under the spoils of Empire.

During this time, land became increasingly commodified through enclosure of the commons and the creation of private property\(^8\). Whereas many had been able to walk around and pick an apple off a tree to eat for their lunch, hedgerows and fences soon made subsistence more difficult, and participation in commodity purchase a necessity. One marker of “othering” was that people were described through comparison to land, base embodiment, and connectedness to the animal in part to psychically separate humans from their land as it was physically taken from them. The desire for land led to an increased weaponization of colonial land theft, often justified by developing ‘philosophies’ of race and theories of economic lack and supposedly natural human hierarchies, such as Kant’s infamous 1777 text

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\(^8\) This is referenced by Marx in *Capitol*, Helena Kelly’s *Jane Austen the Secret Radical* (2017) but is very thoroughly explicated in Carolyn Lesjak’s text *The Afterlife of Enclosure: British Realism, Character, and the Commons* (2021). In this text, Lesjak outlines the way that realist novels illustrate the “slow violence” expression and pain of the change from independence of a laboring class to the slums of cities, the interdependence of “embodied life,” via Butler, and the continuation of enclosure now in the present time to describe the dispossession of the working classes and the need for a grappling with continued effects of enclosure (31, 66, 171-2).
“On the Different Human Races,⁹” and common pseudoscience practices like craniology¹⁰ and phrenology. It is not a coincidence that as England cut up its own lands during land enclosure and capitalist expansion, attempting to subsume lands of other places and the control, cut, and map the bodies and lands in those places, the physical bodies of the people supported by land shifted. The relationship to land and consumption had shifted, therefore irrevocably shifting the relationship to the body. Those described by the compartmentalization of their body parts were portrayed as both disposable and dissectible and as severable from the Victorian national consciousness, body politic, bodies of literature, and their own humanity.

Part of this change to the way that lands and bodies were viewed included the standardization of agricultural practices through notions such as “use” and “waste,¹¹” and unfortunately these ineffective categorizations also contributed to the assumption that lands and bodies elsewhere were not being used to their full potential and somehow either needed

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⁹ Mikkelsen, Jon M. *Kant and the Concept of Race: Late Eighteenth-Century Writings*. SUNY PRESS, 2013. Chapter 1: Of the Different Human Races: An Announcement of Lectures in Physical Geography in the Summer Semester 1775. Mickelson’s translation of this text allows readers to see the often eugenicist, classist, and racial logics underpinning Kant’s writings. He often talks about breeding for “desirable” traits and how the climate and the soil affect people differently as species and races (a belief that continues to be brought up throughout most of the Victorian period in racializing arguments). For example, he states that “a fair-skinned man—from a brown-complexioned woman—also have distinctly fair-skinned children, although each of these deviations is kept in all transplantations through many generations. For this reason, they are variations of whites. At long last, [431] the condition of the earth (dampness or dryness), as well as the food that a people commonly eat, eventually produce one heritable distinction, or stock, among animals of one and the same line of descent and race, especially regarding size, the proportion of limbs (plump or slim), and natural disposition [Naturells]. [...] the family stock [Familienschlag], whereby something characteristic ultimately becomes rooted so deeply in the generative power that it comes close a variation—and perpetuates itself like a . This has allegedly been observed in the old Venetian nobility, particularly in the women. At the least, all of the noble women on the recently discovered island of Tahiti are altogether of a larger build than the commoners. — (14) The idea of Maupertuis to breed from nature a noble stock of human beings in some province or other in whom understanding, diligence, and probity might be heritable rested on the possibility that an enduring family stock might eventually be established through the careful elimination of the degenerate births from those that turn out well” (61).

¹⁰ Craniology did not begin until the mid-late eighteenth century when contact with more groups of people began to increase and was one of the first racial pseudo sciences employed by upper class and later merchant class practitioners to justify white supremacy. According to researchers from the Penn Museum, “in 1817, influential French naturalist Georges Cuvier (1769-1832), who dissected the “Venus Hottentot” Sarah Baartman in Paris, claimed that she had a small brain and a resemblance to a monkey.” [see https://www.penn.museum/sites/morton/craniology.php]

¹¹ An essay titled “On The Teeth” shows that this type of study to try to demonize the human body through categorization and notions of “waste” that were carried over from the discourse around uses of land to the discourse of embodiment and colonization of both types of bodies (land and human).
or deserved punishment, control, or management. These logics of supremacy and commodification were applied to body parts such as teeth. The Anatomy Acts, the New Poor Law, austerity measures in Ireland and the working poor, all reified this artificial division between bodies that were perceived as valued and bodies that were perceived as having use value but only for their parts, not in the whole person. The Anatomy Act came out of 1832 made this commodity connection even more clear, allowing body snatchers and gravediggers to target the bodies of the working poor and anyone “othered” by their class or racialized position, whose family could not afford to hire a watchman for their grave within the first week they were buried, or who were in unmarked graves\textsuperscript{12}. The Anatomy Act only became more controversial as “vivisection” (dissection) became more common practice with the dead, especially since the origin of bodies used for medical study, generally in a public theatre, often were not traceable and were thought to be gotten from graverobbing (Cobb, “Use and Abuse”). Doctors and medical students cut up and dissected bodies that had been “donated,” which often meant stolen from a mass or individual gravesites (L, R.). Since teeth were such a space of concern for English colonial subjects, imperial Britons desired whiter teeth, which could make either grave robbers or surgeons some money if sold to a dentist. These social and legal changes highlighted that poor bodies were not only expendable to the medical field and parts such as teeth useful for the upper classes, but that even after death that their bodies were not respected; instead, they were excisable.

**DENTISTRY AND ITS POPULARITY**

Dentistry and dental surgery becoming increasingly prevalent alongside these developments in the commodification of body parts during the Victorian period (mostly for

\textsuperscript{12} I learned about this from Alice “the friendly storyteller,” in Edinburgh a registered tour guide who I met during lockdowns in 2021 and who spoke about the problems of grave robbing in both Scotland and England during this period.
upper classes). If one was unhappy with any part of their body, they could now buy a commodity to address it. However, teeth are a commodity we can understand as representative of the violence of colonial capitalism, both because of how the commodity teeth and tooth whitening powders are advertised, but especially because teeth could be taken from one person’s body and put into another person’s mouth, whether through teeth transplantation\textsuperscript{13} or dentures. The logics of ownership behind what Aileen Moreton-Robinson calls “white possession,” or the relationship to property and accumulation under settler colonialism can also be used to understand part of the logics of consumerism and demand for the teeth of other people, and what their ownership meant for wealthy Britons. Their newer and more white teeth often came from “secret” or ancient Oriental recipes in the earlier Victorian period but became more violent as they increasingly felt ownership over other people’s lands, resources, and bodies. Teeth were frequently invoked, then, as a reminder of colonial resources, whether that be cultural or material resources. For example, teeth were compared to pearls frequently in the late eighteenth century. Just as pearls were imported to Britain from East Asia, specifically Ceylon between 1770-1850, teeth were also imported as a material commodity from Africa and the Americas, alongside methods of caring for the teeth. Lands under resource mining from British imperialism were romanticized just like the white teeth of the people who those lands supported, especially in Africa and the Americas. Because of the clear pattern of association with both land-resources and land itself in the nineteenth-century colonial capital marketplace, I posit that Britain’s’ desire for teeth representing sexual purity transformed during contact with the land resources and bodies of colonial places into a desire for the actual teeth of other people, the lands of other people, and

\textsuperscript{13} Chapter 1 goes into more detail about the violence of live tooth transplants, practiced for many years by John Hunter and his proponents.
then later into a desire to be forgiven for the violence of colonialism and made “pure” again by adopting the diets and habits that made other peoples’ teeth whiter in the first place.

The desire to change one’s teeth for cultural capital became accessible and an increasingly common practice for wealthy Britons between 1780-1860. The acceptance of bodily sacrifice of working-class and racialized people also becomes increasingly normalized. This acceptance included the popularity of purchasing teeth from the dead stolen through grave robbing, and the teeth of those killed in battle, such as “Waterloo teeth” taken from the gravesites of dead soldiers from the Battle of Waterloo. This market for human teeth developed alongside the desire for tooth powders, whiteners and porcelain-white teeth.

Readers of the periodicals from various compositors may often see advertisements during the Victorian period for getting “pearly dents” or by using “Pearl Dentifrice” whitening powder, or ads that with descriptors such as “solely prepared from oriental Herbs” or “Caja Puja Tooth Powder” which was supposedly “personally received from the Rajah” and then brought to England by the advertiser.

Additionally, the cost of artificial teeth was lower than the cost of “Natural” teeth, which would have come from other people. This chart below, from the Examiner in 1837:

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14 See Spooner, Shearjashub, 1809-1859. Guide to Sound Teeth, Or A Popular Treatise On the Teeth: Illustrating the Whole Judicious Management of These Organs from Infancy to Old Age. 2nd ed. New York: Collins, Keese, & Co., 1838. ; Parker and Beck The anatomy, physiology and pathology of the human teeth : with the most approved methods of treatment including operations, and the method of making and setting artificial teeth, 1854.

15 Advertisement. (1861). The London Review and Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature, Art, and Society, July 7, 1860-June 29, 1861, 3(53), 22-24. The authors of the ad state that “White and sound teeth are indispensable to personal attraction, and to health and longevity by the proper mastication of food, ROWLAND’S ODONTO or Pearl Dentifrice, preserves and imparts a pearl-like whiteness to the Teeth […] Ask for Rowland’s Odonto.”

16 Advertisement. "Examiner," no. 1553, 1837, pp. 719. Advertisement for Pearl Dentifrice tooth powder "Oriental Herbs of the most Delicious Odour and Sweetness, and free from any mineral or pernicious ingredient” (719).

17 Advertisement. (1840). The Musical World, 13(200), 46. One such advertisement for Caja Puja Tooth Powder reads "the recipe of this unrivalled preparation was personally received from the Rajah (Atkinson) at Calcutta, in the Year 1814, by the Advertiser; and has since then been prepared extensively amongst a large Circle of Friends, whose Recommendations of this singularity effective Dentifrice have occasioned for it a Public Demand […] so unrivalled has been the unexampled Demand for this now fashionable TOOTH POWDER, that Fifty–four highly respectable Persons have given their Written Testimonials to its Excellence” (46). Casing and emphasis original to the text.

shows that a complete set of artificial teeth cost 5 pounds, while a full set of natural teeth on a gold plate cost 15 pounds, much out of reach for most working-class people. This created a division between those who could purchase improvement in their perceived outward character, and those who could not afford to change their appearance, or worse yet, those who needed money so desperately that they might sell their own teeth to afford to continue living in a society which was beginning to value consumerism more than life.

In the early nineteenth century, some texts in the study of dentistry still claimed that English teeth were far superior to any teeth because of the climate. Losing teeth was advertised as making you less valuable and less physically attractive. For example, in 1825 a
book review of *Practical Directions for Preserving the Teeth, with an Account of the most Modern and Approved methods of Supplying their loss; and a notice of an improved artificial palate, invented by the author, by Andrew Clark, Dentist* was circulating. This review states that the text has a portrait of Gall and Spurzheim\textsuperscript{19}, the founders of phrenology in Europe, and the importance of seeing a dentist is emphasized by the review’s author\textsuperscript{20}. He states that "if the teeth are gone, the whole expression of the countenance is changed—it seems a ruin—the wreck, the mockery and caricature of its former self"\textsuperscript{emphasis} his (290). The author of the review creates a very detailed picture of this caricature, stating that “your cheeks are shrunk and shiveled like a broiled apple- how your lips are drawn together, like a stringed purse without a clasp- how your narrow, soft, and pointless jaws press against each other, like those of a gudgeon or other leather-mouthed fish; in short, how the depth, the symmetry, and the expression of your countenance are destroyed“ (290). These depictions of the need for a dentist really go into the insecurities created by the increase in advertisement and circulation of dental services as one’s teeth began to fall out due to consumption or age. In this book review and advertisements for teeth whitening, dentures, etc., that litter the Victorian newspapers, not only is ones’ own purity at stake within the decision to purchase someone else’ teeth, but the visible markers of character that others are using to interpret the nineteenth-century Britons results in a heavily distorted expression without them. The ability of British subjects to show their own affect becomes threatened by the lack in their teeth (if they do not hurry up and purchase replacements) and could make them a social mockery, a commodity themselves (purse) or an animal (fish).

\textsuperscript{19} the relationship between phrenology and dentistry is explored further in chapter 1.

The implications of this implied lack of affective ability are alarming – they are told that they need both dentistry and false teeth to express their feelings outwardly, to be read socially. It is not a surprise, then that despite the contradictions such a choice would contain, the moral and physical purity indicated by pure white “noble savage” teeth becomes increasingly fetishized throughout the nineteenth century. Despite Britons’ own lack of affective ability, the so-called-savage was portrayed as inhuman, as unfeeling. However, as the idea of the “noble savage” developed, so did the perceived ability for their teeth and other bodily practices to assist the English in achieving their own social mobility, health, expression and increased status of their perceived character and moral integrity. This creates increasing cognitive dissonance and frustration from Britons towards the twentieth century, with many social commentators and people in North America beginning to use the metonymy of teeth-as-purity as an avenue for strong critiques of Britain’s moral corruption, ‘in the teeth of’ its claims as it attempted to colonize places around the globe for its own material gain. Because teeth were already associated with morality and character, these arguments held some ethos.

After the 1860’s, we see far more public and medical calls to adopt practices of so-called “savage” nations for oral health because of the “whiteness” of the teeth of African and Native North Americans. Additionally, because of the existing discourses of use and waste in terms of lands, “faculties” and “talents” within phrenology, craniology, and agricultural management, the logics transferred to people’s white and desirable teeth. “But they weren’t even using it properly” becomes the eerie conclusion of these premises, connecting both lands and teeth under a narrative of resource extraction (extracting minerals such as iron,
gold, and silver, and extracting the teeth of people who are dehumanized through these premises).

Additionally, because teeth represent our humanity and our affective potential longer than any other part of us, what is more a way to dehumanize and show ownership of lands and the bodies inhabiting those lands than to own their teeth? One way this colonial logic was counteracted in Britain by “savage” people on the ground was to talk about their own teeth. People who were targeted under the colonial politics of attempts to control oral space to unsettle the framework of British national character and expose the affective realities of both shared humanity and British moral degradation through colonialism, class, race and gender politics. The insidious ways that representations of teeth were used to racialize those living and imagined “savages,” and the creative ways in which people whose teeth were marked as savage worked against those portrayals via that same affective orality should be of interest to Victorian Studies as it shows us part of a very prominent but often unconscious discourse that impacted and continues to change the material conditions of women, Indigenous people, pagans, travelers, and commodity fetishism of land relations today. While discussing a few individual historical authors in my chapters, I also assert that all these moments and refrains of emotion and conscious or unconscious interaction between them are reflective of larger transmissions. I understand that although certain people are named in my dissertation, many of their voices represent broader undercurrents in their culture or society. Whether they are reflective of cultural messaging, power structures, and economic materiality underpinning their actions, their words, and their logics can be reflective of a broader superstructure and “a mass culture” as Poovey terms it. By examining what was circulating in the Imperial culture, it is possible both to understand those who subscribed and
those who responded against that messaging. I present the historical context of colonial actors not as an explanation or apology for their atrocities, but in hopes that pinpointing some of these past refrains will help make clear the unconscious and often subtle ways that white supremacist and inherently violent colonialism still permeates Western Imperial social discourse.

Teeth operate as both a contested imagined zone and a commodity, as affectively potent in the discourse of the savage and protestant religious hegemony within a paradigm of attempted power grabs, and as a metonymy of racial, sexual, and land purity, which is present far beyond literature itself, affecting all cultural production (including novels, poetry, narrative, but also medicine and politics). While Sweet’s article mentions affect and delves into how two male authors may have experienced dental pain and apprehension over their false teeth, I argue that affect is a necessary and meaningful way to approach expression of orality in general but also commodification of the body, since that in itself was something that was not only developed under capitalism but the breaking up of body parts and lands into what could be used and what was, as one phrenology pamphlet from Robert Cox puts it, “wasted natural talent” which could be “better” used by imperial actors of the British national persuasion, was felt as affective and as emotionally painful both by those targeted under colonialism and racial capitalism but also by Britons themselves.

Affect theory can offer us a lens from which to understand how these ripples, as Stephen Ahern terms them, levels of chromatism as per Fredric Jameson, or “refrains” as Deleuze terms them of powerful feeling clearly so present in narratives discussing culture (44). It is problematic to assume that we can understand the past fully, as Raymond Williams points out. We view our own time as fluid, while we tend to over-simplify the past, flatten
the feelings, and include certain facts only as a way of saying “this is how things were then,” collapsing complexity (Marxism and Literature 110). According to Guiles Deleuze, we need to be able to experience something in our body to convey the affect behind it. He states that “sometimes it is necessary to lie down on the earth, like the painter does also, in order to get [...] to the percept,” which is something beyond “lived perception.” Gail Houston’s argument for performance of literary texts in the classroom is one way to get closer to the Deleuzean mode of understanding affects and percepts, of what lies within and beyond or “under” our understanding as we interact with modes of artistic expression (194). It is important to feel the affect rippling through texts, especially because of the fallacy to view history as flat or fixed, and especially because history tends to repeat itself. For assistance in understanding these affects, my research has taken two paths; through secondary research into the history and cultural analysis of the long nineteenth century, combined with a deep dive into medical, dental and phrenological archives.

While it has been difficult to find information about some of the specific figures, I have been most intrigued about getting to know better within these archives, such as the subjects of my Chapter 2 and 6, this dissertation is committed to recovering affects that may be more difficult to find. This has culminated in 5 years of archival research on teeth, the discourse of the savage, Indigeneity, travel, land enclosure, agriculture, phrenology, social medicine, Darwinism, and sexuality. Largely, this dissertation has stemmed from my own inexplicable instincts surrounding this topic and attempts to uncover the reasons for my own emotional interactions with these texts and determining which affects and precepts are my own vs the ones already present in the text which may be causing these emotional refrains and responses from a contemporary reader. I have read all notes and meeting minutes of the
Phrenological Society of Edinburgh, the foremost influential phrenological society in the UK and the Americas in the nineteenth century but have also read newspapers and narrative for an understanding of the pattern of how teeth were objectified. In addition to phrenology, I have studied the history of Dentistry in Europe and Britain to get a better understanding of the material realities of teeth and their care in the epicenter of the Empire. One of the largest contributions in this dissertation, however, will be the bringing forth of the material consequences for both Native American and the Irish working poor who were both affected by these unconscious and conscious affects surrounding teeth as a symbol of purity and “the savage,” and additionally bringing forth evidence of how they responded to these affects at the time. Documented affect and reaction to this discourse from quoted Native spokespersons such as Washkamonya (Paxocan) who traveled with George Catlin to London and Irish peasant patients who were undergoing surgery were clear and interacted with in the time but have since been de-emphasized. It was my major goal to bring these perspectives and affects forward and to try to give voice to the reactions to what was instinctively felt as violent and reacted against by subjects who were targeted by this discourse of commodification of character the most. I have chosen to focus on this aspect of the texts that I have found in addition to outlining the historical and cultural context of teeth as a symbol, because that symbology and metonymy cannot just be understood as a literary device. It was a materially consequential ideology and had violent consequences within British settler colonialism and its structures. We can use the existence of these archives to question how these affects continue into our politics and white supremacist structures of racialized interaction in the inherited conscious and unconscious affects we deal with today.

DEFINING TERMS
1. **AFFECT and AFFECTIVE ORALITY**

Affective Orality represents the reality of political and affective tension that the “oral space” operates within, including teeth. Sarah Ahmed’s cultural politics of emotion asserts that emotions are not individual but that they are social. She states that “theory of emotion as a social form rather than the individual” is established- we react to and interact with others’ emotions. As Ahmed puts it while summarizing Durkheim, “feeling in itself comes from without (37).” Therefore, we cannot conceptualize affect itself or affective orality without understanding that affect requires an interaction. Affect connects everyone, even according to Darwin. It is the uncontrollable emotional expression of human countenance that according to his essay “The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animal,” transcends race, nation, and at times even species. People *feel* and may express those feelings spontaneously and outwardly.

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21 This is a term and operant for analysis that I have created. Additional considerations to keep in mind relating to affect and affective orality include:

1. The advertised self-congratulatory notion of perfect self-restraint narrated as possible for “civilized English” only, contrasted against the “unfeeling” or “volatile emotionality” of the person who is categorized as the opposing comparison of enlightenment “reason,” aka “the savage,” is completely unraveled in one moment of affective orality.
2. Through literary descriptions of affective orality, or the moment of affective transit that occurs through a moment of recognition of emotion, characters produce an uncanny “without is within” phenomenon where there is an undeniable, spontaneous, and immediate recognition of shared life.
3. Teeth become a “sublime” object of terror and desire in moments of transit within textual descriptions of affective orality as a phenomenon because teeth are seen as the purest but also the most dangerous representation of this emotional expression. Dangerous not only in their ability to bite and to cut, but in their ability to produce desire as both an object of longing and commodity fetishism, and as a site of sexuality and projected sexual values.
4. Characters objectified through their teeth, orality, and body parts more generally reverse this objectification, or “thingification” as I have termed it previously, through talking about their own teeth, through reclaiming the supposed object as a part of themselves, as personal, as subject. Therefore, this is a way to subvert the objectification.
5. In multiple texts such as dental texts, travel narratives, and novels, characters whose bodies and whose teeth are objectified and commodified in a way that is both a site of this sublime desire and dehumanization speak back in this way through descriptions of their own teeth. For example, a “negro” man talks about his molars excitedly in a dental text in the 1760’s. Fanny Hill, of a Memoir of a Woman of Pleasure talks about how white and even her teeth are in the first 10 pages of the novel, to show that she has not been sexually corrupted by her profession.
6. The thought of racialized or sexualized “objects” talking about their own objectified teeth as subjects creates an extreme negative response from those who wish to objectify them.
7. The Romantic era’s descriptions of nature’s pure, sublime, and untouched nature have a similar pattern of perverse patriarchal desire in the works of Wordsworth, Percy Shelley, and Lord Byron which becomes part of colonial desire and logics of ownership. The connotation of the land with spiritual supranationalism gets projected onto “savage affect” and makes teeth that much more erotic and terrifying for people desiring to violate the lands “savage” people occupy through colonization.
8. On orality and oral space: while David Lloyd conceptualizes and outlines the importance of oral space for Ireland, I will also be building heavily off of his analysis of “oral space” to discuss the emotional tension within orality as it relates to the experience of British colonization and the violence of the famine within Ireland. In this project, I specifically expand his points to include Native, Irish working classes, and gender dynamics of targeted oral space in people sexualized within colonial capitalism.
and are therefore unquestionably human. He purported that showing teeth when angry illustrates that we are all as humans connected to animals and that we have the same base instincts (365). On the first page of his introduction, he argues that the teeth specifically are evidence of our animalistic tendencies. He states that “some expressions, such as the bristling of the hair under the influence of extreme terror, or the uncovering of the teeth under that of furious rage, can hardly be understood, except on the belief that man once existed in a much lower and animal-like condition” (365). He says that baring teeth in anger and blushing from embarrassment are universal affective expressions of uncontrollable emotion that all humans express in common.

The colonizer may fear this moment of recognition for a few reasons. For one thing, seeing subjugated people as subhuman or as “the problem” is what allows them to alienate themselves from their violence towards these people, since they are justifying it by their very position as supposedly subhuman or as animalistic. However, expression of emotion (and the teeth that show with this unplanned and unpredictable expression of emotion) also represents multiple other aspects that may have the power to overturn hierarchy. One of these aspects is anger and aggression, another sexuality and passion, another is a scream or yell, which can result in humans showing a set of full teeth. Another aspect is the opportunity to create an emotional reaction and its subsequent unpredictable consequences in other subjugated people who are exposed to this expression. In the moment of affective orality in the context of colonization, colonial people, who are seen as sublime objects by the colonizer, not only assert subjectivity, undermining their thingification22 and perception of themselves as

22 “Thingification” is a term that I created in 2017 to expand Bill Brown’s “thing theory” to include human beings, due to the phenomenon that objectified subjects become objectified and used as if they were “things” in the context of chattel slavery and colonial capitalism. They often re-assert their subjectivity through a changed relationship with objects. See more
commodified object, but they also affect the emotion of the colonizer in a spontaneous and uncontrolled transmission of connectedness.

Mouths, teeth, and unmediated emotional response enacted through affective orality has the potential to create a ripple effect, revolt, and social change in a fast and unpredictable way. Powerful emotion is the opposite of dejectedness, depression, or lack of affect due to apathy or so-called reason. It is its direct antithesis and works with and beyond those above listed emotional states. Emotional states are also contagious, as argued by both my therapist and Parkinson et al. (2004). Well-documented psychological phenomena like collective effervescence and mob mentality further illustrate that emotional states are shared between groups of people.

I draw from a wide range of scholars studying British imperialism from 1750-1900 in addition to contemporary scholarship on Empire and continued colonialism for assumptions upon which my rubric for studying affective orality is founded. Linda Colley portrays British nationalism in relation to religion and spiritual rhetoric in her text *Britons, Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, which I utilize to understand how Protestantism and masculine warmongering were fused as violent ideology for nation-building, while Saree Makdisi’s *Romantic Imperialism, Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* links Britain’s forced union with Scotland and Ireland to Britain with broader historical and literary imperial moves. Both scholars stay primarily focused on England, Scotland, and Ireland. Eric

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Hobsbawm’s *The Age of Capital* analyzing industrial capital and colonial expansion to highlight the subjugation of the peasantry as he outlines the Empire’s relationship with multiple colonial nations in relation to resource theft and trade. He focuses more on the external colonies as opposed to class issues in England and Ireland. In “Imagining Sara Baartman.” Yvette Abramson outlines how the binary between white and black bodies, notions of the pure and impure derived, in large part, from the mass circulation of images of Sara Baartman in 1808, after a scandalous “exhibition” portrayed her as both naked and as aggressively sexual. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* by Anne McClintock also discusses the nineteenth-century gender binaries and how they were inherent to the industrial-colonialism that occurred during this time. Stephanie Pratt’s *American Indians in British Art 1700-1840* portrays a large variety of classes and relationships between Indigenous travelers and diplomats during this time frame, while *New Contexts: Re-Framing Nineteenth-Century Irish Women’s Prose* outlines how broader literary movements in Ireland, and the political contexts that the primarily Anglo-Irish authors were writing from benefitted them through English-language use and cultural benefits “as members of the Anglo-Irish collective” (*New Contexts* 6-10). It is my intention to learn from these studies, but to focus on both Great Britain and Ireland, and yet to also look at nations in North America and in Africa. I believe that these spaces and nations all share a specific place in the British colonial imaginary that was developed and then exported and more broadly applied. Priya Yoshi and Pablo Mukherjee, who argue that British national and racial identity did not exist without the comparative representations and interactions with other peoples’ bodies and spiritual and land practices. Coll Thrush and Kate Flint outline a historically specific groundwork for understanding the influence of Native leaders
specifically, who they view as diplomats, and elected representatives as outlined in Thrush’s *Indigenous London, Native Travelers to the Heart of Empire* and Flint’s *The Transatlantic Indian 1176-1930*. These texts aid in my transnational approach since tribes had a complex relationship with imperialism and trade markets and acted as sovereign and equal nations by sending representatives to England to participate in diplomatic relations. These many visits are well-documented in Thrush, Flint, and Pratt’s work. Additionally, as I have found in Winona Stephenson’s historical work on George Catlin’s Indian show add more to nuance understanding this idea of “diplomacy.” Instead of attempting to force their visit into the notion of diplomacy, it seems as though we should look to Stephens and more scholarship like it for a deeper understanding of the purpose of and experiences on their visit.

On creating the analytic of affective orality specifically, I utilize British and Irish scholars who have studied British colonization in Ireland to better understand the patterns of how “the savage” appears as a pattern when comparing Irish subjects with African or North American native subjects in relation to affective orality. For example, both David Lloyd’s *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity* shows how the British and Luke Gibbon’s *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics and the Colonial Sublime* portray how anxiety regarding female sexual development and Irish reproduction often revolved around orality (Lloyd) and how this discourse of sexualized Irish peasants contributed to further colonization in Ireland. Gibbons complicates current understandings of Burke’s notion of “the sublime” and his fixation on injured colonial bodies. Gibbons’ other text *Gaelic Gothic* is very influential to understanding how the British state dehumanized and racialized Irish bodies through their alignment with Indigenous Americans and depictions of “the savage.” The discourse of “the savage” not only posits English “civilization” as morally superior to
other people, but it makes “savage” lands and bodies part of a supposedly necessary modern progress narrative. Affective orality complicates this discourse of the savage, because in fixating so much on dehumanizing and othering “savages,” the portrayal of orality and emotion as an unruly, frustrating, and frightening sight for colonial England illustrates that unregulated emotion is both what frightens the colonizing project and what successfully undermines the narrative of “the savage.”

It is my hope that affective orality allows scholars to address moments of embodied affective expression that transmit through orality, especially in tense situation where there are responses to power and political dynamics. Affect is often described through broader cues of embodiment, relationship to land, and relationship to the animal in Victorian texts, but it is just as often implied, which means that we as scholars need to read between the lines. Because certain people are described in metaphorically dismembered ways, as hands, tattoos, feet, and dress were viewed as literally dissectible; thus, “othered” peoples became targets of violence against their bodies and their land-bodies (Crais and Scully). This objectification allowed “the other” to be separated or severed from the Victorian national consciousness, body politic, between genders, bodies of literature, etc. (Mclintock). However, since this separation is artificial, the affective refrains still linger. If affect is defined by what William Wordsworth famously termed “spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling,” then this lack of control is what makes us unique.

This human emotional trait directly challenges the dualism of Enlightenment reasoning’s separation between the land/body and the spirit as well as the presumed separation between the body and emotion. It also mocks the nineteenth-century English attempt to control emotions and define the parameters of emotionality in others.
The insidiousness and the material violence resulting from this desire is something that David Lloyd begins to address with his work on Orality and Modernity. Lloyd states:

This resistant to the rationalization of space, both in relation to the disposition of properly bounded and stable unions of land-holding and in relation to the differentiation of spheres according to their proper activities, correlated to what was perhaps the most scandalous aspect of Irish ‘character’: its apparent emotional instability [...] a practice of emotional performance that does not obey the ever more rigorously demarcated compartmentalization of affective display that characterizes nineteenth-century English emotional comportment. Irish emotional oscillations, manifest in their political agitations as in their more intimate sorrows or pleasures and indifferent to the decorum of public or private space, corresponded to a diffuseness of boundaries that was an offense both to propriety and to the emerging norms of a well-regulated civil society. The labile mouth, conduit of drink and speech, mourning and mockery, blarney and wailing, food and laughter, was the constant metonym for the peculiarly physical performance of Irish emotion and its intimate intersection with consumption and expression. (6-7).

The Victorian spheres referenced in the above pages from Lloyd are also imposed on land and ownership rights, intricately implied as interwoven. Throughout the introduction to *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity*, Lloyd asserts that oral space is what he earlier terms “the material and social space that sustains a culture that has been understood predominantly as oral, in difference from modern, literate culture; on the ways orality in culture imagines and uses space,” which for colonial interpretation, as Lloyd indirectly indicates but does not overtly state, is inextricably tied to land (6). I do not disagree with Lloyd and as someone from Ireland who lives with the repercussion of these colonial oral affects, he deeply explicates and feels how the haunting of the past projects onto the present. However, I would additionally argue that the drive to control Irish orality 1) extends to many other subjects within the British Empire, 2) that not only do British impulses to control Irish oral space
demand categorization and conformity, but they demand material sacrifice for working class and gendered Irish people (and Native, and English and Scottish people), 3) that teeth are the primary resource extracted from that oral space as referents to land and land-resources, not just an afterthought.

**SETTLER COLONIALISM**

Patrick Wolfe outlines how bodies are racialized and marked (for removal, for death) in settler colonial “logic of extermination” and creates new types of subjects to work to understand how colonial powers see people whose land they desire for their regulation and resource extraction. According to Sarah Hernandez, Wolfe’s analysis misses the solution for ways of redressing the violence of past and present colonialism (2). Most contemporary scholars who I follow rely on Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang’s discussion of settler colonialism and steps for repatriation of land and decolonization past the “metaphor” that academic discourse can relegate the ongoing material and ideological fight against settler colonialism as a “structure not an event” (Wolfe). Because settler colonialism is ongoing, we need to continue to address it as such. Not only the problems and how those problems came to be, but also solutions coming out of Indigenous communities who have been fighting this attempted erasure since at least 1500.

**COMMODITY FETISH**

My use of the term Commodity Fetish comes from Marx, Engels, Communist Theories, and the intellectual tradition of historical materialism by scholars such as Walter Benjamin. Marx states that commodities are objects outside of us with some “magical qualities” that are determined by the market value surrounding the object.
DISPOSITION

When I was in the archives in Edinburgh Scotland, especially the phrenological society notes and meeting minutes, the Scotland’s Peoples’ Office records from personal Dukes (who shall not be named for liability reasons) and other members of the Highland Agricultural Society and sometimes additional British agricultural societies, the term “disposition” was used both to address the character of a person and their general behavior and mood, but also was used as a term meaning “to take the character of land.” The fact that the term disposition held overlapping definitions both and was used as a verb both for mapping skulls and their subsequent human traits in phrenology vs dispositioning useful vs wastelands in the Scottish Highland Agricultural Society letters led me to interrogate the similarities between these two types of societies and possible overlap of their membership.

25 Agricultural societies in Scotland, England, and nations where British settler colonial forces attempted to cut apart and classify the character of land were strangely connected to the Phrenological society of Edinburgh through some key figures such as Sir George Stuart Mackenzie, the first patron and aristocratic backer of the establishment of the Phrenological society to determine “waste” lands vs lands with “use value” through a few key players who heavily influenced settler colonialism in Ireland and in Canada and the US settlements. Simultaneously, phrenologists mapped out the skulls and bumps of the terrain of the head that they felt would give insight to human dispositions. Many of the initial settler colonizers and early colonial mappers of Irish, US, and Canadian territories were Scottish, not English. As Cedric Robinson has pointed out, “the development of the capitalist world system depended on labor its metropolis could not produce.” (118). The people benefitting from this “development” were largely from Scotland and England, and those who had a vested interest in land-resources either because of their own enclosed land and consequences of capitalism on their environment and culture, or because of their attempt to maintain aristocratic standing through colonial investments and assertion of expertise in land management. The Scottish Highland and Agricultural Society was important to the practice of mapping use and waste value of lands and separating out “useful” or commodifiable and extractable resource-rich lands from “wasted” lands in a similar way and with similar practice that Phrenologists mapped the topography of the “faculties” which were “wasted” and “useful” in the skulls, casts, and living heads of people whose brains and characters they studied. However, not only did these two practices mirror one another during the 1820’s onward in Scotland and settler colonial territories, but proponents of mapping and agricultural practices which determined use or waste value such as Lord Selkirk, Lord George Stuart Mackenzie, Sir Robert Clerk of Penicuik, and Duke Buccleuch were largely invested in dispositioning lands with the Scottish Highland and Agricultural Society, but Mackenzie at least was also funding human dispositioning. Although efforts were made in the early days of phrenology to procure skulls of women, African and American Native people, children, “idiots” (Image 11) and criminals, most of the available skulls and casts that conclusions were drawn from were from Scotland, Ireland, and were of European men or as George Combe, the founder of Edinburgh’s Phrenology Society termed “our countrymen” or animal skulls found while walking. There was a bit more earnestness at the beginning in trying to “determine natural character,” but as the own men’s morality and character for studying skulls were attacked by a broader public more critical of phrenology, any early attempts to avoid bias quickly passed into nationalist and religious statements from colonial assumptions and the increasing need to please the men (and some women) in the room who were wealthy enough to make donations for the purchase of more skulls and casts, and for rent of a space to examine said skulls.
USE AND WASTE VALUE

According to Marx, “the utility of a thing makes it a use-value. But this utility is not a thing of air. Being limited by the physical properties of the commodity, it has no existence apart from that commodity. A commodity, such as iron, corn, or a diamond, is therefore, so far as it is a material thing, a use-value, something useful. This property of a commodity is independent of the amount of labour required to appropriate its useful qualities. […] Use-values become a reality only by use or consumption: they also constitute the substance of all wealth, whatever may be the social form of that wealth (46). Use value, in other words, is and casts. In this social context, you can imagine that most of the people in the room were not going to lay the lower moral and intellectual skull markings onto their peers, although they didn’t shy away from saying one or two people had certain concerning qualities. Additionally, to categorize skulls and hence dispositions as “national” in the first place already limited the comparisons about character traits to those that could be understood through this national lens. To fully examine and compare “national skulls” in this “comparative anatomy” would have undermined one of the stated tenants of the Edinburgh phrenology society, which was according to early notes clearly determine national moral character through the examination of skulls of all nations by quote “procuring a sufficient number of skulls of different nations, chosen indiscriminately and as nearly as possible corresponding to the average degree of development of brain which each respective nation possesses, an order by comparing them to throw a mutual light upon tenets of Phrenology and the Study of National Character.” Almost 30 years earlier, Samuel Johnson’s infamous trip through the Scottish Highlands had illustrated the way these same national claims about the use value of Scottish customs and agricultural anomalies and a comparative anatomy of sorts between English and Scottish Highland society.

Samuel Johnson, arguably one of the most persuasive voices in the eighteenth century, famously traveled to Scotland in the 1770’s. By that point, the highlands were almost disappointingly civilized, though he still judged the customs and history of this place in relation to its agricultural value and determined it nonsensical, wild and quote “savage” in a way that does not romanticize what once was or lament the “disappearing” of their customs. He says “we came thither too late to see what we expected, a people of peculiar appearance, and a system of antiquated life. The clans retain little now of their original character, their ferocity of temper is softened, their military ardour is extinguished, their dignity of independence is depressed, their contempt of government subdued, and their reverence for their chiefs abated. Of what they had before the late conquest of their country, there remain only their language and their poverty. Such is the effect of the late regulations, that a longer journey than to the Highlands must be taken by him whose curiosity pants for savage virtues and barbarous grandeur” (46). Johnson remains consistent throughout the first parts of his journal that commerce and capitalism in general, lawfulness and coming under British rule has been a positive change for the dispositions and customs of the formerly barefoot “savage,” although he later tempers this assertion through the realization that the chiefs have become quote “rapacious landlords” in upper regions such as Skye. Johnson seems confident that they are the beneficiary of good deeds from England regarding “improvements” that are for their own well-being, comparing them to children who “feel the uneasiness of discipline, without yet perceiving the benefit of instruction” (73). Through his descriptions of “wasted talents” and potential for further agricultural and bodily “improvements,” Johnson presents an argument for colonialism to continue with the assumed consent of Scottish Highlanders, and the ability for former “savages” to turn into docile citizens “with the peaceable submission of a French peasant or English cottager,” even if so many are leaving at a large rate since “for of animal enjoyments, or of physical good, he leaves nothing that he may not find again wheresoever he may be thrown” (73, 81). Johnson is especially concerned with race and nation, with supposed “civilizing” and its effects in Inverness, Scotland. The way he discusses Kale in particular focuses not only on how Scottish highlanders use the land, but also their diets. He states. “Yet what the Romans did to other nations, was in a great degree done by Cromwell to the Scots; he civilized them by conquest and introduced by useful violence the arts of peace [emphasis mine]. I was told at Aberdeen that the people learned from Cromwell’s soldiers to make shoes and to plant kail. How they lived without kail, it is not easy to guess: They hardly cultivate any other plant for common tables, and when they had not kail they probably had nothing. The numbers that go barefoot are still sufficient to show that shoes may be spared. They are not yet considered as necessaries of life; for tall boys, not otherwise meanly dressed, run without them in the streets and in the islands; the sons of gentlemen pass several of their first years with naked feet” (21). This diet of kail is additionally poked fun at in a variety of British periodicals. One, from Harvest and Home (1821) outlines a sketch of Scottish character by assigning “chieftain worth a chieftain place” and calls them “pudding heads” before describing through poem a dance and feast with people “to virtue leers—/ religion strip of half her sacred crown/ and make the only fools, fools indeed,” comparing them with animal heads such as a sheep, whose “white teeth gleam” on the table (320). In this poem, the bravery of Scottish people in Waterloo is celebrated, and yet their diet, consisting primarily of potatoes, kail, and “as if at random tossed” parts of the boiled sheep meat. The scene, as well as the Scottish character, is described repeatedly as backwards and foolish. There is an additional indication that those defined by their teeth are extra deceiving[2].
determined when commodities enter the trade system and are exchanged for money in the capitalist market and their perceived “use value” at any given time reflects what is considered valuable in general. As Dr. Adriana Ramirez Arellano stated in the feminist theory class, I took with her in 2018, use value is often connected to “abuse value” in terms of how much a worker can be exploited or abused by the marketplace, by their employer, by the patriarchy to determine how they are valued in a patriarchal and capitalist society. Her statement has been part of my consciousness when using this term.

In terms of “waste value,” I argue in Chapter 1 especially that lands and human traits described by the term “waste” add value to the supposed “use value” that is being marketed for other places, people, and objects. There is a whole field dedicated to studying the discourse of waste (as I was informed by someone in Ireland), but I have yet to be introduced to “waste studies,” so this is my current operational definition.

**IMPERIALISM**

I argue that it is important, ultimately, to connect my historical analysis to twenty-first century imperialism in the US and the western “first world” places more generally and the ongoing biopolitical injustices created, in part through extractive capitalism. Thus, I am influenced by Jodi Byrd’s *The Transit of Empire*, Glen Coulthard’s *Red Skin White Masks*, Audra Simpson’s *Mohawk Interruptus*, Aileen Moreton Robertson’s *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty*, and Amy Brandzel’s *Against Citizenship: The Violence of the Normative*, which discusses the “whiteness” of citizenship. I also pay attention to this notion of citizenship is the text *Inventing the Savage*, by Luana Ross, which outlines the contemporary practice of positing Native people as “deviant” and as non-compliant with the state, in other words portraying them as criminals. Joanne Barker’s
Critically Sovereign develops the relationship between queerness and Native sovereignty. These works help me connect my nineteenth-century analysis back to contemporary biopolitical injustices and illustrate how the discourse of “the savage” is still used today, both to perpetuate and resist racialization and dehumanization of lands and people considered a threat to capital expansion. As Patrick Brantlinger has argued, “extinction discourse” embedded in the discursive formation of the disappearing ‘savage’ “is a specific branch of the dual ideologies of imperialism and racism […] Like Orientalism and other versions of racism, it does not respect the boundaries of disciplines” (*Dark Vanishings* 1) Saree Makdisi uses the term “internal colonial others” and populations within England that were viewed as external as “not us” including through the poetry of John Clare and the description of working class non-Britain's as “Arab” even though not Arab (Landscape Research Group). This is something I focus on in my discussion of gendered English and Scottish working women and Irish working classes.

**INDIGENOUS, INDIGENEITY**

In this dissertation, the term Indigenous is capitalized because it is being discussed as a political and theoretical marker and is invoking Indigeneity more in relation to Nation than an essential view of “Native-ness.” When I worked with Jennifer Denetdale to study and test on theories of Indigeneity and Indigenous epistemologies within the Native Studies subdiscipline called Critical Indigenous Studies (CIS), I noticed that most authors capitalized the word Indigenous. When I asked Dr. Denetdale about this pattern, she said it is a marker not only of someone who is or is not labeled as indigenous, but as someone who shares the political category analyzed within CIS. The political position of Indigenous communities is acknowledged while simultaneously interrogating state recognition factors such as blood
quantum, culture, and reductive and romanticized views of what it means to be Native. CIS’s multi-disciplinary theorization and critique of settler colonialism, patriarchy, “settler sexuality”/gender binary, colonial neoliberalism, white feminism, and of industrial capitalism’s cumulative effects on lands, people, and cultures who have been targeted within a US, Canadian, New Zealand, Hawaiian, and Australian context by settler colonial racism, extractivism, and legal limitations enforced by the state is extremely useful to anyone who wants to talk about Indigenous people and Indigeneity. This field draws from the Native Studies tradition that was established in the 1970’s in universities around the US, and uses Indigenous epistemologies/knowledges, or what one scholar terms “Indigenous Critical Thinking” to produce an oftentimes theoretical approach based in kinship, land, sovereignty, blood, nation, colonialism and tradition, de-emphasizing culture and embracing the diversity of Indigenous experiences in modernity (Native Studies Key Words). Additionally, CIS centers Indigenous scholarship and voices in conversation with theories like Critical Race Theory, Feminist Theory, Marxism, Queer Theory, and “Post-” Colonial Theory and what those theories have failed to understand about living Indigenous communities within imperial nations. What Aileen Moreton-Robinson terms in her introduction to Critical Indigenous Studies “Indigenous-embodied knowledges” is something that I’ve tried to pay attention to, a validation of those epistemologies is too often separate from western academic knowledge and epistemologies, there is also a move away from “authenticity” or “essentialisms” in the CIS lineage, and a problematizing of Indigeneity to problematize state ways of knowing identity. Additionally, most CIS scholars have material responsibilities and kinship as part of their theoretical framework.
IRISH

When using the term “Irish,” I do not refer to people of Irish descent nor to a coherent racial or ethnic group; instead, I am influenced by theorists and contemporary historians who argue that there is no such thing as that identity category. While it is descriptive of a place and national belonging for some, it is also a contested and historically diverse category. This is why I choose to focus specifically on class, gender, and at times religion within Ireland—because those are more specific identifiers that can help us analyze some important differences in how certain people were treated in a variety of contexts.

WHITE SUPREMACY

When I use the term “white supremacy” in some parts of this dissertation, I am utilizing a cultural study understanding of the structures in place that favor “whiteness” as a political category, reify racialization, and maintain a forgetfulness of history. At various times, various groups of people have been considered “white” or not. While I am using this term, I am aware that in different time periods, whiteness and other ideological structures that uphold the state have had material consequences on people who at a given time, were not considered “white.” For example, although Italian and Irish Americans may have been discriminated against at various times within the US, they are now considered “white;” in other words, receiving unearned benefits at the expense of Black and Indigenous people historically and in contemporary ongoing capitalism and neocolonialism. Because this is a shifting structure, my use of this term is not to set it in stone or to reify race as a construct; instead, my working definition of whiteness is “anything that doesn’t threaten the state” based on years of organizing work. The structure of white supremacy operates within what Althusser would term “ideological state apparatus” and should not be reduced to what
Foucault terms “a Hegelian skeleton” that does not consider materialism and material consequence of ideology.\textsuperscript{26}

**TEETH AS**

Teeth are not only crystallized symbols of Lloyd’s metonymy of the labile mouth, including the implied relationship between land, culture, society, and food ways, but they are an actual commodity to be stolen from colonial bodies in imperial logic just as gold, iron, uranium, or as now possible in our contemporary time, lithium and fracked shale gas. The metonym of Teeth as Purity is multilayered, but the limits of this dissertation make it so that the focus will be on teeth as a material and commodified object and teeth as a metonym of purity through five primary areas of intersecting symbolism, although there may be more used in the archival material and more are discussed in the conclusion: Teeth as Land, Teeth as Gender and Sexual Purity, Teeth as Race, Teeth as Class, and Teeth as Character. These five avenues of assessing or dispositioning “purity” of an objectified subject are limited in their scope by assumptions of binary categories such as pure vs impure, or “waste” vs “use” and “savage” vs “civilized” from these five primary areas of metonym, which may operate alone or concurrently in a text. I have chosen to focus on these categories because the patterns that I have noticed in my research over the past seven years tend to utilize one or more of these five markers to then assert a claim about the purity or impurity of the person’s character.

Additionally, although all these markers may operate simultaneously, people who interact with British discourses and their affective refrains are often shown to quickly

\textsuperscript{26} For additional information and context about my use of this term, see https://washkamonya.pym.org/annual-sessions/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/06/What_Is_White_Supremacy_Martinez.pdf which outlines the term in a similar way to my understanding. Definitions such as this one from Britannica describe how this ideological state apparatus was created historically but do not address as many contemporary consequences https://washkamonya.britannica.com/topic/white-supremacy.
perceive and understand the way this operant is being projected onto them and they often address, attack, question, or assert one or more of these symbols themselves. This is often done by invoking various descriptors of teeth as metonym of one or more of their markers to mirror back to Britons their own hypocrisy, to show them the lack in their own teeth. The response of people who are being shown themselves is generally extreme.

Although I focus primarily on the UK and North American authors who traveled to or interacted with literature and discourses from these places, I believe that these 5 categories are important and still influence our understandings of ourselves and how we feel about our own mouths and teeth today in the UK and North American contexts, in addition to the continued material practices racialized extractivism that primarily targets Indigenous communities and members of the global majority. Teeth not only represent land-commodities such as pearls, ivory, sugar and importable food resources, but they also can be used as a pathway to understand the way that people are dehumanized and objectified as commodities. Teeth are just part of the commodification of the human body that occurred during enclosure’s march to the late-stage imperial capitalism that we deal with today. There are so many other body parts which are also objectified and become fetishized as commodities in this process, in addition to what Hegel and then Marx term “alienation” from the actual commodity production that our bodies became part of. Additionally, in the contemporary time, resources are increasingly disembodied- they are on the cloud, detached from the physical, detached in theory from the land for many workers in the technology age. However, the capitalists do not see it that way. They still see land and our bodies as disposable for their purposes, as parts of a whole.
Teeth are important, both in the past and in the present, around the world. Teeth are lasting parts of human meaning and remain longer than the rest of our bones after death\textsuperscript{27}, so it’s no surprise that a culture obsessed with mapping species, borders, and operant categorization would become fixated on them. While teeth hold a variety of spiritual and cultural meanings throughout the world, this dissertation has specifically focused on Britain, Ireland, Ioway, and Dakota response to British values around teeth. The symbology of gendered, classed, and racialized intersections of teeth in general and in British national discourses specifically had a largely negative effect on commodity culture, settler colonialism, and is both a symptom and cause of the violence towards people’s physical and psychic selves under this system of resource extraction.

Furthermore, while there is a wealth of information about this topic in the archives that this dissertation only began to uncover, this topic is under-represented given popular culture interest and historical evidence to support the significance of symbolism of teeth within the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Although there is some effort to address cultural meanings of teeth in fields like Dental Anthropology\textsuperscript{28}, much of that work focuses on the genetic components of teeth as an artifact of culture or diet as opposed to the type of comprehensive study of material conditions, colonial contexts, and is generally presented without contemporary political implications. At its worst, the studies coming out of this field

\textsuperscript{27} “The teeth are the only visible part of our skeleton,” as Dr. Adriana Ramirez Arellano reminded me in a 2018 class when I was telling her about my topic. Teeth are also represent the otherworldly potentiality and spiritual recognition that totally breaks the mythology behind the person who is seen as inhuman—shows recognition of self and the uncanny and breaks through racialization as the colonizer sees their own mortality in the visible skeletal representation of both the universality of death and deadly “bite” potential, as well as the very thing that haunts them, the very truth they try to pretend doesn’t exist.

\textsuperscript{28} I have spoken with anthropologists working in Dental Anthropology and follow the Dental Anthropology groups on social media, reading the articles that come out of that field on a regular basis. Additionally, the journal of the Dental Anthropology Association (http://www.dentalanthropology.org/) has defined the field as “a subfield of biological anthropology. Dental anthropology utilizes the dentitions of humans and other non-human primates—both past and present—to answer questions of anthropological interest. These questions can include (but are by no means limited to): How are individuals and populations related? What did their diet look like? How healthy were they?” as recently as June 2023.
contribute directly to reifying racial realism, racial science, and eugenicist beliefs about humanity. That work, at its best, can help contemporary people change their diets and can help advocate for better soil quality, more Indigenous types of growing methods and sustainability, and so repeats many of Catlin’s directives to a largely upper class and European audience. We clearly need more interpretation from a humanities perspective to add these other affective layers to the very personal space of the study of teeth. Without those layers, there is simply repetition of nineteenth century scientific categorization and supposedly ‘unbiased’ scientific representations of human populations.

By understanding the way that the teeth-as-purity metonym operates, we can better understand the colonial dynamics at play and the way that objectified subjects navigated these dynamics in long nineteenth-century Britain, Ireland, North American contexts. We can also begin to interrogate the contours and the sharpness of these overlapping symbols in race, land, gender, class, and character through the ways in which this pattern becomes much more than a discourse. This is an important step in addressing how potentially unconscious affects are still creating emotional and material refrains in today’s world and taking action to solve the dehumanization and violence that can become a result of these unconscious affects remaining unchecked.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

In my chapters and within the conclusion discussion, it has been important for me to include responses and contemporary refrains from people targeted by the discourse of “the savage” because while there was so much information about the British discourse itself, either as contemporaries of the nineteenth century or as affected by these logics now. I wanted to make sure that any discussion of British history included contemporary material consequences of that history. Therefore, each chapter has quotes from contemporary writers
who have been affected by the ongoing politics of “white possession” and its effects on their land, their teeth, and other forms of expressions of resistance to colonial violence via affective embodiment.

First, I present the notion of teeth as land in Chapter 1, by connecting the field of dentistry to the practice of colonial resource extraction of pearls, tea, sugar, and the extraction of teeth from working class bodies. Using the public visual scrapbook of TG Purland, a prominent gentleman dentist in London in the Victorian period as an avenue to better understand the structures of feeling within the field of dentistry during that time, I explicate images and clippings from the scrapbook within material and historical context. This context includes the enclosure of lands and colonial land views, professional interest shared between dentistry and phrenology, and the overlap with those professions with categorization of waste vs use value through the concurrent practice of “dispositioning” land and human characters. While phrenology mapped useful and wasted “faculties” or “talents” within someone’s face and skull shape (aka taking these maps of the head and skull to “disposition” a person’s perceived character), agricultural societies mapped and “dispositioned” land as either useful or wasteful to capital enterprise, enclosure, and property value. Both types of mapping, carrying on the tradition of craniology, fed into the commodification of teeth and the practice of dentistry. This chapter discusses the class and racial politics at work when British aristocrats purchased commodity teeth just as they purchased gold, iron, and other material goods that were associated with extraction of land resources. They purchased them to build their own social capital, and to have power in their society. This power was knowingly navigating the material reality of colonialism and consumption of goods imported through chattel slavery, enclosure, and the exploitation of
workers’ labor, and the brand new white teeth that they might purchase in dentures or have transplanted from a worker’s mouth into their own gums were a constant reminder that they did not have moral or character purity and were resorting to pain and violence to procure the façade of purity.

In Chapter 2, Teeth as Character operating alongside Teeth as Race are both put into question directly by the critique of British orality by Paxocan (Iowan) man Washkamonya (Fast Dancer, Jim) who traveled to Britain, Ireland, and Europe with other key members of his tribe to find and work with George Catlin to save their people from starvation caused by colonial US policies29. In this Chapter I examine how Paxocan travelers did not go to join Catlin as the “ambassadors” suggested by some Victorian and nineteenth-century historians, but they came under duress because of the material conditions of settler colonialism. For example, When I read about Washkamonya in Flint’s “Indigenous Victorian Studies” article, dressing in British clothing, going around to the gin houses in London and counting them by making marks with his knife on a stick, I knew that I wanted to learn about him and his interaction with Victorian England. However, after reaching out to scholars who had written about and researched Catlin, reading Catlin’s travel journals, and four years of searching for him in the archives, I found that this intriguing and humorous person was left out of most accounts of the descriptions and advertisements of their tour events and times as documented in the British periodicals, at least by name. This gap of information about him as a person and a historical figure who traveled and lived for a time within Victorian England, Britain, and Europe.

Catlin’s texts, “Shut your Mouth to Save Your Life,” and *The Mouth Shut*, which seem to be generated from Washkamonya’s statement in London years earlier, argue that Native oral culture is superior to “Civilized” oral culture because of the low rate of infant mortality rate during teething, the lack of disease among the tribes he has been in contact with (he outlines how colonial contact, introduction of alcohol and disease by colonists, and assimilation to modernity has ruined this healthy lifestyle for some people). Washkamonya’s response to British commodification and racialization of teeth directly challenges *Teeth as Race* but reinforces *Teeth as Character*. As a warrior for his tribe, Washkamonya delivers a comment on the state of English orality that cuts like a knife to the core of British lies and is used by Catlin to build the argument of superiority of “noble savage” life as opposed to the “savage civilized” life in these texts. However, by using other texts from Catlin, we can also see and reimagine Washkamonya’s personality and his purpose in offering this critique and others.

Because Washkamonya is described as such a character whenever he is mentioned in Catlin’s journals, and because he is one of the only members of his party to speak English, we may also imagine that he was the one who offered the critique of drinking culture and class difference to Dickens, who was so angered by this that he wrote “The Noble Savage,” an infamous five page essay calling for genocide of all Indigenous people around the globe and British superiority (which he claims to have written after speaking with one member of Catlin’s tour who critiqued British oral culture). If history is a storytelling of the past, it is our responsibility as scholars to try to imagine possibilities that may not be overtly proven. I argue that there is enough evidence to consider that it may have been Washkamonya who offered this critique to Dickens. Regardless, his critique hit a nerve both as quoted in The
Mouth Shut and Shut Your Mouth to Save Your Life, which were widely read and disseminated, and may have struck a very sore nerve with Dickens as well.

The intense and immediate reaction to this critique says a lot about Briton’s sensitivity regarding their own orality as they attempted to control the orality of Others. It also shows the carefulness and the purposefulness of the few spoken words chosen by a warrior who was there in Britain and Europe because the capitalists had exported this way of being, seeing, extracting, controlling, and consuming and the problems coming with it were attack his people. That his response hit exactly on the heart of the matter shows how much tension existed within this oral space, and that although Britons themselves may have tried to bury it within their own unconscious, the ugliness of their nations’ violence and the consequences on material life of the class divisions could not be hidden from a visitor.

In Chapter 3/4, I primarily explicate Teeth as Gender and Teeth as Race through an analysis of writings by Indigenous women who lived in the nineteenth century and explicitly interact with colonial discourses in their writings. I primarily open a conversation of Wicapewastewin (Dakota), also known as Good Star Woman, who told the story of the Dakota warriors stuffing a government agent’s mouth full of grass when they killed him after he had been starving them for months and hoarding the provisions meant for the tribe. Although there has been little scholarship addressing Wicapewastewin’s decision to share this story with white missionaries who she knew would share it with broader audiences, or her decision to later share it with Frances Densmore, I argue that we should consider her narrative as a piece of nineteenth-century literary history and part of the Oceti Sakowin literary tradition. I cite and utilize stories from other women of her tribe such as Ella Cara Deloria (Yankton Dakota), and Zitkala Ša (Yankton Dakota), who both also wrote in the
nineteenth century as well as contemporary scholars of Dakota literature to contextualize her
narrative and its meanings. Included in this is their use of the critique of wasicu orality of
settler colonialism and its consequences for community, kinship, and land tenure.

In this chapter, I also emphasize that Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Ojibwe), and E.
Pauline Johnson write about teeth in their texts *American Indian Story*, *The Sounds the Stars
Make Rushing Through the Sky*, and *The Moccasin Maker* and that their representation of
teeth is more similar to Wicapewastewin and Zitkala Ša’s use in their stories than it is of
British oral culture even though they both had very European educations. Although these
women are prolific writers and are very well known, they remain often left out from literary
studies of the nineteenth century. I argue that their presentation of teeth directly relates to
their worldviews and works to humanize and empower instead of objectifying or mocking
their subjects. These writers, despite interacting with British discourses sometimes even
overtly and having experience of their own teeth being objectified via Teeth as Gender, reject
those metonymies. They do not participate in the compartmentalization or mapping of the
body as parts separate from the whole. Instead, they embrace and assert an Indigenous
worldview and narrative of humanity and land.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I examine material consequences of Teeth as Class, Teeth as
Race, Teeth as Gender, and Teeth as Land by observing how Irish Teeth were targeted by
periodical, literary, and dental texts and how Irish writers responded to this at the time. The
last chapter focuses primarily on Teeth as Class and moves into orality more broadly,
although there are also discussions of gendered orality. Richmond Hospital in Dublin as a
site of class violence and unethical medical experimentation on working poor Irish people
whose class position and nationality made them especially vulnerable to all the overlapping
views of biopolitical commodification that occurred due to the long history of mapping Irish bodies and Irish lands for resource value. The associations with the baseness of land and soil, the fertility of the soil compared with the fertility of the people were all used by British colonists for hundreds of years to decry Irish pagans as “savage” and as excuse for attempting to control their orality. Additionally, Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt have pointed out that the idea of potatoes brings up associations with peasants “in the modern mind” because it has been considered such a “staple food of the working poor” (110-11).

Because of the long history of seeing Irish peasants as highly sexualized and as part of the very soil, this allowed for more opportunity for medical exploitation of Irish working poor during the Victorian period by Scottish and English doctors at Richmond and other workhouses within the Hospitals of Industry system.

The way that Irish orality was targeted during the 18th and 19th century has been documented both by contemporary scholars such as David Lloyd, and by commentators, stories, literature, and periodical texts since the 1600’s. Outlining the colonial views of Ireland and Teeth as Class, Race, and Gender within the context of hundreds of years of British colonization of the Emerald Isle. In Chapter 6, I utilize affect theory and affective refrains through art analysis of unpublished prints from University College Dublin (UCD) to assist in recovering the “structure of feeling” that was occurring within the Hospitals of Industry in Dublin between the 1830’s and late 1850’s, and how the working-class patients who entered these hospitals may have experienced their time there. Although I don’t have as many quotes from the patients as I would have liked (there were thousands), I am taking what I can from the images of them and notes about interactions with them to try to understand their voices better. For example, in images and portraits, we can sometimes see
what their hands are doing, what their bodies are doing, if they seem in distress, and what
their faces and expressions are doing in these images. Additionally, I interpret the fact that
while some affects from the patients are visible, these images also include the feelings and
biases of the artist, J. Connolly. I explicate some of these medical images and the way that
orality is portrayed through Teeth as Gender and Teeth as Sexual Purity because of the
difference in how male and female patients were portrayed. The objectification of the
medical gaze and the medical history of Ireland’s relationship to Britain through medical
discourse is reflected on to develop more context for Richmond Hospital as an individual
space that was part of a larger imperial framework. The chapter specifically addresses how,
within these contexts, Richmond Hospital and the Dublin Hospitals of Industry more
generally contributed to reformist colonial views of the Irish poor and functioned as pipelines
for patients to be medically and socially exploited.

Reviewing the use of laborers in workhouses associated with these hospitals, surgical
notes, and illustrations of oral space, I assert that the notion of “charity” functioned to veil
the space of a camp, utilizing what Giorgio Agamben outlines in his work Homo Sacer about
the space of exception. In addition to explicating the images of J. Connolly, I follow the
specific journey of one surgeon, R. Smith, who wrote about his views and treatment of
working-class women; specifically, many women who came to Richmond with oral
complaints were later subjected to public experimental surgeries in the Anatomy and Surgical
Theatre at Trinity College Dublin, where R. Smith was a professor. Voices and protestations
from one patient who did not want to go through with the procedure, and the public spectacle
created with her body during the subsequent surgery is a grotesque example of the way that
Irish peasant embodiment, orality, and sexuality was used and abused as a commodity in
nineteenth-century Ireland. This chapter branches out from teeth specifically, entering more into Lloyd’s “oral space” more generally and what it represents as part of the metonyms of teeth. Note: Chapter 6 requires a content warning due to the graphic nature of the medical procedure described. Please read this chapter when you have the emotional and mental capacity to do so.

**THESIS AND CONTRIBUTION**

No comprehensive study of the commodity fetishism of teeth or their underlying cultural meaning in this time has yet been conducted. However, this topic is important since it underpins those “logics of white possession” while also becoming a space that challenges the false spiritual and emotional hierarchy posited by colonial logics. Affective orality and the value placed on teeth eventually highlights Britain’s own spiritual and moral lack, their own potential of life and death. It shows that the oral space is not one that can be regulated, hence its power.

I assert that teeth are a contested ideological space in terms of their use in constructing and deconstructing the notion of the savage through the practice of “dispositioning” both lands and character for use value within British imperial contexts. Using the notion of “oral space” to analyze teeth more specifically as a symbol of unconscious affect, I make four unique moves. *First*, I connect projects of resource extraction and land enclosures to descriptions of and to dentistry as a profession through TG Purland’s scrapbook and the connection between dentistry and phrenology in Chapter 1. In chapters 1 and 5, I connect teeth as a symbol of land-resource and as a physical commodity to be extracted within British colonial discourses; *Second*, I look at the discourse around teeth in relation to purity culture and the social “use value” of “pure” teeth both in periodical culture (advertisements, short serial narratives, and notes from two influential phrenologists who
were also wealthy landholders and members of societies around the UK and the Americas, who “dispositioned” land to determine waste land from useful land) and in literary production; Third, I connect the discourses around affective orality and teeth to racialization and cultural/ medical/ social justification of violence towards “others” within and beyond the social body, as well as transcultural responses to this valuation of teeth and affect, teeth and the politics of teeth during the long nineteenth century. Fourth, I outline the ways in which subjects who were objectified through the discourse of the savage and through Teeth As readings by British colonial capitalists use affective orality to assert subjectivity and mirror back the lack in the teeth of the colonial orality, using Teeth as Character to assert the lack of purity inherent in British cultural practices and the unfeeling and “savage” nature of ‘civilized’ modernity. Through the assertion of historical specificity, potent imagery, direct critique of British oral culture, and displays of both affective orality and narrative self-control, people whose teeth, lands, and bodies are being assessed in the nineteenth century very often refuse to let this discourse have a defining role in their self-perception or their perception of the people lying through their teeth while they attempt to control the orality of others.

Because Britain was on a global stage, and its actions and discourses had far-reaching consequences, the commodification and tension surrounding orality and teeth was something that people interacted with beyond England. Washkamonya’s assertion of what he and his tribe perceive as the moral impurity of British imperialism and the lies they told flips these characterizations of teeth back onto the Empire, and some, potentially including author Charles Dickens, were not happy with his interpretation of British character. I argue that Washkamonya hit strategically where he knew that the British were most weak- their teeth
and the hypocritical morality reflected in them by their own standards. Chapter 3: Affective Orality and Teeth in Indigenous Women's Writings of the Nineteenth Century utilizes writings by Zitkala Ša (Yankton Dakota), Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Ojibwe), and E. Pauline Johnson write about teeth in their texts American Indian Story, The Sounds the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky, and The Moccasin Maker. I will illustrate how their uses of teeth operate opposing the English colonial symbology of teeth, despite various levels of interaction with colonial discourses. Through these texts, they show how teeth are part of a whole person instead of an object stand-in for ideas of disposition, personality, or character. Because my other chapters are mostly male authors of texts and although there is response to British colonial frameworks from people being targeted by them, I still wanted a chapter that focused on women’s writing, and especially Indigenous women writers who were honestly quite prolific and broadly read through the later part of the nineteenth century. I argue that despite interacting with the British and colonial representations of teeth and orality, they assert a sovereignty-based understanding of orality and the functions of teeth in their texts that illustrates a choosing to commit to Indigenous land and kinship ties instead of accepting English logics of embodiment, possession, and ownership.

My methodology is both interdisciplinary and influenced by my own life as an activist-scholar. My dissertation project uses Feminist theory, Cultural Studies, Critical Indigenous studies, and newer theoretical scholarship with theory traditions such as Marxism, Ontology, semiotics, cultural and dental anthropology, creative writing, and Literary studies. My project aims to connect a pattern of ideology and material significance which transits through 18th century England to the present time. This project uses a cultural
This project began with interests in specific patterns, people, and places that I had seen mentioned sometimes only once in other research projects (such as Washkamonya, also known as Fast Dancer, or “Jim” highlighted in Chapter 2 who I first encountered in a Kate Flint article) and felt drawn to or compelled to understand and “find” in the archives. My curiosity led into various threads of research, many of which had to be abandoned to write this dissertation. However, I think the initial interest and instinct regarding teeth and regarding certain people and places ended up being correct\(^{30}\). I was open to giving up on those threads if I ended up finding nothing to support my instincts, but I am indebted to Dion Million’s “Felt Theory,” and for having read it early in my graduate career. This practice of following ones’ emotional reaction to texts helped give me the confidence to continue pursuing what to many seemed like an esoteric, broad, and possibly misguided path. I also wanted to be responsible in my research and to attempt to be as thorough as possible in topics such as the history of dentistry which I had no previous interest or knowledge in, but in doing both broad and specific micro historical research, I believe has proved fruitful in terms of influence and conversation between various professional fields and nations. This commitment to primary research is one of the reasons that my work is interdisciplinary, but I

\(^{30}\) As I continued to write, I noticed myself feeling exasperated at the time limitations that have been enforced onto this project and the pervading feeling that although I was able to find some answers that satisfied my curiosity, I now have a million more questions. This work has been deeply rewarding as much as it has frustrated me, and I have shared some of what I’ve learned with movement leaders who I hope will also use this historical context to build new futures. From this experience, I have learned that one way forward is to build coalitions with and listen to people who have been up against Imperialism and its violence for a long time. I hope my work will be a tool for understanding where we are and imagining a future where property is less important than community.
also attempted to find secondary sources from a variety of authors in a variety of fields over the years.

Theoretically, Gilles Delueze’s *Concept, Precept, Affect*, and Indigenous feminist scholar Dian Million’s\(^{31}\) the notion of “felt theory” have contributed deeply to my understanding of affect. I build off the tradition of affect theorization from both historical and contemporary scholarship on emotion and “affect,” which in psychology is used to describe something that is neurologically foundational to the human body and is reactive. In other words, affect is generally studied through responses in reaction to outside stimuli\(^ {32}\).

Unmediated displays of emotion through the space of emotional response orally represents affective orality; not only is showing the teeth a connection to that instinctual and unregulated part of us, but seeing another person’s emotion as shown through teeth erases all “civilized” classification.

Additionally, I work from primary archival research that I was able to do throughout the past three years despite the ongoing pandemic, and the library restrictions in place because of the pandemic. The research ironically mirrored my own physical and medical weaknesses, since because I have increased risk factors for covid because of my own damaged orality (missing half my throat due to childhood cancer), in person research became riskier and more stressful for me in addition to becoming more practically challenging in general. Unfortunately, the difficulties of gaining access to the archives in Dublin, Edinburgh, and London took up so much of my time and organization especially with my trip

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\(^{31}\) Million argues that “insisting on the inclusion of lived experience,” fraught with multiple layers of pain and emotion, is the only way to get an accurate picture of history.

\(^{32}\) This article neatly outlines the history of affect as it has been understood within and beyond the field of psychology: https://Washkamonya.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2884406/
to Ireland and the UK in 2021 (waiting for reopening and quarantining of materials, restricted public and private transportation modes, inability to return to review documents, providing proof of my own medical state, requiring booking a month if not a week in advance, restricted timeframes of entry and use, with most archives only allowing one appointment per week or month), that it was difficult to additionally organize and later interpret the materials that I had taken images of and notes about. In terms of the difficulty of finding the patients of Richmond Hospital, Washkamonya and other figures who are left out intentionally from the British archive, that has been both a frustrating experience but also one that elucidates the material violence of silencing and intentional propagation of colonial narrative history that we still grapple with today. In some ways, my original focus on individual people was also naive and potentially misguided. Washkamonya, for example, traveled to England and the UK under duress because his tribe needed him to fulfill that role. Even in my chapter, I argue that he was speaking on behalf of both the other Paxocan travelers who came with him and for his tribe back home who were suffering greatly and needed him to fight for them, to speak for them, and to advocate for them.\(^{33}\)

These barriers have made it harder to later access and use the materials that I had spent so much effort collecting, and much time was required to attempt to interpret and organize these materials over the two subsequent years. Because of this, I had to be very choosy with the documentation and the archival sources that I have highlighted and was unable to use as many of my gathered materials as intended.\(^{34}\)

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\(^{33}\) Winona Stephenson talks about Paxocan starvation as the underpinning reason for the Paxocan travelers to meet with Catlin. They were traveling under duress, not from any other motivation but to earn money and assist in their peoples’ survival.

\(^{34}\) Despite these challenges, I am so grateful to the archivists who made working in the British archives more accessible despite the prohibitive barriers in place through both guarding of materials and additional covid safety restrictions that were in place.
Recovery works with theories of memory; by making a memory relevant again, we can get closer to what Raymond Williams calls the “structure of feeling” inherent in felt memory. Along with using feminist theory to reconstruct counter-narratives and examine the process of othering via industrial capitalism, I use affect theory as part of my construction of affective orality, specifically Raymond Williams’ notion of “structure of feeling” and affect theories related and non-related to William’s notion of historical affect. It is also critical to use the biopolitics in Michel Foucault and critics Georgio Agamben, Achille Mbembe, Judith Butler’s work on “grievability” and “precarity.” as well as Critical Indigenous Studies’ related work on survivance, sovereignty, and how embodiment of land and people is impacted during colonialism. In other words, I suggest that affect theory must be intersectional and account for the ‘feelings’ of the oppressed in wholistic ways. This is especially true for people who are still impacted by dehumanization and whose affect is still silenced to harm or exploit their bodies and lands. Not all the groups who were referenced as “savage” in the nineteenth century are still being affected in the same ways by ongoing discourse and colonization, and that is something that I consider with my methods. The intersections of queer theory and Native studies in work by Quo Li Driskill, Chris Finley, and Kim Tallbear, Jennifer Nez Denetdale, and Scott Lauria Morgensen all inform my work in discussing relationships of recognition.

Theories relating to affect and embodiment, especially from disability studies and Black feminism also heavily inform my work, especially Elizabeth Donaldson’s work on mental illness and *Jane Eyre*. Additionally, I utilize theories of historical materialism and
historiography, including Marx, Engels, and Morris from the nineteenth century in addition to contemporary theorists who build on Patricia Hill Collins’ concept of intersectional oppressions, including, “Fortune’s Bones, A Manumission Requiem” and Sara Baartman *The Hottentot Venus, a Ghost Story and a Biography* in terms of their historical and creative methods for recovering stories and adding to the history of not only how people were treated vis-a-vis their body, but also as a way of resurrecting their humanity.

The text *A Bridge Called My Back* has also been useful for me in terms of bringing together a collection of seemingly disparate stories to express emotion through the essay and poetry. To discuss issues of class, I utilize Marx’s ontology enacted through historical materialism including Glen Coulthard, Edward Said, Gyatri Spivak, Raymond Williams and Fredric Jameson. In terms of close reading methods, I look at language via word choice, formatting, punctuation, content, and writing style to analyze what underlying meanings might be. Through combined voice methods, narrative inquiry,\(^\text{36}\) and collective oral history data\(^\text{37}\) in both the primary texts and in the periodical texts, I examine the unique and politically powerful rhetorical choices of fiction and non-fiction writers in conjunction with the broader historical and political context that I am reading about from other scholars (feminist, womanist, disability, queer, critical Indigenous, and race analyses prioritized). I also examine periodicals from the time to historicize the use of orality and cutting. Thus, I am arguing for a discourse analysis that sees orality and cutting as key to many colonial rhetoric. Teeth in this dissertation have an intense symbolic relationship with notions of purity, both moral and sexual purity. By fixating on and attempting to objectify oral space and value its power in relation to the politics of character, orality, and especially teeth, in

\(^{36}\) https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/51087035.pdf
\(^{37}\) https://Washkamonya.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4387636/
interactions with sexualized, racialized, and classed subjects in literature, visual culture, and periodical publications, colonizing discourses within the nineteenth and late eighteenth century show projected desire of fear of retaliation for crimes committed against the commons, against lands and the people inhabiting them, but also a twisted desire to control and destroy the affective potential of oral space.

Although this objectification has been resisted by working class people in Britain and Ireland throughout its development and people around the globe—especially within Indigenous communities—this move towards “extraction” of parts instead of viewing land and people holistically has become a defining part of modernity that is crushing us all. As John Trudell wrote in his poem “Death Wears a Mask,” he states in caps lock:

PROGRESS IS ITS DISEASE/TRYING TO HIDE ITSELF […] INDUSTRIAL MINDSETS/ CIVILIZED HOSITLITY/ CLASS NOBILITY THE PRIVILEGED/ CANNIBALIZING HUMAN SPIRIT/ INDIFFERENT TO HUMAN FEELING.  

Not only is he pointing out the exact issues with the legacies of British orality, but also how it hides itself, how it masks itself within Native communities and pretends to be something other than what it is and poisons those who embody it. The fixation on and subsequent theft of such a personal and necessary part of one’s body is part of this cannibalizing of the human spirit that Trudell calls out, and is one element of the psychic pain of colonialism that needs to be felt and dealt with by everyone who functions under the current phase of late stage capitalism we live under, but especially these affects must stop being ignored by Europeans and European-descended Americans. As my dissertation research makes clear, bourgeois Britons were interested in purchasing this type of perceived character trait, through purchasing the teeth of working-class children and adults who would have their teeth

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38 Posted on Instagram in March 2023 by Tara Trudell, one of John’s daughters.
removed for money. This focus on commodification and deeper analysis into the affective politics of this relationship with people experiencing the violence of enclosure and colonialism is one of my proudest interventions.

This dissertation only scratches the surface of what is possible with this topic, and I hope to be able to continue researching orality and the commodification of teeth and land as it relates to continuing practices of commodity culture, resource extractivism, race and white supremacy, and highlighting the voices of nineteenth-century Native and working-class people who refused to be silent in the face of imperialism.
you call us dangerous
when you took
away all our weapons
except our teeth
& bones
& now you’re upset
your flesh got caught
on the sharp edges
why were you there
in the first place?

~jaye simpson (Two-Spirit Oji-Cree) excerpted from their
“teeth and sharp bones (a dialogue)”

it was never going to be okay

CHAPTER 1. Skull and Bones: Phrenology, Dentistry, and The
Commodification of Teeth, Land, and Character in England, Scotland, Ireland and the US

Teeth are a symbolic cultural site first of gender and sexual purity in England, but later develop as a fetishized commodity evidenced by land and body use value within a broader settler colonial framework. Teeth in Victorian London, for example, are deeply rooted in cultural and biopolitical undercurrents which overlap multiple spaces that dentists, phrenologists, and members of Agricultural Societies frequented and shared information within. Therefore, teeth as a literary symbol cannot be dissected as separate from these social forces, or the material and economic forces of colonialism and capitalism. I outline how dentistry developed alongside a commodification of teeth through examination of cultural
and medical texts archived and curated by one prominent London dentist presented to the London public in 1844. I will also make an argument for my view that commodification of teeth increased substantially during the industrial era and become inextricably linked to settler colonial logics as transmitted throughout British imperial practices of resource dispositioning, extraction, and the discourse of the “savage” in the commonwealth, although I especially focus on Scotland, Ireland (Dublin and Northern Ireland), and upper North America in this dissertation. The practice of mapping or “dispositioning” the characters of both people (under phrenology and dentistry) and mapping lands grew in conjunction and with overlapping purposes of control (either self-control or control of others)\textsuperscript{39}. Phrenology and dentistry both had a significant role in shaping how character was determined, and their ideas were then utilized to perpetuate the dehumanizing “comparative anatomy” used within both professions. The discourse of the savage, which spiked in use as a term at a similar time to the first Phrenological society of Edinburgh meetings began (1820 onward) is not coincidence.

\textsuperscript{39} Raj Patel and Jason W. Moore argue that “maps were a way to control nature” (61)
2. Skull with Teeth Falling Out, Print from TG Purland’s Dental Memoranda, Wellcome Institute
Through mapping both lands and bodies, medical and phrenological practitioners were able to build off Briton’s desire for labeling lands and the parts of them that became market commodities. Bodies and their parts became mapped in detail, labeled by phrenologists, agriculturists, and dentists as either “useful” or “wasted.” Teeth, because of their existing cultural and material meanings in Britain and the colonies, are not only a contested and tense literary site of affective orality, but contested ideologically, economically, and medically throughout much of eighteenth and nineteenth-century dentistry and in prior years. As spiritually, sexually, and racially significant markers in the colonial map of the body, teeth grow to represent the transmission point between notions of “civilized” and “savage” character. Since teeth could also be purchased, transported, and transplanted as a market commodity in the Victorian period, they represented an immediate, if not always accessible, way for Britons to purchase new teeth for themselves and increase their own market value as people of pure character, “civilized,” and become “white,” unstained by any trace of the “savage” within their own visual markers.

**TG PURLAND AND TEETH AS LAND, AS COMMODITY, GENDER, RACE**

I will start this chapter by looking at how teeth were visually, medically, and commercially represented within the epicenter of the British Empire—London, and then discuss Scottish land managing influence on the broader intellectual and philosophical assumptions underlying the commodification of teeth, bodies (and land-bodies) within the colonial system of capitol. TG Purland’s dental and dentistry scrapbook entitled *Dental Memoranda* is a fascinating and disturbing case study of the way teeth were viewed, felt affectively from Victorian dentists and followers of the profession’s development in London and their clear relationship with Phrenological and Agricultural Societies through shared
lectures, professional support, and mutual interest. For example, phrenological and agricultural depictions appear earlier in the scrapbook (on the first four pages) then leads out to historical clips of dental advertisements, lists of prices of teeth, advertisements showing the increase in a marketable commodity over the early Victorian period. As evidenced in Image 1, Purland’s understanding of teeth, their meanings both culturally and as a commodity, and the discourses surrounding the mapping of human character through teeth as a practicing dentist carry extra weight for contemporary analysis since his father, grandfather, great grandson, and nephew also identified as and practiced as dentists historically (Wellcome). I argue that because he an acclaimed figure in early Victorian dentistry and was highly invested in his own research on both phrenological character in relation to the teeth and the trends of the time, that observing some of the images he chose to include in his scrapbook can show us some of the affects that were operating in London in the nineteenth century and beforehand, how dentistry as a profession exploded with an increase in colonization and comparative anatomy.

While researching in London at the Wellcome Institute on the history of dentistry in, I came across this bright red and gold scrapbook that T.G. Purland had compiled throughout the 1820’s- 1860’s. He scrapbooked primarily about teeth and dentistry. I argue that because of Purland’s personal and professional influence within the London dental profession and vast amount of sponsored advertisements (advertised in the image as “unique” and relating to his book about teeth preservation which also asserts standards of control for other practicing dentists), analysis of this both private and public visual object of the scrapbook can help us
understand some of the ways in which teeth became an object of increasing desire during his
dental practice, both for him and for the London public.

Using Purland’s collection of images and texts as a window to access a potential site
of what Raymond Williams terms “structure of feeling,” I apply my broader research on the
history of dentistry and phrenology to question how medicine between 1770-1900 intersected
with visual culture in advertisements, gender, class, and racialization through the meaning
that he seems to give to teeth as a cultural symbol and medical space throughout these texts
and images. It also helps show us the type of materials that were in circulation—whereas a
contemporary reader can research within British historical periodicals, we may not know
what would be considered important to someone of the nineteenth century, especially in a
profession we are not part of. However, by utilizing Purland as a pathway into the broader
beliefs about teeth in the center of Empire, we can understand London dentistry and its
history better, as well as the cultural messaging perceived as important by someone whose
entire life was dedicated to the mouth and teeth medically, economically, and materially.

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40 Purland was an early member of the preliminary organization that later became a branch the British Dental Association,
“the British Society of Dental Surgeons” which costed two guineas per year to join, and whose sole purpose was to
differentiate between the classless and the professional dentists, evidenced in the Dental Association Constitution, which I
was able to view thanks to the help of staff at the Wellcome collection who were unable to prepare it for viewing but who
emailed me photos of the item entitled “Draft constitution of the British Society of Dental Surgeons’ on the back of page
122, inside a handwritten letter.” The prologue to the constitution reads “furnishing a uniform system of education, as shall
give character and respectability to the profession, as the safest and most efficient method of establishing a distinction
between the meritorious and skilful Surgeon Dentist and the empiric” (122). One of Purland’s major goals, from the
clippings which he included in the scrapbook, therefore, was to lead to this distinguishing between “quack dentists” and
“surgeon dentists.”
While some of these are drawings and illustrations, much of what Purland collected was ephemerae and advertisements. By observing the patterns of representation and chosen imagery within this scrapbook, it may offer a glimpse of the broader emotional and professional values of dentistry in London (which seems to have been very influential to the
rest of the UK and into the US colonies). The patterns present in this scrapbook in terms of focus, content, and language of included texts are as follows: the first pages in the book focus on the broader skull and mapping of the nerves in the face and the teeth within a variety of skulls, with two essays from the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh from TG Purland himself, as well as a clipped Lecture from George Combe, one of the lead phrenologists in the society, that was given in the 1850’s in London’s Phrenological society. The focus of the scrapbook then moves outward into advertisements for tooth whitening powders and replacement commodity teeth or dentures. Additionally, there is a focus on children and a large number of affectively emotive and at times disturbing images, many of which come from famous cartoon artists who ridicule dentists for their almost clown-like cruelty (their faces are contorted in dreadful glee as they inflict pain on their patient) or their sexual licentiousness (many of the images have women with their breasts out and mouths open surrounded by leering men).

There are also many indicators that at least throughout the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries, dental surgery was primary for wealthy patrons and “ladies.” This gendered element of dentistry was not just in this scrapbook, but the inclusion of so many ladies with their dentists in Purland’s Memoranda commonly discussed in relation to the importance of keeping the nation pure and showing colonial others the teeth of British women, on behalf of the British nation. One author Hugh Moises went so far as to say in 1798 that “the British ladies have justly held the palm of beauty in preference of those of any other nation, and the sons of Briton proudly boast that preference. Yet what would be the echo of admiring nations were they told that my fair country women were daily robbed of an essential part of their beauty by imprudence by neglect in the management of their teeth. I
will not proclaim the extent of such loss-- but I will caution the lovely fair as becomes the duty of their faithful servant” (iv). Not only is this from the dedication directly to the ladies of England and reminding them of their duties to keep their teeth pure for the nation, but compares their teeth and their overall beauty both to their embodiment representing the national embodiment and future of Briton by indicating that British men will not remain attracted to them or choose to reproduce with them if they can find people of other nations with more lovely or less neglected teeth. However, in addition to upper- and middle-class women being gendered in dental texts, including TG Purland’s scrapbook collection, there are also a proliferation of (more grotesque and crudely sexualized) depictions of working-class women interacting with predatory male dentists.

Purland as dentist and collector was informed by his lineage of practicing dentists, which he prominently displays on one of the first pages of the scrapbook almost in an aristocratic way (Image 2). This shows that he thought very highly of himself, and perhaps his family at some point in history was upper class since they were not only literate but also collected their family history. The page next to his profile page (with an artistic profile bust in addition to his lineage of names on his father’s side) holds clips of information about phrenology as early as one of the earliest entries (page 2). This may indicate that he was part of a Phrenological Society, but importantly, I assert that the presence of phrenological advertisements in this scrapbook are relevant to a broader cultural view of the body, its parts, not only the social body as Mary Poovey would assert, but the way that bodies were valued or devalued during the late eighteenth and nineteenth century.

The items held in esteem or seen to be of importance to Purland while he was making his collection and later audience can help us better understand the affective structures
surrounding dentistry in the Victorian period, including the influence of Phrenology on the field of dentistry. In Dental Memoranda found in the Wellcome Library in London I noticed a pattern of fixation on skulls and head shape along with racialized advertisements for tooth whitening and believe that this text and other collections of images and pamphlets from individuals can help us understand what may have been part of a larger and more symbolic discourse surrounding teeth and Victorian cultural meanings and value systems around them which included overlapping discussions with phrenologists. The scrapbook begins with striking images of the head, mouth, and teeth, images of multiple types of skulls, including a children’s skull, pictured with the absent teeth in illustration number three above. The inscription below that drawing of the skull has been enlarged and is the fourth image, reading “skull of a young person under seven years of age.” These images and texts show various views of the skull within both life and death or a state of in-betweenness (as evidenced by exposed nerve pathways and undead flesh of a side profile of a living man below in Image 3). The initial image in the scrapbook (Image 1 above), with its haunting depiction of teeth falling out of a shattered child skull, is one of the first images in Purland’s scrapbook.
The order and presence of materials shows both the overlapping interests in phrenology for Purland. Was he or the field of dentistry influenced to map the various parts of the teeth and nerves through the phrenological system of mapping parts of the brain and their associated character traits or “dispositioning” the teeth as phrenology dispositioned through bumps on the head. How were these fields so interwoven? *Not only was phrenology and agriculture inculcated with notions of use and waste lands and mental faculties, but through the sale, commodification, and purchase of both dental care products and teeth whitening recipes from far off “oriental” or “exotic” lands, but they were additionally using teeth from people in those othered places to increase their own social value- their own commodified and doctored character due to the self-consciousness that these
comparisons and denigrations of other human bodies created. To use the teeth of other people, both living and deceased, for live and regular tooth transplants, dentures, etc., the underlying assumption was that those other people whose teeth were desired to be transported into British mouths were wasting their naturally “perfect” teeth. This increased the fetishization of racialized perfect teeth, and this type of research on comparative dentistry was only possible through the expansion of imperialism, industrial capitalism, chattel slavery, and colonization.

Teeth as a resource and commodity fetish are described throughout 1770-1900 with similar language to agricultural and commodity resource and phrenology terms, such as disposition and become intertwined with and representative of lands, sexuality, and embodiment. For example, teeth were thought to be made of the same substance of bone, except harder and longer lasting because they are the part of the human skeleton which remains undisturbed many years after death. Teeth, as discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, were developed as a commodity can be viewed as both part of Britain’s own national anxieties about orality, purity of character, and self-control after land enclosure and fractured relationship to land both at home and in broader Europe after the transatlantic revolutionary period, and as more insidious desire to not only control and regulate the orality of colonial “others,” but to own the resources of both their oral space and their lands as evidenced in a variety of Victorian era texts and literatures. As I will outline, not only was land enclosed, but “knowledge was enclosed too” (Patel 61). By understanding how the relationship developed between land and teeth within a settler colonial logic, we can also understand the ways that whiteness as a political position that conglomerates multiple nationalities and ethnicities in our modern age as inextricably linked to the notions of purity.
that were underlying the drive to steal, purchase, and sell the idea of ‘perfect’ white teeth that we still deal with today both in the US and the UK. I argue that commodification of white teeth with no imperfections attempts to market “perfect white character” via access to land-resources and the co-optation by “civilized” people of idealized body resources valued more by the market than the lives of people murdered by settler colonial violence. Additionally, I point out the seemingly cozy connection between dentistry and phrenology.

5. Profile of a man with facial nerves showing, reads “W. Espin____? J. Stewart scalp!” TG Purland Dental Memoranda, Wellcome Collection
6. Skull of a Young Person Under Seven Years of Age, reads “For McClark’s Werk on the Teeth” TG Purland Scrapbook, Wellcome Collection

7. Caption Accompanying "Skull of a Young Person"
In addition to the focus on children’s skulls in phrenology included in Purland’s text, there are many excerpts pasted towards the end of the collection regarding childhood teething. The fixation on children (including the inclusion of this child’s skull with teeth in image 5 with the text description zoomed in Image 6) is indicative of the overarching anxiety and mismanagement of children’s dentistry, including what was called “cutting” of the teeth, the loss of “milk teeth” and teething in general. There are so many advertisements included in Purland’s book for anodyne necklaces (Figure 8) because they helped keep babies from crying (anodyne is a pain reliever that is poisonous to children under 6 months but was advertised for teething as early as 1725). Since the remedy had been so long standing, it is a bit unusual that TG Purland begins the medical advertisement portion of his scrapbook early on with clippings about anodyne necklaces. His scrapbook appears to be chronological from youth to adult after the phrenology clippings and personal publications.

As George Catlin later points out in *The Mouth Shut* in 1860 the profession’s concern largely stems from a huge percentage of child deaths attributed to teething. This is one way
that Catlin undermines the assertion of British and white or “civilized” superiority, since he
asserts that all tribal representatives, he has ever interacted with have never heard of such
problems or cause of death for their people and that death in infancy more generally is just
never usually a phenomenon which occurs in any quoted tribe’s history. However, this issue
was happening frequently in London, and it was likely in part a result from these anodyne
necklaces and lethal teething treatments. This timeframe of teething was called “cutting of
the teeth” in Purland’s publication “Directions for Preserving the Teeth,” and he may have
included it earlier because he had published extensively on the dangers of “lancing” and
“surgically excising” the teeth in a young person as they are teething, which was apparently
common practice in the early nineteenth century (16-18). This painful process is derided by
Purland as both damaging to the gums and to the newer tooth.

There are many clipped dental advertisements, with a specific increase in
advertisements comparing teeth to ivory, pearls, and other land-commodities gained through
resource extraction via colonization. One example is a clipped ad from Jacob Hemet, “dentist
to her majesty” who is selling his “essence of Pearl” and “Pearl Dentifrice” as early as 1774
(79). The Pearl beds of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) were being targeted for extraction during this
time of colonialism (they became part of the “commonwealth” in 1770) and were eventually
captured through colonial overtake and violence by the British through the Treaty of Amiens
in 1806. Another later ad from 1868 that Purland clipped reads: “French, American and
English artificial teeth!” that are “incorrigible, incorruptible, and undetectable” and
“strengthened with gold” on which Purland or whomever wrote all the dates on the ads has
written “What an awful liar!” (76). By this time, gold was one targeted mineral causing much
settler colonial violence for many years in the Americas up to this point from the Spanish to
the French to the British. There are also ads comparing teeth to ivory, which was another commodity from colonialism, the slave trade, and poaching of large animals such as rhinos and elephants in Africa. This association of teeth to land-commodities that are not food is a common practice throughout the mid-eighteenth and the first third of the nineteenth century, but Purland’s reaction to these products and their efficacy or the authenticity of their origins is one of extreme skepticism.

One of the longest clipped ads warns of “quack” dentists from outside of England coming to cure ailments of the teeth with unknown tinctures or removal of what was known as “live teeth” in exchange for money. This (1774) and a couple of other ads collected by Purland in the 1770’s talk about people from “the outskirts of town” who will try to steal teeth of an unsuspecting Britons and trade you for a hat, coat, or other necessity in exchange for a couple of your teeth (79). Even though many of the dental advertisements in periodicals discuss the magic of cures from other places, this particular article warns of the dangers of trusting such outsiders, saying that “such places are the cause of many young women’s misery and destruction: [...] he robs the till for dress, and she is robbed of her peace: he is transported, hanged, or sent to India for a soldier: she into the streets as a common prostitute” (79). Although this clipping includes many anecdotes, it is largely a fear-mongering peace about the dangers of losing one’s teeth to a scam artist, and therefore one’s respectability in exchange for access to new clothing.

The clip discussed above is an outlier in terms of its negative tone towards any dental practices. Dental advertisements for adults from the 1770’s through the 1860’s generally seem to indicate that one’s own whiteness can be increased by owning colonial other people's body parts or beauty secrets, mainly teeth. Likenesses to tooth whitening recipes from the far
off ‘orient’ or from an American Native diet with less sugar were the most innocent parts of these advertisements. An ad clipped says “first person to sell in this kingdom” (1774) while another calls their foreign remedy the “Imperial Tincture” (1774) and yet another lists a “Florentine tincture” for sale. However, the more sinister parts of this commodity became the increase in grave robbing for teeth, selling executed Native American teeth, and the teeth of or powders representing African enslaved peoples such as one of Purland’s clippings for “the incomparable POWDER for Cleaning the Teeth” from the west Indies described as “a neat cleanly medicine” that “has given great satisfaction to most of the nobility and gentry” (76).

The ways that these teeth powders are marketed (both the ones Purland clipped and additional ones from other sources) show that white “clean” and perceived purity of teeth became a social signal, and increased teeth’s value as commodity for the “use value” of increasing one’s own class status in England but also for increasing ones perceived ‘whiteness’ in a colonial context, but as Purland’s scrapbook indicates, dentistry was also used for depicting visual representations of whiteness and blackness as having different valuations and social status. Another clip that comes later in the text has images of the same people side by side as having blackened teeth and then white teeth (84-85) in a series of
advertisements towards the end of the scrapbook.


11 Clipped Advert for Tooth Powder with a Smiling Woman and Man Before and After, TG Purland Scrapbook, Wellcome Collection
These images are now to contemporary readers a familiar trope of before and after shots, but the extreme difference of expression in some of these images and the contrast between ‘blackness’ and 'whiteness’ not only of the teeth but of the individual’s character, are implied even when not stated outright.

The first set of side-by-side advertisement images show an older woman with wrinkles under her eyes in bonnet and black mourning dress who has neutral facial affect with a small slight smile until after her use of the teeth whitening powder with the subtext on the before image reading “horridus nigro” (horrible black) and the one on the right reading “pulchrius albo” (more beautiful white) under a quote about cleanliness and personal responsibility by Lord Chesterfield (84). In the second photo, as in this style of ads today, the version of her after the treatment is happier and has a broader smile and more youthful
appearance. Because both beautiful teeth and tooth rot were associated with colonization by this point (although they have no dates in the scrapbook, they are towards the back of the book after the year has passed 1840), it is not a far stretch of the imagination to also consider that the viewer may have been reminded of the slave trade and fetishized teeth of colonial people 41.

In the next photo, there is more difference between the lady on the left, who has her hair styled as someone would in the 18th century, and the gentleman on her right, whose clothing and hairstyle indicate he is from the same period. Interestingly, the woman is portrayed with the cavities and spotted teeth, and unlike the elderly woman in the first ad clipped, both the feminine and masculine side have a wide smile. Because of the similar face, eyebrow, and neck shape and the similar expressions between the man and woman, my first thought was that the woman became a man. Either way, this ad indicates that the man has purer and whiter teeth and has used the teeth whitening powder advertised to the benefit of his social character. The person on the left is not looking at the artist, even though she has a broad smile. The man is looking directly and confidently at the artist/ readership. There is no wording to indicate a contrast between black and white in this image, but the contrast of genders is an interesting artistic choice and may have reminded readers (in the scrapbook it says 1830’s in pen) of the association of dirty teeth with female sexual impropriety and thus impurity which was already a very established trope in Britain at this time 42.

41 While this has happened with many contemporary fashion trends and celebrity co-optation or use of “Black Aesthetics” to increase their own value as a self-commodified cultural object, frequently termed “blackfishing,” in modern times, I argue that the fetishization of teeth was a major beginning to the desire for and commodification of this both literal and metaphorical theft of Black bodies and their valued parts. The Kardashians have been especially criticized for their appropriation of Black body parts (such as butt implants and lip filler) and their use of adjacency to Black men to appear more edgy, trendy, etc. See “Keeping up with the Kardashians is Ending, but their Exploitation of the Black Aesthetic continues” in TIME magazine, 2021: https://time.com/6072750/kardashians-blackfishing-appropriation/
42 See introduction pages 4-5.
The working classes in England, Ireland, and broader Europe also had teeth removed without anesthesia to sell them during times of need, and at times were even murdered and their teeth sold during the spree of murders in Scotland known as “Burking,” where unscrupulous people could sell a corpse to the medical men in Edinburgh and their teeth to the dentists. Although the use of working-class teeth for sale to make dentures or even using dead soldier’s teeth (Waterloo teeth) is a late eighteenth-century practice that continues throughout the nineteenth century has been portrayed in some popular culture such as Les Misérables when Fantine sells her teeth and hair to a man on the side of the street pulling them for 20 francs a piece. However, what is lesser known is that for at least fifteen years, the practice of “live teeth transplants,” popularized by one of Britain’s most famous surgeons to this day, John Hunter was a large part of dental practice. When he published his text on Pathology of the Teeth in 1778, he was arguing that enamel was “composed of an earth united with a portion of animal substance” and he and his contemporaries were calling teeth “fangs.” Hunter’s experiments included live teeth transplants of human teeth into chicken

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43 One such example is in the 1831 magazine The Quizzical Gazette, or Moral and Satirical Reflector, which includes a definition of “Burking” which reads: “to sell body parts of dead people to doctors” and says that John Burke was “executed for Burking the Italian boy.” It also adds that it is important to use caution when opening your mouth to avoid being Burked, saying “open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what chance will send you” (9). Accessed in the National Library of Scotland.

44 Carlyle, John Aitken, physician, 1801-1879; Carlyle, Mary, niece of Thomas Carlyle, née Aitken, 1848-1895; Carlyle, Thomas, essayist and historian, 1795-1881; Wellmer, Meta, author, pseudonym M Wirth, 1832-1889. National Library of Scotland Special Collections item ACC. 9207, accessed May 2021. In a letter dated May 1831, it is discussed that “offered for sale to a dentist the teeth of the poor victim, fresh drawn from the head by his own acknowledgment, an operation he performed with a shoemaker’s awl” (125). Additionally, a portrait of one of the murderers is included was stated to be “Native of Irish” and had participated in grave digging and body snatching.

45 John Hunter’s A practical treatise of the teeth; intended as a supplement to the natural history of those parts, Wellcome Collection London, 1778, pp 111-112.

46 This quote was analyzed by one of Hunter’s contemporaries in the text "John Hunter and Ondontology," which I read at one of my sessions in the Wellcome Collection, London in June 2021 but need to find author credit for. The text emphasizes Hunter’s personal journals of experiments, as well as his text Natural History of the Human Teeth and Their Pathologies.”
mouths and then chopping their heads off and boiling them. However, the use of live teeth transplants was not only public spectacle but were widely uncomfortable.

The humiliation and absurdity of the transplants (where live teeth were highly prized, meaning that impoverished working-class people (often children) would have their teeth pulled without anesthesia and have them put into the mouths (if they were a good fit) of people from the upper echelons of society, the aristocrats, also without anesthetic. For perspective, if the tooth of the person who had tried to sell it did not fit, they may not be paid. If the tooth was considered a good fit (potentially after pulling out of a line of 3 or more working class people trying to make a profit by having a tooth pulled), according to Hunter’s treatise, the most successful transplants would last up to three years before needing to be replaced again. The workers’ whose teeth were taken suffered more loss of character in addition to making it more difficult to eat and were only used for their teeth in this context, and because female teeth were more sought after, this was a gendered change in their physical appearance and perceived sexual purity. For the workers who chose to sell their teeth or participate in “live teeth transplants” they could use not only their labor power but also their actual body parts as collateral for up to a pound, which might help them last longer from their other material conditions caused by this inequity. One the other hand, the aristocratic class whose teeth were being replaced by the teeth of these (sometimes volunteer) tooth donors could purchase new teeth out of the mouths of more precarious bodies when theirs rotted from their own over-consumption of sugar, tea, and other goods of colonialism.

47 Excerpted from John Hunter and Ontology, “what puts it beyond a doubt is, that a living tooth, when transplanted into some part of an animal, will retain its life and the vessels of the animal shall communicate with the tooth, as is shown by the following experiments” (167)

48 John Hunter’s personal practice notes in the Wellcome collection assert that female teeth are “easier to transplant because they are smaller. It helps to have two volunteers who may have a fitting tooth because if one doesn’t work, can try another until the right one fits” and then the patient still may not have “certain success” after multiple people sacrificed their teeth (and all the social baggage for readability of character). “Transplanting Teeth,” 168.
They could purchase the improvement to their visible character, and hence their own social value, while the social value of the workers whose teeth they took decreased with each missing tooth.

The live teeth transplants practiced by Hunter\(^{49}\) and many others were an experimental treatment heavily visually represented within a corpus of artwork that already often exhibited both the painful, seemingly cruel infliction of dentists to their patients, as well as the racialized and classed exchanges that only served the wealthy. For example, a famous satirical illustration by Thomas Rowlandson in 1787 critiques both the pride and vanity of the aristocracy, who are all depicted with their mouths open, and the pain of the three working class people who are having their teeth pulled as the aristocracy demands. The following are three different versions of this image with citations in the footnotes for each individually. Although the colors and brightness changes with each version, it helps the

\(^{49}\) While Hunter advocated for and practiced live teeth transplants, he was thoroughly against the use of women’s menstrual blood to cure toothaches and was also against the “violent passions” of foreigners who would often corrupt women’s teeth with their rudimentary dental care, or the “Tooth whitening powder from “foreign miscreants” often fools even the most genteel women and then their teeth are ruined forever.” This outside threat to English woman’s purity of their teeth was also lamented on by TG Purland and he had many clippings of a similar sentiment in his scrapbook. Hunter, John. Sheldon Peck Collection on the History of Orthodontics and Dental Medicine, et al. *The Natural History of the Human Teeth: Explaining Their Structure, Use, Formation, Growth, And Diseases. Illustrated With Copperplates*. London: Printed for J. Johnson, No 72. St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1771.
viewer notice that some things stay the same within all colorations.

In this image, we see the pained expressions on the working-class people’s teeth who are having their teeth removed and transplanted into aristocratic mouths. The intimacy of this image is also telling- there is barely any space between the workers and the patients receiving

13. Rowlandson’s Live Transplantation of Teeth, Blue Tones Royal College of Surgeons England ⁵⁰

In this image, we see the pained expressions on the working-class people’s teeth who are having their teeth removed and transplanted into aristocratic mouths. The intimacy of this image is also telling- there is barely any space between the workers and the patients receiving

⁵⁰ https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/library-and-publications/library/blog/transplanting-of-teeth/ the caption reads “Tooth transplantation was a lucrative but controversial practice in the 18th century; Rowlandson’s cartoon highlights the questionable ethics and exploitation of the poor. While unscrupulous dentists charged large sums for the treatment, vulnerable donors, like the young chimney sweep depicted in the cartoon, received little reward. There were also clinical limitations: long-term success was rare as the transplanted teeth loosened over time. More serious still was the danger of cross infection from donor to recipient. Eventually the ineffectiveness, the risks to health, and a growing public distaste for the practice, combined with the introduction of improved, porcelain dentures, led to the procedure being pretty much abandoned by the 19th century.
the transplants, which indicates how even though they may desire to create class distance, there is nothing quite as personal as having a person’s tooth placed into your mouth, making them ‘close’ and in communion with each other’s for as long as the tooth remains alive in its new socket, or as Hunter puts it, the “life and the vessels of the animal shall communicate with the tooth” (168).

51 14. Rolandson’s Illustration darkened, World History Commons, 1787.

In all versions of the image, the man seated in the middle is having his head pushed to the side and a tooth extracted by an almost serene looking gentleman dentist. He and his

51 https://worldhistorycommons.org/transplanting-teeth
clothing are various shades of black, blue, or grey, which could signify that he works as a chimney sweep. However, he is much older looking than most of that profession, who were generally children. His blackness could be part of the satire’s point as well, since at this time, Dental textbooks were already fetishizing the teeth of African people52. Additionally, scholars have asserted that chimney sweeps in Victorian literature and cultural texts often used the figure of a chimney sweep53 to subdue readers’ class and race anxieties, and those Black figures in Dickens’ texts which include illustrations who “carry the visual markers of the sweep – burnished cap, brush, and often bag,” are there in order “to comfort the (white) viewer and reader that they are not seeing a Black child on the street” (277) 54. There are markers of the chimney sweep for this man- he has a hat, and a brush is visible on the ground between his feet. Rowlandson may have been employing this trope as well, but more importantly, the subject position of this blackened ‘sweep’ also immediately draws the viewer’s eyes to him. Teeth of the working classes were up for grabs by British upper-class

52 Textbooks include a seminal French dental text from the early 18th century such as Pierre Fauchard’s Le Chirurgien Dentiste, ou Traité des Dents (1728) -that is considered throughout the other texts I’ve encountered to be the foundation of modern dentistry standards and is referenced as late as the 1880’s in other dental and medical texts that I have read so far in my research. Andrew Spielman and many other scholars of medical history call him the “father of modern dentistry” Spielman, Andrew I. “The birth of the most important 18th century dental text: Pierre Fauchard's Le Chirurgien Dentiste.” Journal of dental research vol. 86,10 (2007): 922-6. Fauchard still has a school of dentistry named after him entitled Pierre Fauchard Academy that publishes articals in its journal “Dental World.”

53 Another version of the image from the Wellcome Institute Collection

54 Lehmann, Christian. “The Blackness of the Chimney Sweep: Dickens, Illustrators, and Erasing Racial Complexity” Dickens Quarterly, Volume 39, Number 3, September 2022, pp. 276-311. Lehmann states that “whose presence Dickens’s illustrators (and Dickens himself) tended to erase and even to replace” (280). He additionally writes as an example widely circulated in London, that “In 1824, Robert Cruikshank […] created the frontispiece for James Montgomery’s fund- and awareness-raising book, The Chimney-Sweeper’s Friend, and Climbing-Boy’s Album. His illustration capitalized on white anxieties of white children being sold to “dark” men and, in turn, becoming dark themselves” and additionally points out how chimney sweeps were often compared to enslaved Africans since some could be stolen as children and sold into the profession, or preyed upon as small orphans (283-286).
patrons willing to pay for these live teeth transplants\textsuperscript{55}. Not only did Britain covet the land resources of Africa, but they coveted African bodies and teeth.

This fetishization may have led to an increase in teeth of African people being particularly sought after. The “strength and perfection” of their jaw according to many texts, in addition to the slave trade and the vulnerable position that enslaved Africans were put into by white colonizer plantation owners, gives an insight into the level of violence that this commodity fetishism may have generated. It has come out recently (2019-2022) that George Washington, whose teeth were supposedly made of wood, included ivory, animal teeth, and the teeth of some of his own enslaved people. The reason we know this, according to Mount Vernon’s records\textsuperscript{56}, is that he paid 6 pounds and 2 shillings for African teeth, which was considered generous and unusual at the time- most often, people did not pay for their enslaved Africans’ teeth but instead took them by force.

\textit{15. Rowlandson’s Illustration, Final Coloration. Wellcome Collection, 1787.}

\textsuperscript{55} The cost of the operation usually ran from 4-10 pounds, a large sum.
\textsuperscript{56} https://Washkamonya.mountvernon.org/george-washington/health/washingtons-teeth/george-washington-and-slave-teeth/
However, the difference in position, and the lack of number in terms of the people he gave payment to, makes this entire transaction very questionable. Doubtful that their consent was enthusiastic, I implore the reader to consider that these aristocratic desires did and still do affect how people in the world are treated depending on “use value” but also on abuse value for the wealthier classes.

Teeth are fetishized as a commodity of character in Rowlandson’s cartoon is also shown by the way that the blackened man is being treated by the people around him. An aristocratic woman with a gawking and open-mouthed expression looks at him hungrily, holding an ice rag to her cheek and possibly bleeding after her bad tooth was just removed. This hawkish and intense star that she has towards him is disturbing, if not simply alarming. Additionally, he is trapped in between two dentists and three aristocrats, and very physically close to everyone. Any class, gender, or racial barriers are erased – he becomes the most important person in the photo but also holds valuable commodities in his mouth that are about to be shared with his wealthy patrons.

The aristocratic class is displayed in a very unflattering and vain way. The man with the large wig in the back stands with his mouth opened and holds up a looking glass- we see that his face is covered in makeup and his affect is one of kind horror and awe at his own expression. As he stands gawking at himself and his new tooth, possibly from one of the children pictured to the left of the group holding their faces in pain, the younger woman on the far right in the pink shawl has her head arched back, her mouth wide open, upward, and her face in super close proximity to the dentist- it almost looks as if he is about to kiss her. The undertones of a sexual or at the very least potentially intimate situation with
the dentist attending to her, invading her oral space. She and that dentist are both blushing heavily.

The children in the image are in rags, shown to be of a lower working-class situation, and look to be suffering in misery. The one in the dress is looking downward and holding her right ear, while the boy next to her, who may also be dressed as a chimney sweep due to his floppy hat and parts of his body blackened, holds the right side of his jaw, frowns, and wears no shoes. The sign above them reads: “now money given for live teeth.” Although this image is not included in Purland’s scrapbook, he does talk about teeth transplantation and this image in some of the excerpts that he cut out; he is highly critical of the practice, which he calls “ludicrous” in one clipped essay (24). The writing in the middle of the print is much more difficult to read on all copies that I’ve seen online and at the Wellcome, but it seems to read “Baron Dentists,” which would mean that the dentists, themselves in expensive attire and wigs, are also part of the aristocratic class (although certainly not as high ranking as say a Duchess or a Viscount). Perhaps this is one of the reasons why they were able to attend to the aristocratic class and make so much money off the teeth of the working poor during this period. Purland’s attempts to separate himself from these “quacks,” as quoted earlier, is a good indication of his discomfort of this type of chaotic intimacy of other dentists who came before him. However, he did seem comfortable including other images with racial and sexual undertones. He says, as shown in the image below, that the operation is risky, spreads “constitutional distempers” which may affect the new mouth of the person who receives the transplant (50). He describes that “a young lady had her teeth extracted and their places supplied with others, still alive, from the mouth of a healthy-looking girl. The teeth took rot, and with them a disease which miserably terminated the existence of the unhappy young
lady” (50). Therefore, not only did live teeth transplantation considered a joke by the satirist cartoonist many years earlier, but in the nineteenth century, although it was still practiced, it was practiced less frequently and frowned upon by those influential to their burgeoning profession such as Purland. He importantly argues against the transfer of constitutional traits, which could be an indicator not only of disease, but of some remnants of the character (positive and negative) and dispositioned aspects of the person whose teeth were removed.

Instead, Purland was an advocate for prevention of cavities and the development of new forms of dentures. He said that depending on the type of the tooth used, if they were porcelain, “causes a disagreeable jarring, or clatter in the mouth; so much so, as, to be heard by the person to whom the wearer speaks” and often causing severe jaw pain or chills because of the material (47). Teeth could be made from mineral resources extracted from land or labor such as gold, porcelain, animal teeth, or human teeth and dental work was expensive and primarily available to the same people investing in colonialism and land management anyways. Newer and whiter teeth often came from “secret” or ancient “Oriental” recipes in the earlier Victorian period but became more violent as they increasingly felt ownership over other people’s lands, resources, and bodies. Just as pearls came from land and were imported to Britain between 1770-1850, teeth were also imported from Africa and the Americas, lands that were romanticized just like the white teeth of the
people from those lands. Although he does advocate for prevention, it is important to note that he does not rule out the use of human teeth from living or dead bodies, which was also common practice. Only from one mouth straight into the next mouth while both patients are living (or live teeth transplantation as a practice in itself) is critiqued. The practice continued for many years afterwards even into the 1860’s in Britain, especially in rural areas. His scrapbook contains images of dentures made from a variety of materials, including porcelain and horse teeth, many of which also suggest going into a feminine mouth and methods for inserting or installing more permanent dentures with wires. In the images below, which were clipped and inserted into the scrapbook without attached description or context, act as haunting disembodied notions of these false teeth and the aesthetic results for the female mouth alone in their implantation. These two images appear on page 49 of the scrapbook, standing on their own in the scrapbook as disembodied and decontextualized dentures and teeth, and in the second image of the floating woman’s mouth and chin, it is also unclear what sort of instrument or body part (is it a human nose) is represented figure A. It seems like a surreal and faceless image, a fractalized identity of the person hinted at in the image, but also a decontextualized object.

*16. Illustration of Dentures from Ivory and Porcelain TG Purland Scrapbook, Wellcome Collection*
which in its design and layout
highlights the teeth and lips.

Purland’s critique of the
inhumanity of live tooth transplants
was not unique to himself, and
Britain’s orientalist practices around
the increase in desire for white teeth
as a commodity of character in
dentistry is sardonically referred to in a short story publication appearing later in the
nineteenth century titled “The Sultan and His Teeth” from the magazine *Bow Bells* (1878).

The story reads:

THE SULTAN AND HIS TEETH.

There is no doubt whatever that the Sultan earnestly exerted himself to prevent war but finding himself obliged to choose between revolution with almost certain loss of power, and measures which were sure to make Russia declare war, he chose the latter reluctantly and with serious forebodings. The character of this man may be estimated from the following incident: - He suffers from a decayed tooth, and having been advised to consult a dentist, summoned one. The dentist advised the extraction of the tooth, and at the request of the Sultan, explained the modus operandi. The Sultan summoned a slave, and directed the dentist to show him how it was done. The slave lost his tooth, but the Sultan was unnerved by the sight of blood and deferred the operation on himself. It is stated on the best authority that the dentist had already been summoned eight times, and that eight slaves have lost one or more teeth each, but that the Sultan still suffers from toothache. This incident might well serve as a parable to illustrate the way in which Western Europe has dealt with the fabric known as the Ottoman empire.

Not only is this story participating in Said’s orientalism because of its’ depiction of
the Sultan and eastern social customs, but it additionally uses this story as a way of critiquing
the formerly British practice of live tooth transplants and class and racial inequity. In an
additional layering of critique, British colonialism and resource extraction without regard to the people affected by it is heavily and directly compared to the greedy Sultan in the story. This not only links teeth to commodity culture directly, but also to Britain’s violent relationship with its colonies and the people living in those colonies. The notion of character is additionally invoked, not only marring the Sultan’s character but also that of Britain as a nation and Western Europe and its use and abuse of the bodies of lower-class people more broadly as well as the commodities of these places, such as fabric. This story is a short but very clear illustration of how inextricably linked these ideas were for many nineteenth-century Britons regarding dentistry, race, class, teeth, commodification of the body, and character.

The ways in which these visual scenes were of grotesqueness at the dentist were often depicted, especially for French and Irish Dentists, was completely characterized by the grotesque and sexualized style of cartoon or description. In a section that focuses on what Teukolsky terms “urban character and cockney masculinity” they argue that popular books such as Life in London make character both “visual” and “external” through “a stunningly influential reach across the popular, visual, theatrical, and print cultures of the 1820’s and 1830’s” (41-43). The importance of character emphasized in Life in London I would argue is simultaneously reflected in a variety of other texts throughout the time, and the “obsession” as Teukolsky terms it that occurs in this text for the “theme of character” in visual representation also occurs throughout the collected images and notes of the Phrenological and Agricultural Societies of Edinburgh, Dublin, London, and Pennsylvania. In fact, the type of focus on depicting different visual caricatures of people’s character is very common in illustrations stemming from phrenology, which hit the UK with increasing traction in 1820.
This is in part because the land-owning class generally had less mental separation between thinking of urban and rural since many could travel easily between the two. Additionally, images of character were not confined to urban caricatures in many texts- instead, they became a tool of colonial and patriarchal control and colonial propaganda to “other” any person considered unmodern, including the rural peasant, the woman with her mouth opened by one or more untoward looking me, the poor chimney sweeps lined up to have their teeth pulled and placed into an aristocratic mouth, and the faraway exotic “savage,” people who were often portrayed visually in degrading ways that either infantilized or sexualized their teeth and orality.

Purland’s particular choices show us a snapshot of the representative meanings of teeth circulating amongst prominent dentists in London in the early nineteenth century, what was available in the newspapers that someone in the upper or merchant class would read, the way bodies and specifically the character and commodity of teeth were treated both by dentists, merchants, and the values placed on them both monetarily and as a commodity fetish by society, the surprising connections between phrenology and dentistry, and how teeth were viewed along race, gender, class, and national definitions.

Strangely, his choices include the very satirical and sexualized way that both dentists and female patients were portrayed throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, despite the grotesqueness of some of them. He also included advertisements that indicated the association of teeth with commodities abroad, with the desire to improve one’s character and social standing, and with both sexual purity and whiteness. Although the sexual perversion of dentists was a widely circulated trope, it is interesting that Purland himself chose to include quite so many images of sexualized female patients and their leering and sexually predatory
male dentists. The images range from gentlemanly dentists invading uncomfortable aristocratic mouths, to dentists of all class taking advantage of a doting, naive, or sexualized female patient (Images 8-11). Some of the images are more tongue in cheek, while others are overly aggressive and seem to be almost a gang rape of the woman’s mouth and violent. One such example is “The County Tooth Drawer” (Image 19). In the image “The Country Tooth Drawer,” the female patient is surrounded by men as her worried husband looks on. One of the men is stepping on her leg so she cannot back away while

18. Dentist Leering at Working Class Woman, Partial Clipped Image from TG Purland’s Scrapbook, Wellcome Collection

the other holds her head in place. Her face is deeply pained, her front tooth pulled, her facial muscles contorted in agony and her brow furrowed in what looks to be excruciating pain, but the men behind her smile in an almost sinister-looking pleasure. One of them holds a stick in the air, looking like he might beat her with it. The drawer himself seems to be older
and focused but is also

19. “The County Tooth Drawer” Lithograph Printed and Sold by Bowls and Carver. TG Purland’s Scrapbook

dressed similarly to all the other men. He and the woman have similar buckle shoes on.

Unlike the aristocratic dentists pictured in the Live Tooth Transplantation image from
Rowlandson, this scene shows one that this process, which may be less technical, is done
with people of a more similar class- for the working classes, there was no transplantation for
a rotten tooth- they mostly just had to have it pulled.
20. Fealing the Lady’s Teeth” Illustration and Lithograph, 1782, TG Parland Scrapbook, Wellcome Collection
In the following two images, “The Dentist Fealing the Ladies’ Teeth” and “A French Dentist” from Purland’s scrapbook, the images show similarly sexual undertones of men invading the oral space of a female patient. The images range from timid to overtly pornographic with the French Dentist image, the woman’s full bosom bursting out of her top and everyone’s faces flushed a deep red color. Holistically, Purland’s choices for inclusion in his scrapbook may seem somewhat sporadic and to include specific interests of his (including his own work), it also says a lot more about his own feelings and motivations for getting into dentistry, in some ways, than it does about London dentistry in general at this time. However, because of his influence and the fact that he advertised the existence of his scrapbook in the
newspaper I maintain that we can still learn a lot from the images he collected. It is fascinating to see what someone from that time and in London was assuming was important for both him and his target audience.

It is also important to note that these sexual depictions of dentistry included in Purland’s work and even the satirical cartoon by Rowlandson of Hunter’s live teeth transplant practice, also contrast with some of the depictions of teeth sellers or the economic reasons in continental Europe. For example, this image of a woman covering her eyes as she steals the teeth of a hanged man, out of clear necessity since she is not enjoying it, contrasts greatly with the eerie, leery, or even joyful affect of the dentists depicted in much of the English and Scottish satires and general illustrations of dentistry as a practice. Her affect is much more one of avoidance, fear, and possibly sadness, and is very different from the robust and at times gleeful images included in Purland’s scrapbook. 57

Eighteenth and nineteenth-century developments in both

22. “A Caza de Dientes” by Francisco Goya, 1805

57 A Caza de Dientes by Francisco Goya, 1805. Wellcome Collection.
dentistry and phrenology respectively created and mirrored the desires of white supremacy within settler colonialism and the perceived market competition inherent within industrial capitalism. Critical Indigenous Scholar Aileen Moreton Robinson asks in her book *The White Possessive* for scholars to examine colonial logics of private property and ownership when looking for answers to help understand some of the ongoing repercussions of settler colonialism. Robinson states that ‘contemporary and historical narratives of Britishness and national identity reveal that the values required to establish the nation as a white possession are those that were also required to dispossess Indigenous people of their lands. Through the law, politics, and culture, the nation has been created as a white possession’ (31). It is important to recognize that what we now feel as part of life, was not a given in the eighteenth or even the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

More importantly, I would also argue that the scrapbook’s existence says more about the values of the burgeoning profession of dentistry and phrenology in Victorian London than it may have later. In choosing what Purland felt was significant to include in this scrapbook, collected prints, artistic representations of skulls, bones, teeth, dentures, and dentistry, he also had to pick things already in circulation. Much of what was chosen shows the price of purchasing teeth to patients, the advertisements to make teeth whiter, and the representation of dentistry as both part of the sexual and racial apparatus of imperial

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58 Even though many practicing phrenologists were working or merchant class people, they were heavily sponsored by Scottish aristocracy and landed gentry, a point that has been largely overlooked in previous studies which tend to highlight the humble origins of the world’s most famous phrenologists. Dentistry, on the other hand, was an older and more class-mixed production although Purland was fast to emphasize his gentlemanly origins in his scrapbook.

59 To nineteenth-century physical sciences, skulls of dead humans and animals are all the same or strikingly similar material objects and similar methods are used to read the skulls of various people and animals. It seems that comparative anatomy in phrenology may have been a method learned from the comparative dentistry of Hunter. There are clear similarities between the language in both fields, and clear relationship through speeches given by dentists at phrenological society meetings and vice versa, which needs to be examined further in future studies. The attempts to try and compartmentalize the parts of the body mirrors the compartmentalizing of the “races of man” are also similar.
capitalism and settler colonialism. If a nation only exists through reproduction of bodies and citizens and workers, then it also only exists in an arbitrary sectioning off values, ideologies, and geographies from places that are in constant communication and trade with one another. This happened both locally and transnationally through settler colonialism, agricultural management, the enclosing of lands and redrawing of borders. Creating private property in England and the British colonies was an extremely traumatic experience for those living through it, changing ways of life and relationship to land in by creating categorizations and borders where previously there hadn’t been. As Carolyn Lesjak asserts, “they witnessed the destruction of the commons and the profound transformations of a whole social world an set of values’ and that ‘as a result, they were cognizant-- in ways we can no longer be-- of the historical existence of a relationship to land and property alternative to that which came to prevail over the course of the nineteenth century, and of an alternative set of social and historical relations’ (6). The creation of borders and dividing lands with hedgerows made travel and survival less convenient for peasants, traveling ethnic groups, and the mobile working classes and the solidification of patriarchy and the gender binary inherent within the image of the pastoral single family home life where the “angel of the hearth” and home and property ownership, control, and wealth hoarding, became an irrevocable symbol of capitalism’s winners and Britons’ national identity.

The participation of influential Scottish wealthy landholders in enclosure within Scotland, London, and in Irish and the American territories of settler colonial land grabs is visible using the term “disposition” within both the Scottish Highland Agricultural society and the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh and the overlapping donors and membership of both. Purland’s inclusion of phrenological essays within his scrapbook early on shows that
despite the controversy surrounding the practice, he felt much more comfortably with phrenology and may have been a member of the phrenological associations or agricultural associations that developed in London by Anglo-Scots gentlemen\textsuperscript{60}. As the aristocrats mapped and began exerting control on lands within the Highland Agricultural Society, designating lands as useful or “wasted,” phrenology mapped and began to exert control on the notion of dispositioning character. This land-supported mapping and land-managing exported nationalism that Moreton-Robinson refers to as evidencing the “logics of white possession” was not only applied to lands that were being dispositioned, but also to the notion of classification and character in general. As Vine Deloria would later comment on this desire to classify and categorize, “Non-tribals can measure the distance to the moon with unerring accuracy, but the moon remains an impersonal object to them without personal relationships that would support or illuminate their innermost feelings.\textsuperscript{61}” In other words, no matter how much mapping and categorizing of the natural world occurred in colonial mindset, there was no deeper understanding, either of the de-personified object of study, or of the internal self. Through these two societies and their influence in London and throughout the British commonwealth, phrenologists and agricultural managers began to “own” the discourse of disposition and control the way lands and human bodies were classified and valued as commodities.

The commodification of character via phrenology and the discourse of the savage, in addition to the desire to commodify the land’s bare resources (gold, pearls, copper) and this mirrored the desire to own body parts of the people living on the land which were

\textsuperscript{60} This is something that I need to research more- I have not looked for Purland’s participation, although he clearly was in touch with phrenologists as he was invited to speak at the phrenological association meeting in London and included his speech within the scrapbook.

commodified, and which settlers felt they could steal and own to increase their own character. Founding members of phrenology within the UK included George Combe and Robert Cox of the Edinburgh Phrenological Society, who, according to their observatory notes and meeting minutes, were prolific letter writers and travelers throughout Scotland, Ireland, and London. Additionally, Robert Cox and other Phrenological Society members disseminated information through correspondence and visiting lectures in the Eastern part of the US. Their ideas, while ridiculed by some contemporaries and of course from subsequent scholars of the nineteenth century, were shared widely through pamphlets and personal letters, irrevocably changing and influencing how people and their character was viewed in a way that leaked into representations of cultural and literary texts. The inclusion of advertisements and publications from their Edinburgh and London branches within TG Purland’s scrapbook, and their choice to publish at least one essay from him (also included in his scrapbook) in their bi-annual publication, represents that these two fields, the field of dentistry and phrenology, had frequent communication and possibly mutual support for each other’s ideas and practices.

62 Pamela Gilbert’s text Victorian Skin works from the assertion that many British authors, philosophers, and science aficionados were heavily influenced by the Scottish enlightenment in attempts to mediate their fears of ‘The Terror’ of the French Revolution and its violence to better grasp “the problem of embodied consciousness” after the move from the enlightenment to materialism (1, 6-7). I would add that this shift in focus on embodiment and mapping to understand embodiment also became visually available and widely accessible in part through phrenologists and other pseudo scientists, who were one of the enthusiastic transmitters of these methods into the British mainstream consciousness in nineteenth-century Edinburgh (then Glasgow, London, Dublin, and Pennsylvania). The idea that one’s character could be read just by what was externally visible, also connects with the way that enclosure and mapping of lands coincided with mapping of bodies through lines on the skull.

63 For example, Lesjak argues in relation to the popularity of Dickens’ “eccentric biographies,” that “character is always a material, collective endeavor in that it always involves an exchange between individuals and the world, one in which individuals are truly the world instead of released from it (51). She asserts that these characters “become object lessons, as it were, in how to refuse the objectification that nullifies subjects” (58).
With increasing land enclosure squeezing peasant and farming communities into the marketplace instead of subsistence, and with increasing upper-class travel and access to sugary goods (corn, tea, sugar) from places Empire stole resources from, it is clear both in phrenological texts and Purland’s scrapbook habit how capitalism, extractivism, and settler colonialism could use science to justify their destruction and continued search for “frontier” to exploit. According to Marx in “American Food and the Land Question,” one thing that was certain in the nineteenth century was the desire for and perceived need for trade from food from the US frontier. He states that “The British agriculturist used to pride himself of his large farms as opposed to the small farms of Continental peasant proprietors; but what are the largest farms in the United Kingdom compared to the farms of the American prairie, farms of 40,000 acres and more, worked by regular armies of men, horses, and implements, drilled, commanded, and organised like soldiers? (June 1881).\textsuperscript{64} While Britain exploited and benefitted from the foods of other places, as well as the bare mineral resources of other places, this practice further illustrates the association with teeth as symbolic of land during colonial expansion, both because of the teeth of other people that were encountered and written about and because of the lack of teeth in England and amongst wealthy Britons through the 1890’s when dentistry became more widely afforded by more people, both in terms of what teeth represented to them and in terms of the material and physical elements of teeth.

I argue that teeth became fetishized as a commodity within Victorian Scotland and the rest of Britain not only because of the existing cultural symbolism surrounding teeth, but also because wealthy Briton’s teeth were rotting due to excess consumption during colonial

\footnote{64 This reference does not include page numbers – Marxists.org.}
expansion. In Edinburgh’s Surgeons’ Hall Museum, the small section on dentistry is nestled away on in a corner of the 5th floor and takes up 3 total cases. The messaging around the exhibit from staff and in public plaques is one of relief that we as contemporary museum visitors are less tortured through severe dental problems than the people of the past were. Compared to other exhibits, this one is small and primarily consists of illustrations, dental tools, false tooth sets made of a variety of materials, and at least one case is dedicated to instruments called “apple scoops” that allowed Britons with rotting or missing teeth to consume food, especially fruits. The way that these devices work is that a hollowed tube is shoved into an apple and then the fruit is sucked out by the gummy mouth of whomever had lost so many of their teeth that they needed to eat this way. According to the exhibit information, apple scoops were prominent amongst all classes, but primarily purchased and used by folks who were at least middle class. This was due to their food habits and their access to imported foods, especially sugar, before the 1830’s when these goods became more readily available to the general British populace.

Ironically, the people purchasing the teeth of other people must have had some internal knowledge as to their own corruption, making teeth and orality a very sensitive topic in British cultural texts. The need to replace their corrupted teeth with the better and whiter teeth of working-class, dead soldier, criminal, Irish, Native, and African teeth in their mouths in addition to the other materials used in dentures must have led to quite the cognitive dissonance, given that they thought themselves better and purer, at least earlier in the nineteenth century, than the people they were purchasing teeth from. What did that do to the psyche of the wealthy Briton? Not only could they not feed themselves with only English grains and produce, but they relied on violence and control of lands that were not theirs, and
violence towards the mouths and teeth of colonial people both to gain access to this personal
material resource for their own mouth to eat, function, and to enhance their own character.

We see evidence of this unconscious discontent in periodical texts where English upper-class
people lash out at colonial people for expressing themselves about their own teeth, the teeth
or oral space of British people, their habits of consumption, their lies, their drinking, and
their lack of integrity specifically regarding the mouth. The outrage expressed by one young
lady about an “old Indian” man speaking of his own teeth in a letter to the editor about a
party he attended in her company appears severe, and she lashes out by questioning his
humanity and mocking his elderly and sickly body, quoting him and responding with
vengeful rage: He again proceeds as follows:

The truth is, and matron or maid may doubt if she will, that a marriage is becoming
every day a greater rarity among us. At first sight, it may appear that I am ill entitled
to handle this topic, and I may incur some danger of having the old adage, about the
devil reproving sin, thrown in my teeth.” I should greatly doubt, whether the increase
either of marriages or of anything else, can ever be much promoted by the return of
such people as your correspondent. But what business has he ever to mention such a
word as “teeth?” Has he so soon forgotten the joke about the “hippopotamus, or river
horse,” and “Mr. Scott the dentist?” Did he never hear of the elephant, “the armed
rhinoceros,” or the Hyrcan tiger? In short, can he be averred, on the honored a
gentleman, that he has one steadfast proper human tooth in either of his two jaws? I
leave it to himself to declare it (542).

This passage offers an intense example of the way that oral space and teeth were contested
during the early nineteenth century. Part of her frustration in this article before the passage is
that he is critiquing the lack of convivial conversation at parties in this time versus when he
first arrived in England and Scotland in the 1780’s. Although he writes anonymously about
the party, she says that they know exactly who he is. Her insults and insinuations about his
teeth are both an ageist attack (she accuses him of being too old to try and marry but he

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continues to flirt with and then be rejected by women who just came out into society such as her younger sister)\(^{66}\) which not only insinuates that her is perverted but also that he is not meant to be speaking with the people who he is speaking with because of his advanced age; however that type of age gap was fairly normalized at the time (539). The phrase “what business has he ever to mention such a word as “teeth?” and then the tyrant about the various animal teeth jokes could either indicate that he does not have very many teeth in his mouth because of old age, but because he is described as both an “old Indian” in his own letter and by her “a Caledonian,” and his skin color is referenced by saying that he spent too much time in the sun growing up (539). Therefore, he is continuously racialized in the text before this comment about whether he’s allowed to talk about teeth is made. Additionally, the comparisons to animals, although the hippopotamus does not have many visible teeth, also connects with the way that colonial people were compared with animals throughout this time to further dehumanize them. Her question about the teeth which reside in his mouth and their origins could also be perceived as classist, although she calls him a gentleman.

As readers, we are left to question the implications of the “Old Indian” as he referred to himself and as Alpina refers to him in this letter does not have human teeth in his mouth, is it because he is purchasing porcelain or animal teeth as Purland’s clippings illustrate were still popularly used at this time? Or is she questioning his own status as human? She does indicate in another page that a family not her own refers to him as “monster.” Although she is offended that he gave commentary about her party in his letter in general, her feelings seem to become heightened at this part of the story, where she attacks his teeth. If the owning class of commodity teeth felt that they could control the narrative, the bodies, and the lands of the

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\(^{66}\) She additionally mentions that old bachelors represent “all manner of wickedness” (541).
people whose teeth they had in their mouth, they were contented. However, it becomes clear in a few moments of extreme reactivity that if a person who was considered “lower” in their hierarchy, especially racialized colonial people, were to comment on English oral culture or express their own affective discontent with colonial attempts to control their bodies and mouths, this brought up a wound for Britons, who were clearly very self-conscious about their mouths and teeth. This projection of humanity versus inhumanity, character, and value exiting within the oral space assisted in the commodification of teeth and desire for these white teeth (described previously as references to the savage and animal, and prior to that as notating sexual purity and value to patriarchy as a chaste or modest wife) as colonialism and capitalism increased.

The commodification of character in relation to land resources had a clear and violently negative material effect on places targeted for settler colonialism. As Patrick Wolfe
outlines, the unique influence of settler colonialism is that it “destroys to replace” and leads to genocidal “logics” (338). Part of the violence inherent in the discourse of the “savage” embodied within how teeth are imagined and commodified as part of one’s character purity is the binary and supposed separation between peoples considered are “primitive” (with good teeth) and those who are “civilized,” with “civilization” at the top of the hierarchy in both dentistry and phrenology. Some of the primary markers of “civilized man,” according to many of the phrenological pamphlets include “agreeableness” and “obedience” (Cox 32). In George Combe’s “Condition of Man” published and circulated in 1847, civilization and especially British nature is heavily critiqued. However, both he and Cox (two of the most influential phrenologists in Scotland and therefore the world), worse even still are “feelings,” as seen in the order of “lower animals,” with higher order faculties including the “intellectual faculties of genius and the external senses” and “supremacy of the moral sentiments and intellect” but creates a reimagined class structure social where “the highest, the greatest, most splendid of all qualities, necessarily imply the existence of inferior degrees, and are attainable only by a few” (Combe 15, 16, 19). Their systems of study and cranial mapping were not only applied to casts and skulls of animals and people, but these skulls were also then used to argue for certain national qualities of which the heads of people supposedly represented. These hierarchies often contradict themselves, however, especially in Combe’s exertions. On one page of “Physiology applied to Health and Education” and “A treatise of the physiological and moral management of infancy,” for example, he says that in “moral law on natural prosperity England leads the way” but on the next he basically associates the British nation as one that has some of the worst human traits combined. In fact, “Britain’s moral history is “dark with suffering and gloom, and at this day we groan under the debt and
difficulties [...] chiefly in wars, originating in commercial jealousy and thirst for conquest” and uses the term “unprincipled forefathers” (67-70). Combe’s concern over the overtly evil and “sinful” qualities of the British nation and of the Britons’ ancestry and his critiques of capitalism and imperialism are both contradicted by some of the other information he disseminates throughout his time with the Phrenological Society (1820-1850’s) and they are also contradicted by Robert Cox, who according to meeting minutes begins as the group secretary but later gives fire and brimstone lectures and disseminates British national and Christian hegemonic propaganda, and who also takes credit for publishing most of George Combe’s work and distributing it to the public.

Despite all the issues inherent within “civilization,” as outlined by Native authors later in this dissertation, this idea was long subscribed to and still is by some people. Because the perceived Native, Irish, African pagan connections to land and land-based spirituality are represented by teeth earlier in the discourse of the “savage,” from the 1600’s onward (Gaelic Gothic 6) which creates a direct and uncontestable link between teeth of people considered “savage,” i.e., pagan, to the land desired for settler colonial resource extraction. This is briefly mentioned by Patel and Moore in their chapter “Cheap Nature,” arguing that the existence of Indigenous knowledge and witchcraft directly “challenged both its epistemology and ontology” (61). Conveniently, many of the people whose teeth and lands were targeted for the betterment not only of individual wealthy Britons’ character improvement and the increase of wealth of the British national body through the commodification of land and extraction of resources, were also targeted through the representation of teeth and character in phrenology and dentistry.
Linda M. Clemmons discusses how for many Christian missionaries invading Native territory, often the first settlers in a place, lamented Native worship of the land and of “everything they see” as opposed to solely one Spirit or God, assuming that their relationship with land was either naive or satanic and attempting to convince them of enlightenment dualism between heaven and earth (31). This relationality, described by Critical Indigenous studies and Native studies traditions as a deep kinship seeped in long history and mutual responsibility (Mishuana Goeman, Leanne Simpson, Joanne Barker, Aileen-Moreton Robinson, Dian Million, and many others have written) represents one of the largest barriers to settler colonial success. In other words, this deep relationality to land and love of the land as relative is a direct threat to the enlightenment dualism that later allows for enclosures in Britain and Europe and the continued rejection of paganism and embrace of the notion that man is greater than nature within Christianity and especially Protestant Christianity. Therefore, the colonial discourse of “the savage” fixates on this spiritual link to attack and undermine both before and after teeth are commodified as an integral part of identification of “primitive” diets and non-colonial consumption.

As Silvia Federici argues, the logics used in the Americas during colonization mirrored those brought over from Europe. Federici states that “the similarities in the treatments to which the populations of Europe and the Americas were subjected are sufficient to demonstrate the existence of one single logic governing the development of capitalism and the structural character of the atrocities perpetrated in this process. An outstanding example is the extension of the witch-hunt to the American colonies.” She later goes on to argue that witch-hunting and demonization of land-based spiritual practices were a solely European practice, from Spain to England, where elites targeted these spiritualities as “devil worship,”
was used as “a weapon to strike at political economies and vilify entire populations” (220). Therefore, despite the practice of demonizing land-based spirituality being primarily a European phenomenon, it was exported to the US colonies and used against any who was considered a threat to the structures of power there, largely women, Native people of various tribes, and according to her research, anyone whose consumption was vilified (re discourse of the savage and the notion of cannibalism, nudity and sexualized orality, and the portrayal of supposedly unruly appetites in general and hungry mouths surrounding human heads and entrails). These images of colonial propaganda against the “new world” were disseminated around Europe as early as the 1550’s and caused great harm in terms of ongoing lack of empathy after that point from European power structures towards Native populations (223). Despite this being a campaign of gold, silver, and other resource extraction, Native people were targeted as the ones to be feared because of their consumption.

The idea of the untouched by civilization teeth presented in these journals are still part of the myth of the “dying Indian races” that he was a large part of promoting in England67. Teeth featured prominently within the discourse of “the savage,” but also as a symbol of purity and upright moral character in English literature from as early as the Wife of Bath’s infamous gap tooth. Teeth and their affectively charged presentation occur during

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67 Datta, Nilak. “The Museum as West and West as Museum: The Micro-Politics of Museum Display in George Catlin’s Vanishing American Indians.” Western American Literature vol. 53, no. 3 fall 2018. Nilak Datta writes “when Catlin was preparing to embark on his first journey to the Great Plains, the 1830 Indian Removal Act came into force. His showcasing of Indian culture was predicated on the acceptance of Indian extinction.” Furthermore, Catlin’s problematic representations of himself and the people who were traveling with him became signifiers for collapsed ideals and created less, not more, understanding in Europe about the Americas and subverted his original goals of supporting Native people in campaigning for their rights and lifeways. His competing goals of enterprise and survival under capitalism meant that exploiting existing tropes and ideas was often more important than protecting his friends and Native alliances, although he tried to tell himself that both were possible simultaneously. As Datta asserts, his show was so influential to the British idea of Native life and colonialism that “The Museum (Gallery Unique) becomes the West when Catlin the traveler becomes the center of attraction surrounded by other attractions. Catlin’s West becomes the West.”
important moments of power exchange when bodies are interpreted and evaluated. Usually, teeth are presented and described in a text either as a shorthand way to describe someone’s character or as a way for people to prove that they or someone they encountered had exceptional character. Most often they are described by narrators upon encounter and first description. Teeth are objects in themselves, but bodies are also social commodities whose value is represented through their teeth. Fanny Hill in *The Memoirs of a Lady of Pleasure* describes how “carefully” she takes care of her teeth within the first chapter. This is narrated as a way of reclaiming her purity in the narrative about her sex work, about how despite imbibing of “pleasures,” she is still not stained by them and hence, neither are her teeth. The presentation of her teeth through the character’s own first-person narration is an important rhetorical move to show that despite her profession, her purity, and thus her teeth, remain unstained. Another example from the Wesleyan-Methodist magazine in London in 1888, where the English (middle class and we are told well-traveled) narrator meets an Irish peasant girl and immediately describes her teeth in a way that is representative of this pattern in texts from this time onward that connects her with the discourse “savage” and therefore “unfeeling” character through her mouth and teeth:

“The eldest born of Paddy’s numerous progeny was a girl-- a tall, good looking, and as yet, bone-displaying damsel of sixteen, with masses of magnificent but totally unkempt auburn hair, and the whitest teeth that I ever saw in human mouth. Not an atom of vanity, nor indeed, as far as I could discover, of any other feeling, did this handsome young creature possess” (57)

This description of her shockingly white teeth as an important moment of contact, alongside general character description, is typical in English encounter narratives, but most often a fixation when describing people connected with occupied or desired lands, or people of “questionable” character, who were described in animalistic ways (see the word *creature* in
the passage above) and as unfeeling. However, as English people were also observing throughout the time of industrialization and colonization (especially in the later part of the nineteenth century), the spoils of the Empire overconsumption of sugars, tea, and other imports were rotting out their own teeth. They coveted not only the lands, but the teeth of the bodies on those lands they were trying to exploit through colonization. This becomes clear through lustful depictions of white and even teeth and scientific articles stating that the best practices of keeping one’s teeth intact were coming from other places, such as India, Africa, and the Americas advertised alongside artificial teeth. Although teeth were used in the earlier part of the eighteenth and nineteenth century to disposition racialized and sexualized “others,” they became increasingly fetishized and desired throughout the Victorian period. Thus, the claim from Washkamonya that he and the other Native travelers felt that English teeth “were destroyed by the number of lies that passed over them” is perhaps one of the most potent affective critiques that could be leveled at them. This is especially true when we specifically understand that character, purity, and morality were often perceived to be shown through perfect and unstained teeth, something that the later emphasis on the “noble savage” that Catlin unfortunately perpetuated through his shows.

This tension around mouths and teeth as a space of potential to challenge the dominant narratives around character purity and what is or is not “savage” or “civilized” becomes a very prominent site of discussion about racialization, sexualization, gender, class, and land value simultaneous to the spike in usage of the term “noble savage.” What people eat, how they eat, what their teeth look like, how they take care of their teeth, and how people use their oral space all become various dog whistles for discussions around control of appetites, both sexual and dietetic in British periodicals and beyond. Or as David Lloyd
outlines through Kantian philosophy and Freudian psychoanalysis, Lloyd outlines how Irish colonial subjects viewed as their oral space are positioned through a lens that inferences a “negative and inadequate way of being in the world” and that “oral fixation signifies regression: the development of interiority, of the ego and the superego, obeys the hierarchy of the senses that aesthetic philosophy had already defined as dividing those in which the subject dissolves into its objects” (5). The discourse of the noble savage relied on this paternalistic and egoistic view of the other as being in a lower stage of development on the hierarchy. Freud may have picked up this tension and relationship in his theories simply through observing western European society since this discourse of colonial orality was prominently passed around Italy, France, and the Eastern US at the very least. The advertised self-congratulatory notion of perfect self-restraint narrated as possible for “civilized English” only, contrasted against the “unfeeling” or “volatile emotionality” and what Yvette Abrams terms “savage sexuality” or uncivilized appetites (cannibalism inferred) of the person who is categorized as the opposing comparison of enlightenment “reason,” aka “the ignoble savage,” is completely unraveled in a moment of affective orality. Through affective orality, or the moment of affective transit, in reference to Jodi Byrd’s usage of transit, occurs through a moment of recognition of emotion where the oral space of either fictional characters or living people within social contexts produces an uncanny phenomenon where there is an undeniable, spontaneous, and immediate recognition of shared life from the viewer. Additionally, this uncanny tooth becomes more deeply embedded in the personal through theft of and transplantation of teeth; instead of out there and unknowable, it was consumed, placed in the gum, subsumed, and intimately felt (yet ironically still unknown).
Although the notion of the noble savage developed out of this egoistic paternalism of colonial and white supremacist violence, it also was not widely accepted as positive. In the case that political economist Thomas Malthus outlined in earlier years about the Irish, that the idea of the “nobility” of so-called savages was detrimental to the social good of Britain. On June 11th, 1853, Charles Dickens wrote a now infamous essay (that should be much more infamous within Victorian Studies) in *Household Words* arguing that Native peoples should be “highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth” and that “The Noble Savage” as romanticized by his contemporaries, did not exist. Instead, all people whom Dickens classified as “savage” were “bloodthirsty,” and “addicted to entrails,” and deserved any negative fate that came their way (337). In this same essay, Dickens writes in detail about being a spectator at Catlin’s show with “his Ojibbeway travelers” and describes his view of what it was like to see people persuaded by the concept of “the Noble Savage,” or beautiful beings deserving of compassion and admiration through Catlin’s outward support of this trope and of highlighting wonderful parts of Native people, customs, dress, dance, and embodied elegance. As someone who was both very influential and widely read during his life, who became a public figure and a hero of the literate working and middle classes of England, Dickens’ work in creating public support for colonization and Native genocide must be reckoned with more often in Victorian Studies. Although it has been mentioned in writing, (such as in Coll Thrush’s text *Indigenous London* and some scholarly articles) I have rarely heard it discussed elsewhere.

The commodification of both teeth and land comes from the same ideology of disconnected relationship to land and rejection of paganism; since land, diet, purity, are all represented by teeth, white teeth themselves become a symbol of land-resources targeted for
extraction, in addition to being extracted and sold as a resource out of the mouth. In Linda Clemmons’s recount of the Dakota 38, it is stated that their bodies were mutilated, and their teeth were pulled after the men were hanged (92). The values of a few overlapping societies of wealthy men became parts of unconscious ideology that remain pieces of a broader pattern found within cultural artifacts of colonialism that spread from England through Scotland and to Ireland and the Americas. All these spaces and more are deeply affected by the logics of racialized possession and national identity that we still grapple with in part because of the objectification and categorization of dispositions.

On the one hand, immigrants to the Americas relied on people who had been there to disposition the lands that they were going to be invading (largely wealthy landholders such as Lord Selkirk of the Red River Settlements and the people they hired from their own country (often Scotland and then Ireland) or emigrants to map out and give a disposition of the lands they would be traveling to. Phrenology, although as Steven Shapin has argued largely made up of people from merchant and middle-class backgrounds as opposed to Edinburgh’s “cultural elite,” became insidiously linked with the practice of mapping human bodies and their perceived “faculties” or “natural talents” (Shapin 229, Combe 15, 17). The way that perceived “intellectual and emotional faculties” were ranked within the Phrenological Society at times might seem random and was not linked to any university or Royal Society despite having some aristocratic members such as Sir George Mackenzie. However, over the years, not only did the language of phrenology draw on the language of agriculture, but the language of agriculture, in part because of Mackenzie’s combined funding of both the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh and the Highland Agricultural society, used the same
language to map or “disposition” both lands and people’s social character and the implied social, cultural, or material value of said lands and people.

This mapping of character through outward traits strongly associated itself with descriptions of teeth and other body parts. Priya Yoshi, Pablo Mukherjee and others argue that British national and racial identity, did not exist without the comparative representations and interactions with other peoples’ bodies, cultures, spiritualities, but with “comparative anatomy” and the tendency to practice “dispositioning” lands and skulls being both the crux of phrenology and agricultural development in Scotland, England, and Ireland, we can also expand this to comparative anatomy of land value and the practice of “dispositioning” in both Agricultural Societies and Phrenological Societies around the globe. While comparative anatomy is a foundational practice within phrenology, it was also practiced before the creation of a Phrenological Society in Britain. For example, in 1812 an article was published in *The Weekly Entertainer* comparing the skull shape and teeth of Arabian people with “North American Savages” and comparing both with animals within the first paragraph of the story:

> their demeanor is haughty. They are well-made and active. They have an oval head, the brow high and arched, aquiline nose, large eyes, with a watery and uncommonly gentle look. Nothing about them would proclaim the savage, if their mouths were always shut; but as soon as they begin to speak, you hear a harsh and strongly aspirated language, and perceive long and beautifully white teeth, like those of jackals and ouches; differing in this respect from the American savage, whose ferocity is in his looks, and human expression in his mouth (488)

As we see in this example from a travel narrative, white teeth, orality, affect, facial features, and head shape are brought into the determination of character and of “savagery”

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almost immediately, separate from the person, their value systems, or their land. Their teeth are described as beautiful, and in a later part of the story, he also outlines how bright white the sheik’s teeth are and how much they stand out during his storytelling (490). Part of what the author is apparently offended by is that the teeth are very white, and part of what he is offended by is the language they speak using their mouths. The author also asserts that Native North American people are more humanized by their orality, instead of less. There is truly no conclusion to the article or to comparative anatomy besides racist observation, but we can see that this fixation on determining character from the teeth was commonly practiced even before phrenology. This practice and mindset, of certain people being trained to determine the social and economic value of lands, bodies, and begin the process of creating borders around what traits, features, and parts were considered to have “use value” vs which were “wasted,” is part of the larger structure of “the logics of white possession” leading to the commodification of teeth as a part of use value. This mindset was clearly transmitted to the Americas via Phrenological and Agricultural societies, for the expansion of settler colonialism and Anglo-Scottish control of agricultural ‘best practices,’ this comparison of race and exterior character markers and resource extraction from both lands and bodies.

**MAPPING CHARACTER, DISPOSITIONING TEETH AND LAND**

The corporealized, commodified, and compartmentalized view of exterior markers of human character as evidenced by the visible parts of the skull and bones created both a commodity fetish of “wasted” teeth and “wasted” lands, whose ‘owners’ were not gaining the use value from them that colonists believe they should. Dispositioning character through these exterior colonial methods was supported both by nineteenth-century dentistry and phrenology was not relegated to Edinburgh, England, Ireland, Germany or France. Instead,
the ideas being developed from Gall, Spurzheim, Combe, Cox, and Purland were widely disseminated and then connected with practices of colonial mapping and land-theft around the world because of their funding and connection to aristocratic patrons such as George Stuart Mackenzie (one of the first note-takers and the reason for the Edinburgh Society’s existence) as evidenced in the early letter transcribed by him in Image 10 (1821). This was especially true in colonial locations within the US through letters, mailed books, mailed skulls and casts of heads, letters and essays, and then also physical lectures given in person by traveling members of the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh to London, Dublin, France, Pennsylvania, New York City, Georgia, Boston, parts of Canada and so on.

James Poskett, who argues for viewing phrenology as a global and material science instead of looking at it purely through the national zone that it is often placed in, outlines how phrenological methods were popular in Africa, in Calcutta, and even in China for a certain time in the 1820’s and 1830’s, and its critics and practitioners were in all of those places. Poskett outlines why it would be a mistake to assume that all those who were not white responded in the same way. The reception of phrenology varied, ranging from damning criticism to enthusiastic acceptance” although as he points out, the timing was often very conspicuous for Combe’s lectures and conflicted at times with people who were arguing against his ideas. For example, James McCune Smith “described the “fallacy of phrenology” in a lecture to a black audience in New York City in 1837 [...] only a few months later, Combe arrived in the city, lecturing on the history of slavery with the aid of his collection of “Negro” skulls” (15). Phrenology was a global pseudo-science, as outlined in this book, but it additionally was transmitted to Philadelphia as early as it was transmitted to Dublin and London.
This contrast between supposedly civilized and savage, controlled and animal, maintained itself throughout many phrenology texts. The hierarchy with seemingly English and then seemingly British at the top was mapped onto various bumps and traits of one's physiognomy, often contradicting other parts of the visible brain. For phrenology, character seemed to be of utmost importance, but character overall was only shown by dividing up various parts of the brain. The notion of place and Indigeneity was especially ranked lower on the hierarchy, grouped under the trait named “adhesiveness,” for which animals and men shared an “irrational” love of external objects. For example, Robert Cox, wrote in one of his pamphlets asking “do you have strong attachments to places? Do you prefer the stupendous, the horrific, the howling, the gloomy, the awful, the dreary, the rugged sublime to the elegant and graceful?” At the top of the hierarchy was the man who subverted the quote “imperfect moral atmosphere in which their sentiments could play” to “habitually obey the precepts of Christianity.”69 This fixation on obedience and especially this notion of obedience paired with being Christian comes at a time that cannot be insignificant because in the 1840’s and the years leading up to expansion of settler colonialism throughout the world, enclosure of much of the remaining commons with increasing numbers of poor and disenfranchised

69 Not surprisingly, throughout Cox’s seminal publication and lecture “Condition of Man,” based off almost 20 years of phrenology research and attempts to categorize various traits of raced and gendered character values up to that point, outlines obedience as one of the key beneficial and benevolent traits that humans can express. This text combines enlightenment notions of religion and disregard for unbridled emotion and attachments to other people as less useful and more animal. He states that “in natural science, three subjects of inquiry may be distinguished: 1st, what exists. 2ndly, what is the USE of what exists? 3rdly, why was what exists designed for such uses as it evidently serves?” The notion of things and people having to exist for a specific use or purpose is inherently capitalist, ableist, and part of the colonial logic underpinning colonizing practices both of land and targeted peoples’ embodiment because inherent in this statement and even the rhetorical situation of this statement asserts that someone outside of that other person or place will act as a judge of what has use and what is wasted.
people as a result, and was during after the first wave of British missionaries and right as the next wave began.70

Both dentistry and phrenology end up propagating myths of both the noble and ignoble savage through the language of commodity, sexuality, and spirituality. The “organs,” most prized in phrenological hierarchies are also heavily applied in Christian theology, such as veneration, obedience, patience, and binary gender conformity to the separate sphere’s doctrine71. It is also clear that in dental and colonial texts, the white teeth of colonial others are fetishized, desired, and then commodified through dentistry by way of colonialism and resource extraction more generally. As the question of mapping character and dispositioning lands and bodies for their “use” vs “waste” value, dentists and phrenologists of the Victorian era played a large role in the commodity fetishism of teeth. Characteristics denigrated through these same professions in pamphlets and advertisements are associated directly with land-based spiritualities and with the same language as the discourse of the so-called “savage,” such as supposed “love of approbation” and “loyalty to place,” to land, naivete or propensity for violence, and large strong teeth that would frighten Christians. In fact, in a text published in Boston in 1844 but circulated amongst phrenological societies in the US and in Scotland titled “The manners, customs, and antiquities of the Indians of North and South America” stated that the Mexican and Central American Indigenous god Quetzalcoatl lived in a temple where the “entrance of that temple had a door made lyke unto the mouth of a

71 The separate spheres doctrine has been attributed to Sarah Stickney Ellis and is generally attributed first in her essay “The Women of England, Their Social Duties, and Domestic Habits” published in 1839 (Victorian Prose, 53). William Rathbone Greg argued that if men don’t have a wife to morally guide them, “thousands of men find it perfectly feasible to combine all the freedom, luxury, and self-indulgence of a bachelor’s career with the pleasures of female society and the enjoyments they seek for there” (Victorian Prose, 162).
serpent, and was paynted with foule and divilish gestures, with great teeth and gummies wrought, which was a thing to feare those that should enter thereat, and especially the Christians, unto whom it represented very hell with that ougly face and monstrous teeth” (90). Not only does this passage indicate that Christians are at particular risk of this natural land-mouth and its “great teeth” representing an Indigenous god, but it propagates fear around the “monstrous teeth” that are yet again fixated on.

As jaye simpson asks in the epigraph to this chapter, to understand the reasons why teeth are so fixated upon within discourses of “the savage,” we must first understand the answer to the question “why were you there in the first place?” (10). Through examining how Britons and the people who were forced to interact with them visually represented teeth, we can move into the rest of this study with a better understanding of both orality’s relationship to the marketplace and relationship to British ideas surrounding land and embodiment.

Because there is so much historic violence surrounding both “the logics of white possession” and the practice of procuring new white teeth, it is important to understand that teeth are more than a market commodity. They are a sight of pain and power amongst the people whom the Empire, through TG Purland and other dentists, phrenological and agricultural societies often dispositioned as “savage” or “criminal” in comparison to both “animal” and “gentlemen.” These categorizations, which were pursued beyond phrenology and dentistry but which clearly coalesce within images of maps projected onto bodies, and with the theft of skulls, teeth, and bones for the purpose of becoming authoritative and making broad generalizations which informed the ways both lands and bodies were cut up into pieces for colonial consumption, are inaccurate but persuasive to the very people who ended up becoming the foot soldiers of settler-colonialism in various locations.
The consequence within the eighteenth and nineteenth century for anyone who was racialized, sexualized, working-class, peasant, pagan, whose land-based spirituality threatens aristocratic power relations and commodification of lands and bodies. This practice of worship and kinship with the land (including the Irish and Native North American people highlighted in the rest of this dissertation), women, and those who fall outside of the heteronormative family structure outlined by Engels as the basis of capitalism’s possibility were all perceived as at best an inconvenience and at worst a threat because they were (and still are) undermining the messaging from the state about who is useful and who is wasted, who is valued because of that use to the state. Why were initial and subsequent settler colonizers there in the first place? Why did they leave en masse from their homes to pursue this life of instability and potential for land-theft? We must study the history of land-enclosures and the continued criminalization of the poor, femme, and unsettled/ nomadic (such as Romani and Irish travelers) in the process of commodification of lands and bodies (including body parts such as teeth) to fully understand the cycle of violence that this logics of whiteness and possession entraps and inculcates.

The existence of affective orality and the potentiality that exists within the oral space and biting back of us (the global majority of racialized folks but also of everyone else who is a threat to this system of “white possession”) is a never-destroyed reminder to the aristocratic classes that the project of enclosure, “civilization” and modernity is unnatural and at its core, impure, tainted with the blood of many and the destruction of the land that supports and connects everything and everyone. We are all human, and we all die. Teeth, as a reminder of death and of land operate both as fetishized commodity and uncanny object, symbolic of multitudes, including the potential for life, creation, and personal agency, but also for
connection, spontaneous emotional sensitivity to another being that we are supposed to be unrelated to, similarities to other mammals that live and die on earth, an undeniable universal level of sameness instead of difference. We have not forgotten whether instinctual or through oral tradition. By showing our teeth to the Empire, we remind them that the land is on our side, that we will eventually swallow them whole as they have always feared.
CHAPTER 2. The Mouth Shut: Washkamonya’s (Paxocan) Response to British Oral Culture, Affective Orality, and the Consequences of European Mouth-Breathing

“Men who lack the courage to meet their fellow men in physical combat, are afraid. Not of their enemy, nor from a conviction of their own inferiority, but from the disarming nervousness of an open and tremulous mouth, the vibrations of which reach and weaken them, to the ends of their fingers and their toes.”

~George Catlin, “The breath of life, or mal-respiration and its effects upon the enjoyments and life of man,” 1864

Kate Flint, in her special edition article “Victorian Native Studies” mentions an Ioway (Paxocan) man nicknamed “Jim,” who walks around in English clothing and counts the number of Gin houses in London on a stick. Although Jim was a brief mention in this article, it sparked my interest in After looking for “Jim” for over 5 years in archival research, I would argue that he and other Native voices also became a primary source of Catlin’s written arguments starting in 1853 when Paxoche (Ioway) people came to meet Catlin in London. We hear Washkamonya's voice through quotes in Catlin’s journal about the reaction from the Paxoche to the conditions of the working classes in London and critiques of English orality. The way he is described in Catlin’s journals shows that he not only spoke English but was engaging the English populace in theoretical debates and conversations. When I read about Washkamonya in Flint’s article, I knew that I wanted to learn about him and his pointed jokes, and his interaction with Victorian England. However, after four years of
searching for him in the archives, it was clear that there was a lot left out for someone with so much energy for critique and humor.

As Indu Othri argues, “the subaltern can speak, but we must make the effort to hear them” (292). This gap of information about him as a person and a historical figure who traveled and lived for a substantial amount of time (4+ years) within Victorian England, Britain, and Europe. Although Native travelers with Catlin have been known for years within Victorian scholarship, and Sami Lakomäki, Coll Thrush, Kate Flint, and Tim Fulford have published books on Native visitation to England, it is yet difficult to find many in-depth studies that focus primarily on the travelers themselves.


72 Catlin, George, 1796-1872. Group of Iowa Indians who visited London in 1844. Artstor, library-artstor-org.libproxy.unm.edu/asset/NMNH_125723742; based on the other portrait with Washkamonya as the primary subject, my guess is that “Jim” is figure eight or ten to the right in the back. Another portrait is posted below. Because at least three other men are listed in Stephenson’s account as warriors and at least four have similar regalia to Washkamonya, it seems that many the group travelling to London were warriors.
Additionally, misunderstandings and assumptions about their purpose pervade most of the available scholarship. There have been claims that they traveled as “ambassadors” or primarily as delegations of culture, but Plains Cree scholar Winona Stephenson has outlined ways in which their purpose for taking the trip to Britain and Europe was primarily about finding more financial and political opportunities for their tribe under economic duress from settler colonialism—instead of coming as cultural ambassadors, they were coming to join in performance with Catlin because they knew that performance would allow them to help their tribe avoid starvation (2). Catlin corroborates this in his preface to the text *Adventures of the Ojibbeway and Ioway Indians in England, France, and Belgium; being notes of eight years’ travels and residence in Europe with his North American Indian Collection* (1853)\(^\text{73}\). He states:

> in justice to me, it should here be known to the reader, that I did not bring either of these parties to Europe; but, meeting them in the country, where they had come avowedly for the purpose of making money (an enterprise as lawful and as unobjectionable, for aught that I can see, at least, as that of an actor upon the boards of a foreign stage), I consider my countenance and aid as calculated to promote their views; and I therefore justified myself in the undertaking, as some return to them for the hospitality and kindness I had received at the hands of the various tribes of Indians I had visited in the wilderne\(\text{s}\)s of America. In putting forth these notes, I sincerely hope that I may give no offence to any one, by endeavoring to afford amusement to the reader and to impart useful instruction to those who are curious to learn the true character of the Indians, from a literal description of their interviews with the fashionable world, and their views and opinions of the modes of civilized life (vii).

In this passage, he asserts additional motives of promoting the views of his companions and their “opinions of the modes of civilized life” and in setting the record straight about the misguided beliefs as to their character. He still offers an apology for himself or what Tuck and Yang term “moves to settler innocence” by trying to explain that he did not bring them

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\(^{73}\) Accessed on archive.org in June 2023 as uploaded by the University of California Libraries
over himself, but that they came of their own free will. Instead, it is posited that Catlin assumes to know their “real character,” which is his stated reason for writing and publishing about the trip, and wants to help Europeans understand it as well. Throughout this text, he provides quoted anecdotes that extend beyond a page at times (weather they are true to life or not, many of them read like a dialogue in a play) about the ways in which Paxocan (Ioway) and Ojibwe guests reject “civilized” customs, particularly when it comes to drinking alcohol and smoking things that are not tobacco. In his outline descriptions of the chapters, he already sets up what he hopes will be the reader’s perception of moral superiority on the side of Native visitors and an ignorance of European hosts, especially those who are wealthy or aristocratic, although in his preface he states that he has witnessed a genuine attempt from nobility to understand the “true native nature” (viii). In Catlin’s summary of Chapter XI, in Manchester, he states that the Native guests “refuse wine—Distress of the kind and accommodating landlords” also outlined the Ojibwe disgust at seeing white people who were intoxicated, not understanding the large numbers of poor people, or why a woman would hold onto a man’s arm when not sick (xiii). In the Chapter itself, the Ojibwe guests are said to rest a few days before being reading “for their inspection in the new world,” which indicates both that they would be inspected and that they were going to be in the role of inspectors for “the strange sights” (111)\(^{74}\). There was concern based on their refusal to take an alcoholic toast to their health, saying that the “wine which was poured out to them, they were surprised to receive smiles and thanks from the Indians as they refused to partake of it. […] they were under a solemn pledge not to drink spiritous liquors while in England, which

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\(^{74}\) Catlin shows himself an unethical translator in this Chapter because he does not appear to be telling them who they will see. They thought they would be seeing a king, but they are seeing the same mayor that they met the day before their refusal to drink.
was applauded by all present, and they received many presents in consequence” (112). Interestingly, the refusal to drink was not met with the type of dramatized consternation that Catlin seems to indicate in the Chapter description- it instead seems as though people were happy to accept their reasoning and showered them with gifts. The line “they were surprised to receive smiles” could indicate that they were surprised at the rejection of wine, or that they were not used to seeing the Native actors smile, which would make sense given the later focus on Catlin’s interpretations of Native oral values in his work *The Mouth Shut* and “Shut Your Mouth to Save Your Life” where the consumption and oral culture of Britain is heavily critiqued about ten years after the publication of this text.

Although most visitors in Catlin’s 1853 text are not mentioned by name and tend to be conglomerated into one “Native” reaction to British society and culture, Winona Stephenson’s research, she recovers voices of certain travelers and collects their tribal names, roles within the tribe, and English name translations. It is also clear from Paxoche observations and critiques collected by Stephenson that they refused to collaborate in or accept the larger colonial enterprise” (15). They were not “ambassadors” as many scholars have suggested. Instead, they traveled under duress and extreme necessity. They did not want to be there. She argues, in contrast to the vision of Washkamonya and other Native travelers that “contrary to the expectations of their hosts, the Paxocean visitors did not revere English civilization, nor did they exhibit any desire to imitate it. Rather, they condemned certain fundamental English precepts and institutions, and spoke clearly on the disturbing nature of English oral culture.

As a warrior representing his people, Washkamonya, or Fast Dancer, was perhaps one of the more open critics within this group of travelers. He and the other travelers such as two
highlighted in Stephenson’s article, Seenon-ti-ya, and war chief Neu-mon-ya, were not afraid of expressing disgust with European lifeways or with the consequences of capitalism and colonialism on the bodies of Londoners and critiquing the wealth disparity they witnessed. However, the quote that stood out to me was his quote about European mouth breathers. After four years of looking for “Jim” whenever I could get the chance, I had finally given up and began researching the creation of and interaction with the discourse of “the savage” more broadly, I finally found Washkamonya again in a collection of pamphlets from a prominent member of the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh, George Combe, saved and curated by his friend and society member Robert Cox. There was Washkamona, in all his humor, quoted within a footnote of a handwritten text titled “Breath of Life, or Mal-Respiration and its effects on the enjoyments of life of Man.” Catlin’s later published book, based on this pamphlet entitled both *Shut Your Mouth* and then later *Shut Your Mouth to Save Your Life or Shut Your Mouth And Save Your Life* are all the same content but published repeatedly throughout different dates. This publication occurred what seems like every two years or faster, with the pamphlet being disseminated in 1869, a published book version coming out in 1869 and 1870, and again in 1872. It was clear that these ideas gained traction and that there was interested readership. The passage regarding Washkamonya’s critique reads:

Of the party of 14 loway Indians, who visited London some years since, there was one whose name was Wash-ke-mon-ye (the fast dancer); he was a great droll, and somewhat of a critic, and had picked up enough of English to enable him to make a few simple sentences and to draw amusing comparisons. I asked him one day, how he liked the White people, after the experience he had now had; to which he replied—"Well, White man-suppose-mouth shut, putty coot, mouth open, no coot-me no like urn, not much. Washkamonya This reply created a smile amongst the party and the Chief informed me that one of the most striking peculiarities which all Indian Tribes discovered amongst the white people, was the derangement and absence of
their teeth, and which they believed were destroyed by the number of lies that passed over them.

Washkamonya’s observation about English orality, its hypocrisy and its “derangement” is meaningful and overt. Although the passage indicates that Jim was coax ed by Catlin to speak his judgment on British culture, that he and his Paxocean companions were noticing and commenting on what he later terms “black mouths” and how different that was from their own values around embodiment and orality should not be dismissed just because quoted by Catlin. There is some question in my mind remaining as to whether I should even call it “Washkamonya’s observation” because it was additionally presented as a collective observation of his fellow travelers, but he was one of the only ones speaking English. Whether this is attributed primarily to him because of Catlin’s own interpretation, whether he was the one to speak for the group because of his skill with English, or whether he was also trying intentionally to use English as a tool to fight back against the greedy people who were responsible for starving his tribe to death and his subsequent need to travel and perform to earn money for his family back home (he was the warrior in the group after all) is not clarified by Catlin. However, the fact that he is in that situation can lead us to interpret where the sarcasm and criticism in his tone might be coming from.

If we listen closely to the affects that arise from what Jim is quoted as saying, it is visceral. The context of these interactions has to be kept in mind—for him to interact with European mouth-breathing drunk British spectators and the arrogance that he must have encountered from people who thought of him as a lesser being. Britain was asserting itself as a great and strong nation, but upon his visit he was immediately faced with the reality that this was absolutely a lie. Instead, the corrupt nation was killing their own people and his people in ways that were cruel and preventable, while simultaneously asserting that they
were superior. To expect calm, cooperative, kind words and observations from him in this setting would be violent. And yet, in all accounts as well as in portraits of him, he is calm. He has control of himself and his speech, even if not the context he lives and travels in. He was clearly respected by his people, by Daniel (Catlin’s assistant), and Catlin. Furthermore, Washkamonya shows immense self-respect in this passage.

Since he was so often referred to by Catlin and because the various iterations of “The Mouth Shut” as both pamphlet and book is largely constructed from the Paxocan observation as spoken through Washkamonya, I will continue to call it his observation. When I use the term observation, I mean it both as an ability to capture surface implications but also the ability to gain insight while patiently, deeply, and quietly consider the colonizer’s shocking and unethical actions, words, and ideology. His observation not only echoes the communal belief of his fellow tribespeople who were also traveling and making observations, but the weight of the kinship obligations and responsibilities that he has to his people back home and the context of their trip being propelled by that weightiness and that important goal. Although Catlin finds him humorous and he may have been telling jokes, he was also contextually in an extreme situation that readers should not forget. The fact that he was willing to speak these thoughts aloud and to walk around London openly critiquing through observation is incredibly brave and seems a fitting task for his role as a warrior. His opinions, however humorous Catlin portrays them as, carried the baggage of the context he was in and the context that Paxocean lands and his people were in back home. He must have chosen his words deliberately because there was so much at stake. His observations about British orality are scathing and in a way a reversal of the British travel narrative because he is commenting on how “backwards” British customs and culture are, via their teeth. Furthermore, he was
self-aware enough to know that he had a lot more to teach English people than he had to learn from them, and was not afraid to tell them that.

The belief in failed morality’s ability to lead to the corruption of teeth, while seemingly like the tradition discussed in previous chapters, is unique in that it responds to their lived experience of colonialism and British and white European liars within the structures of settler colonialism. As stated at the end of this quote, Catlin may not find this as important as it was when spoken, but the words “which they believed were destroyed by the number of lies that passed over them” belie a significant clue in their belief in English moral corruption. Instead of being recipients of the tension within affective orality and colonial oral politics, Washkamonya and his group of comrades expressed the exact insecurity leading to much of the commodification and fixation on teeth within this time. They noticed the moral corruption, imperfections, and moral impurity that British consumers and participants in colonial imperialism so tried to hide. Because this quote was published within a text that included scathing images and attacks on the British national project and underlying assumptions of paternalism and moral superiority of colonialism, this viewpoint was also disseminated to many readers through both pamphlets in medical and Phrenological Society meetings to multiple re-publications of the book version. Its influence cannot in how medicine and religious discourse shifted during the turn to the “noble savage” cannot be underestimated.
In this passage, Jim is positioned as a critic. He is additionally positioned as a critic by Catlin in the travel journals, when he goes around and counts gin houses in London, critiquing the wealth gap between London’s richest and most greedy and most destitute and drunk. Flint’s

25 Wash-ka-mon-ya, Fast Dancer, a Warrior, 1844-1845, oil on canvas, 29 x 24 in. (73.7 x 60.9 cm), by George Catlin Smithsonian American Art Museum

75 Portrait of Washkamonya, Jim, Fast Dancer, by Catlin free use of commons via the Smithsonian Institute, Creative Commons Full citation: George Catlin, Wash-ka-mon-ya, Fast Dancer, a Warrior, 1844-1845, oil on canvas, 29 x 24 in. (73.7 x 60.9 cm), Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison, Jr., 1985.66.520.
essay Counter-Historicism, Contact Zones, and Cultural History analyses a moment of Jim critiquing the English from Catlin’s “Notes” that is centered around an oral critique. Flint states:

one of the Ioway, Jim (Wash-ka-mon-ya) set out to look at English social conditions in his own right. He mirrored the techniques of nineteenth-century Anglo social investigators by putting on western clothing, so that he could better go out into London unobserved. He began to learn to speak and write English so that he could carry out his inquiries. He stopped and talked to the Lascars. Convinced that only Ojibbeway would stoop so low as to sweep the streets, he asked if that's who they were: they answered "'No, they were Mussulmen.' 'Where do you live?' 'Bombay.' 'You sweep dirt in the road?' 'Yes.' 'Dam fool!' Jim gathered a handful of pennies and gave them, and they drove off" (Catlin 2: 70). Jim had Daniel, Catlin's assistant, help him make a record book of all he saw; he kept statistics on poor houses, prisons, breweries. He counted gin-shops, keeping the score by notching a tally-stick. He noted the Crown's expenditure, seeing, in pre-Althusserian fashion, soldiers and police alike as necessary “to keep people at work in the factories, and to make them pay their taxes” (Catlin 2:188). He said that he hoped they would never drive through one particular street again, For it made their hearts sore to see so many women and little children all in dirty rags: they had never seen any Indians in the wilderness half so poor, and looking so sick. He was sure they had not half enough to eat. He said he thought it was wrong to send missionaries from this to the Indian country, when there were so many poor creatures here who want their help, and so many thousands as they saw going into the chickabobbooags to drink fire water” (508).

Although Flint does not spend time on the consequences of Jim’s agency and his strong voice in this part of Catlin’s Journals, it is clear here that Washkamonya’s critique is leveled against the hypocrisy of English missionaries through the oral space. He attacks the notion that people would try to go around the world when they would not help their own people get food or clean clothing, and that children would go hungry while adults around them eat and drink gin and other spirits. He was clearly disturbed by this, and even utilized Daniel, the assistant that Catlin mentions bringing with him on the boat over to England when he first travels to London in the 1840’s. He chose to spend his off time from performance in documenting the pitfalls and the evils of the society that he was visiting, the society that had contributed to the pain that his people were in. The image of Jim walking around with a
personal assistant, marking the number of gin houses on a stick while he dictated notes to Daniel, shows how confident he was and shows that he wanted his observations and views from his worldview to be documented.

That scene of the walking cane and critiques of English alcohol consumption and its negative effects on society combined with the passage above from The Mouth Shut illustrates a confident critic whose opinions on English orality are colored by his less than flattering observations. He is described as sardonic and as having dry humor by Catlin on more than one occasion, but in the passage above is also called “a great droll, and somewhat of a critic, and had picked up enough of English to enable him to make a few simple sentences and to draw amusing comparisons.” In this part of the passage, it is unclear if Jim himself thinks that he is drawing amusing comparisons or if that is Catlin’s way of either dismissing or praising what he said. However, Catlin thought he was both witty and humorous, and that Jim spoke English and could interact with English culture through their language as well as the visual element of their “derangement and absence of their teeth.” The way that Jim’s quote is constructed also contrasts with English depictions of contact with “others” through their teeth. While at first it is posited that Jim doesn’t find them attractive because of their open mouths, but he finds that they are morally corrupt, and that their grotesque “derangement and absence of their teeth” which he echoes “were destroyed by the number of lies that passed over them.” This part of his quote would be hugely significant and personally shocking to the English readership based on what we have thus far established about English oral culture and the values associated with “pure” and “pearly” and commodified teeth cleanliness/orderliness.
As we see in Jim’s portrait by Catlin, he does not have his mouth open. He does wear war paint, regalia, and a slight smile. His eyes are most expressive, while he keeps his orality private. On the Smithsonian website, the description of his picture reads “Fast Dancer was among a group of Iowa warriors and their families who joined George Catlin in London in the 1840s, where the artist had traveled to exhibit and promote his Indian Gallery. The Iowa arrived in London fully equipped with clothing, domestic implements, weapons, canoes, and plenty of face paint. The handprints on Fast Dancer’s chin and cheeks probably signify that he had killed an enemy in hand-to-hand combat.”

Characters in Victorian serial publications and featured in periodical travel narratives are often described through close observation of their teeth within and generally at the beginning of the first physical description. Whether one's teeth were straight, intact, white, or pearly were described in relation to a person’s perceived character flaws and charms by the narrator by way of depicting the details of teeth and what they indicated about their character. If a so-called-‘savage’ and his fellow travelers are calling these supposedly morally superior people morally corrupt vis a vie their teeth, this would have very likely rankled readers who believed in the myth of British supremacy over colonial lands and people. Jim’s quoted passage is additionally interesting because despite the use of a similar conceit (judging the morality of a person through their teeth), Jim refers to the opinion of all his comrades when bringing a deep and discerning point about British moral failings into the teeth of England after interacting with many large groups of white English people. This structure differs from the English pattern of reading people’s character via teeth in multiple ways: First, no commodities are invoked in the description, Second the general class of people is not mentioned in the description of their teeth, and Third, he depersonalizes it. By
depersonalization, I mean that he makes it about all white English oral culture based on a both personal observation and group observation, incorporating a multiplicity of voices represented within his own comment. Through discussion and analysis with the members of his tribe he is accompanying, he is asserting a tribal viewpoint representing a group perspective of national cultural failings, not the view of a single narrator presenting an individual moral failing of personal character.

It is also possible that Washkamonya spoke with Charles Dickens. Dicken’s essay “The Noble Savage” is postured as a response to a comment from one of the Native travelers with Catlin that Dickens received as a deeply personal insult, perhaps in person from someone who he met in real life, who strongly disagreed with English customs and who called Dickens “a pale face” (337). The fact that Dickens chooses to open his essay with this statement indicates in person interaction that triggered his defensiveness and his drive to write such an exaggerated and fanatically racist account of this, to deride Catlin and his supporters, and to deride all “savage” people in every country and every place around the globe. Dickens directly attacks Indigenous nations and the cultures globally, instead of saying “this person in particular lies and therefore has bad teeth,” which is much different than how English people describe their encounters with “savage,” “Irish” or “working women’s” teeth in travel narratives, advertisements, journal entries and personal letters, and any space of contact zone encounter with an “other” where the usefulness not only of the person but the value of their teeth (and therefore their character) is presented to the reader. Because of this structural contrast, which English readers would have likely picked up on, I argue that Washkamonya’s critique is a successful blow to any notions of superiority via orality thereunto presented by English and British nationalists themselves. Because teeth are
a contested ideological space within the early Victorian period, and because of their use in constructing and deconstructing the notion of savagery, both in terms of Judith Butler’s notion of grievability and Marx’s “use value,” this quote becomes extremely significant when taken into consideration with the broader cultural context and patterns within written work where teeth are evaluated by the narrator. Jim’s quoted passage (either intentionally organized by Catlin or not) directly contrasts with English nationalism’s own assertions of moral purity through British oral culture, but also of the existing British value placed on teeth as a commodity of character.

In The Red Man’s Bones, Eisler Benita outlines how Edinburgh’s exhibition completely changed how Catlin and his attempts to earn money in the UK operated. They outline that “opening on April 6, 1843, Catlin’s exhibition in Edinburgh proved the turning point at which George the performer definitively buried “Mr. Catlin the artist” (317). She states that instead of exhibiting his paintings, they were left in storage. He dressed as a Crow chief and wore a headdress, participated in dances, and became a dramatic performer. Benita argues that “it was the moment when the lively arts replaced framed representations of dead Red Indians, with the artist himself playing a starring role in the transition” (317). Unfortunately, we begin to see less and less of Washkamonya within his journals, but Fast Dancer or “Jim” should not be elided from our conversations about Native voices critiquing the British Empire. His humor and personality shine through even a footnote, and recovering any more of his opinions, critiques, or stories would help elucidate the “structures of feeling” of this time, when the world was much less “whitewashed” as we imagine because that is our reality now. When even Dickens was threatened by “savage” orality and its potential to undue English nation-building with a visit and a conversation, we should take notice as
scholars of the Victorian period. People like Washkamonya were traveling within and responsive to English ideologies, if only because they were forced to be, and may have hence been largely ignored by Victorian Studies as they are not necessarily producing “written” texts with a single author. Washkamonya clearly intended his opinions to be heard, written, and felt as indicated in his choice to ask Daniel to walk around London with him.

Additionally, texts and quotes are valuable outside of certain genres and forms. As Firdous Azim has argued, the idea of a beginning middle and end with a protagonist in a novel is a colonial form, but there are so many other types of writing, including Catlin’s treatise on the superiority of ideas like Washkamonya’s to English ideology. Additionally, as was my own experience in the archives, when we are looking for someone who has been left out of these considerations within the historical record, they are often difficult and time-consuming to find. Although it is sometimes difficult to access Native voices in British archives, Catlin’s use of Fast Dancer’s commentary about English culture throughout The Mouth Shut and his published travel journals shows us that the British archives can be used to recover oral storytelling and voices, especially oft quoted and coherent voices such as Jim’s which are there in plain sight but have yet to be listened to by contemporary scholarship.

As might come as little surprise, there was a mixed but generally negative reaction Catlin’s texts. Washkamonya’s critique of English oral culture hit a nerve and may have even caused part of this extra self-consciousness, so in that way it was a successful blow. As scholars, this text, and the heavy presence of Washkamonya’s ideas within Catlin’s writing is evidence for the need to continue to read within the gaps of British texts, especially where there is a visible presence or absence of racialized Indigenous “others” within the Victorian period, as Ryan Fong has also argued in relation to Olive Schreiner’s Story of an African
There was a rush of medical texts responding to Catlin’s Shut Your Mouth treatise. Some praised Native child-rearing and childbirth practices, while others talked about the link between chronic ear infections and the consequences of European mouth-breathing.

To understand why Catlin’s publication of Fast Dancer’s critique of British teeth was subsequently so circulated but also derided, we need to understand how eighteenth and nineteenth-century readers saw oral space and teeth particularly. Many lands, the foods, and resources those lands produced, and racialized, sexualized, and classed “others” were compared to the British national social body and character. Teeth become a cultural symbol, commodity, and site of extractive colonialism in between 1770-1900 in Irish, English, Scottish, and US settler colonial discourses, but Washkamonya and Catlin’s critique in The Mouth Shut illustrates one way that Indigenous Americans and authors who were exposed to this discourse interacted with it. Orality was a large source of contention, and “oral space,” as David Lloyd has argued, was heavily policed and contested within the colonial discourses and politics of the colonization of Ireland through policing diet and other types of consumption, fomenting of revolution, and oral storytelling. I argue that this space was specifically contested because of teeth and their deeper meaning within English oral culture. Despite being referenced briefly in both Catlin’s journals and pamphlets, any time Washkamonya speaks, his personality and voice heavily influences Catlin’s perspective, arguments, and writings. While Washkamonya is not the only Paxochan traveler quoted in these texts, he is generally the most intense in his critiques and stands out to Catlin. I would argue that these footnotes so overtly direct Catlin’s writing that they can be seen as a clear

76 Surgical and Anatomy Museum, Edinburgh Scotland, May 2021
77 Cassels, James Patterson. “‘Shut your mouth and Save Your Life’ [electronic resource] : being remarks on mouth-breathing and on some of its consequences, especially to the apparatus of hearing ; a contribution to the ætiology of ear-disease.” University of Glasgow Library, 1877.
example of Washkamonya’s critique of English culture and the ill-effects of “civilization” on their oral space.

This chapter additionally imagines some possibilities for Washkamonya in terms of who he may have interacted with and what he thought about English culture and society based on those small moments showcasing his large persona, and what that might imply for Victorian Studies. Washkamonya's critique directly undermines the British Empire’s logic of superiority in a very embodied and personal way, getting right to the heart of English social realities. Catlin uses Fast Dancer’s comment to create his primary argument that Britain’s notion of civilization is ruining the health and well-being of its own citizens. We find evidence of his influence on Catlin within his book The Mouth Shut, and earlier pamphlet versions. Both “Shut Your Mouth to Save Your Life” and “The Mouth Shut” as pamphlets and later as a published book illustrate the importance of Washkamonya’s critique, and potentially to understand the important dynamics of the material and metaphysical tropes represented by teeth in British imperial ideology.

Throughout the pamphlets and what eventually turned into the book The Mouth Shut, Native peoples are described as far more advanced and humane in many of their social and personal practices than European, and specifically English Victorians. In the “Breath of Life,” Catlin lays claim to the oral space on behalf of all tribes he has interacted with, based on this critique of English teeth. He argues that “civilization” has ruined the health and happiness of English people, and states that “the Native Races in North and South America are a healthier people and less subject to premature mortality [...] than any civilized Race in Existence” (8). Not only does Catlin characterize English oral culture and child rearing practices as truly barbaric, inhumane, and even physically grotesque throughout the
pamphlet, stating that thousands of English babies die each year from “teething,” but he includes quotes from various Native connections and basically interviews them about their low infant mortality rates to argue for their lifeways as healthier. In the later book version Shut Your Mouth, Catlin quotes two tribal leaders and British infant mortality statistics to outline his argument. Here, Catlin attempts to create a persuasive argument for adopting the child rearing practices of Native Americans.

Washkamonya’s quote comes early in the text, is placed in a footnote, and is implied as the basis for Catlin’s argument, but teething is mentioned on five different pages in the various versions of this text and in the prior drafts. He utilizes this observation to critique English culture and to champion Native child rearing and teething practices through comparison. While all the Native quotations are contextualized as responses to Catlin’s questioning in the text, because Washkamonya was there with a group of other Paxocan people and able to observe and respond to English culture in person, it creates a different rhetorical situation for his comment, and one that I would argue is even more serious. His comment is not only a statement of his or his comrades’ feedback about English “black mouths,” but it also matches the critical tone of how he is described making observations in England. While I am not trying to argue for full agency due to the duress, he was under in traveling to England and Europe, but because Washkamonya is consistently described both in tribal website language and in Catlin’s journals as a warrior, perhaps he was willing to be a

78 National library of Ireland Medical Gazette from pages 246-248 in 1860 contains a thorough discussion of child and infant mortality and references to foundling hospital death rates from public health official Moore. “he showed how imperative it is to preserve in every way the infant frame; the bane of an excessive infantile mortality not being confined to the present generation; for where such an evil does exist, a large proportion, with difficulty, attain a stunted puberty, in their turn to become the parents of a more deteriorated mental and physical progeny, and thus sapping the very foundations of society.” (249). This article shows that in 1861, infant mortality and childhood health was a public health concern of Empire. The author is the “Physician to the Institution for the Disease of Children” and a “Fellow to the King and Queen’s College.”
bit more risk taking in his words, or even to battle a bit more openly with English ideas than his fellow travelers. It must have been extremely frustrating and angering to go to a society of people who were killing his people and see how disorganized and ignoble, how weak and hypocritical they were. Washkamonya, as a physical target of this English gawking and fixation on “oral space,” it is likely he felt, or affectively understood, the subversiveness of his own orality while in London during this specific timeframe mentioned in Catlin’s quote. Because of the location of his quote and the way it influences Catlin’s argument against British “civilization” as progressive, I argue that Fast Dancer’s critique of English orality and teeth can and should be viewed as highly significant.

The supposed perfect self-restraint narrated as possible only for “civilized” British landholders contrasted against the “unfeeling” or “volatile emotionality” of the person who is categorized as the opposing comparison of enlightenment “reason,” aka “the savage,” is both reified and unraveled in the notion of affective orality. The patterns in writing from the wealthy classes of England, Scotland, and Ireland show what Aileen Moreton-Robertson outlines as the “logics of white possession” from a Critical Indigenous studies framework. What I term “affective orality,” both represents the un-tamability of this affective space of resistance, and a sublime site of desire for people wanting to control the affect, bodies (both political and physical bodies as Sarah Ahmed references) of people who inconvenience the project of wealth accumulation and whose use value in Empire is unclear, and a space of imagined ferocity, actual storytelling, power, and “authentic” uncontrolled expressions. Washkamonya may have felt that his teeth and orality were part of his perceived power within English culture, and potentially offered his critique of English orality perhaps to assert his own affective understanding or to simply point out some of the disturbing flaws of
Victorian value systems. What remains clear from Winona Stephenson’s research on Paxocan reaction to England, Ireland, and Europe, is that Washkamonya understood that “civilization” was barbaric since Paxocan historical records indicate the dismay felt by the travelers at the inherent contradictions and inhumane treatment of the poor and sick that they encountered in England and Europe. Whatever the intention of his comment to Catlin, it is also possible that he was critiquing the hypocritical English oral fixation given their “black mouths” and lazy facial expressiveness. While it is nearly impossible to know his original intentions, the influence this observation had on Catlin’s already existing ire towards Britain was potent.

In The Mouth Shut, “Shut Your Mouth To Save Your Life”, and all other iterations of this publication, Catlin’s argument against British physical and moral superiority is scathing. In the argument for unattractive orality of the English via Washkamonya, the stakes are high. Adopt Native oral lifeways as soon as possible, England, or continue to let your children die. While Catlin outlines how 3,600 infants die of teething as the listed cause “in England alone,” he also says that 25,000 die per year in England through “convulsions” which he argues could also be caused by teething (45). In teething, he argues, the child is suffering, and mothers must have some sense of “the painful and even dangerous crisis” (44). While it is possible that the numbers are exaggerated, he cites the Register General for his numbers. There is evidence in the archives to show that teething was actually a very large concern in England during the nineteenth century.

Catlin’s travel journals and Shut Your Mouth indicate that teeth were long of importance and interest to him and to his Anglo audience because he did refer to discourses surrounding Native teeth multiple times. Three primary instances of this fixation become
apparent in his travel journals in what would later build on Washkamonya’s observations in London. His discussions of teeth both in living and deceased bodies and as adornment overtly address and sometimes offer a counterargument for racialized assumptions that “civilization” is better than wild and “uncivilized” life. However, he does not quite argue for the health of Native teeth over other types of teeth until after talking with Washkamona in London. For example, Catlin posits that Native teeth are not as white as most people think they are and that it is a common misconception that Native and Black people have such white teeth in his earlier published (1848) Notes of Eight years' travels and residence in Europe with his North American Indian Collection. He rejects European fetishization of the difference in African and Native American whiteness of teeth, arguing that if anyone painted their skin that color their teeth would look whiter. His depiction of white teeth attempts to reverse racialization of teeth themselves and make the appearance of one’s teeth more about habits, and even more about honorability of behavior and value systems to critique “civilized” diets, customs, habit, and European (colonial) life. He states that “The teeth of the Indians are generally regular and sound, and wonderfully preserved to old age, owing, no doubt, to the fact that they live without the spices of life—without saccharine and without salt, which are equally destructive to teeth, in civilized communities. Their teeth, though sound, are not white, having a yellowish cast; but for the same reason that a negro’s teeth are "like ivory," they look white—set as they are in troiue, as anyone with a tolerable set of teeth can easily test, by painting his face the colour of an Indian, and grinning for a moment in his looking-glass” (430). While he does observe that their teeth are healthier, “more regular and sound” than “in civilized communities,” he downplays the existing European fixation on the racialized symbolism of teeth. When he compares teeth to the commodity of “ivory” it is still
done in a slightly different tone than the pattern of how teeth are commodified and fetishized/objectified by colonial fixation; instead, he utilizes this discourse to transition into talking about race in general.

Despite the differences between Catlin’s discussions of Native and Black peoples’ teeth in his journals and the superiority of both to English and European teeth and oral culture, he still reinforces the discourse of “the noble savage” through these depictions. Additionally, by the time Shut Your Mouth is published, he asserts that Native teeth are almost as sound as animal teeth throughout their life, and they are the best of all Mankind at maintaining their teeth.

26. Text image 1 from "Shut Your Mouth" by George Catlin

79 His journals espouse the opinion that when Black and European people mix, it is usually because both are the poorest and most “degraded” members of their society and hence their offspring tend not to be generally very strong or attractive. But when Black former enslaved people mix with Native people after escaping from slavery, they marry the best Native bloodlines and have the most attractive children because they are honored within Native tribes for their extreme courage. He says that the offspring of mixed Black and Native babies are the strongest and the most composed children and the former enslaved members are now honored members of the tribe for their bravery and strength in choosing to put their lives at risk to defy their unjust captivity.
In the above images of his descriptions of white Native teeth, we see him comparing them to the “natural” state that animals are found in, referencing the purity and the “noble savage” trope that he presents in his work often. However, the fact that this comes so early in this text, while in his 1840’s text teeth are discussed much differently, may also show that he understood the tension represented in oral space within the English discourses he so wanted to be a part of. He centers orality in this entire text, but that he begins with the purity of teeth is very important, especially given his notice of Washkamonya’s observations on British Orality.

Furthermore, in the tribal US, Catlin found no evidence that Native parents had any problems with teething time or any other time of infancy to adulthood, in part because of their oral practices. He talks with “Shar-re-tar-rushe, an aged and venerable Chief of the Pawnee-Picts, a powerful tribe living on the headwaters of the Arkansas River at the base of the Rocky Mountains, told me in answer to questions, “we very seldom lose a small child--none of our women have ever died in childbirth --they have no medical attendance on those occasions, [...] and our children never die in teething” (13). The way that this is quoted in the

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80 Images from page three and four of the 1869 printing of Shut Your Mouth, uploaded to archive.org by the Wellcome Institute from the Wellcome Collection.
text is contextually more ableist and not related to teeth, hence the redaction. This quotation clearly shows that Catlin was interviewing Native leaders to write this full argument and uses Shar-re-tar-rushe’s quote to illustrate the perfect health of this tribe and the contrast between tribal infant and mother mortality rates, especially due to teething, with the English (whose women consistently died giving birth and whose babies, we have already shown, frequently died of “teething”). This contrast is made clear throughout the text between not only England and Native American ways, but the concept of civilization itself is shown to degrade peoples’ health.

Both Kiowa and Shar-re-tar-rushe (two Chiefs he interviews to illustrate health of their people) are living in their “primitive state” and have no encroachment of English lifeways. He interviews three other Chiefs, Claremont of the Osage, Nawkaw of the Winnebago, and Keemonsaw, Chief of the Kaskaskias, who say that with the introduction of English lifeways, decreased numbers, and health due to colonization, and the increase in “fire-water” usage, the children in their tribes are not so numerous and healthy as they once were (14-15). Instead, they now experience some childbirth defects, and sometimes mothers die in childbirth. Keemonsaw said that there were only a few people even left in his tribe due to “whiskey and smallpox” (15). Catlin’s argument against England is both a personal attack and based in these heartbreaking interactions with tribes who were dying before his eyes from colonization. The myth of the disappearing Native was in large part perpetuated by Catlin and was supported by his personal experiences. He not only blamed England, but he blamed “civilization” for its corrupting influence on all human health, using England as the primary example of this corruption.
Within the first sentence of “The Noble Savage,” Dickens writes of a Native participant in the performance group that he was insulted by their conversation. He quotes this person, saying, “his calling rum firewater, and me a pale face, wholly fails to reconcile me to him. I don’t care what he calls me. I call him a savage” (and then talks about civilising him off the face of the planet etc.).” (33781). It is seemingly clear that Dickens interacted with and had a conversation with someone who called him “a pale face” but that he quotes this line as reasoning for the rest of his essay also puts the quote of a Native person, possibly Jim since he spoke English and is listed in Catlin’s other texts as being a ‘droll’ and a critic. If we imagine this being a possibility, I think that it is worth imagining since we have so much other information about Washkamonya’s personality. I’m less interested in proving that this was him, and more in using the context clues in Dickens’ essay that indicate that it was someone like him. From Catlin’s descriptions, we already know that Fast Dancer has a lot of humor, that he more intensively critiques British society, and that he is comfortable in some contexts offering his negative opinions directly to Europeans.

From his journals and early letters and advertisements about his tour, Catlin describes feeling that the angle of presenting the “noble savage” would best help uplift and protect the tribes he had gotten to know during his earlier travels as a painter, but also to manipulate English sympathy for financial gain. Starting in London with a gallery show only, he had begun taking more and more extreme measures to capture the attention of the English public, even bringing a bear over to England at one point (journals). Through Catlin’s own writings

81 Dickens uses that event as a jumping off point for broader biased calls for the genocide of both “savage” customs and of the people who romanticize what he considers to be antithetical to and even a threat to “civilization.” He paints English and American supporters of the “noble savage” trope as fools, and Native people as “bloodthirsty” and violent, worthy of being killed only, not appreciated, or admired. Catlin’s stance is opposite to Dickens, although both use the reductive and racialized trope of the “noble savage” in their arguments and both direct the conversation primarily to a European and Anglophone audience.
about his experiences in North America and while traveling in the UK and Europe, and later publications surrounding oral culture specifically, through his quotes and footnotes quoting Ioway travelers (specifically Waskamonya-aka Jim) and through intense narrative response from periodical writers and society newspapers in England, we see various positions on orality emerging in conversation and in response to colonization. Winona Stephenson argues that these responses were unified in that “the Paxoche were very critical of British inequities, greed, and lack of charity. In Paxoche society, no individual was left to fend for himself or herself in times of hardship.” (10). Catlin takes this general stance and Jim’s critique of mouth breathing and impure teeth as being indicative of both of visual and cultural grotesqueness and animalistic tendencies usually projected onto the “other” from inside an upper class or “civilized” English (capitalist) subject, morally lacking in both internal and visible ways, teeth decrepit from the very thing they claim sets them apart. Catlin calls the Europeans and especially English spectators as having a “pitiable, and oftentimes disgusting expression, which none but Civilized communities can present,” and creates exaggerated images of English mouth-breathers (37- Image below).

He describes this oral condition as extremely unattractive, but also as animal. Later in the first third of the text, for example, English gawkers are compared to “faces and the mouths of the Wolf, the Tiger, and even the Hyena and the Donkey” as more “handsome by the side of them” (37). Furthermore, and possibly most significant to Catlin’s pointed critique of the discourse that he is participating in, is that their disgusting facial expressions are a product only of “Civilized” communities. By mimicking the discourse that Dickens and other English colonial supporters used during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century to mark “the savage,” to mark “the civilized,” Catlin also plays with and mocks not only this
category itself of “the savage,” but also argues that people participating in these so-called “civilized” communities are in fact animalistic, disgusting in appearance. Through his critiques, which seem to simply quote and repeat Native statements, he argues that European and aristocratic people are often much more misguided and in need of assistance than the North American “savages” whose critique of the barbarity of English mouth breathing, oral culture, and child-rearing practices he includes throughout both pamphlets and books about

28. Image of European Mouth Breathing Depiction from “The Mouth Shut” by George Catlin
Catlin’s inclusion of Washkamonya’s critiques in “Breath of Life” and *The Mouth Shut*, etc. work almost as a counter argument back to Dickens’ complaints and suggest that while Catlin is the author and writer of this text and others on Native customs, he is getting his material from conversations with various people instead of making assumptions based off non-interaction or minimal interactions. As problematic as Catlin was, he had real relationships with many different Native people from a variety of tribal nations and cultures and perhaps some of the information he wrote was reflective of reality. However, it’s impossible that he could have written about his interaction without bias, and he is quoted throughout articles and media with many problematic and paternalistic statements himself. Catlin seems uses words like “entertaining” to describe Jim’s critiques on English society and seems to write of them in a jovial way. I have entertained the possibility that since Jim seems to have been more willing to share his critiques with Daniel and Catlin because of their relationship, but he clearly has a strong critique in all the contexts he visits. Additionally, because he spoke and understood English, it is a possibility that he interacted with many English people. It does not take much imagination to understand that it was possibly Washkamonya who was the “him” referenced in Dickens’ infamous essay given his personality and comfort in offering feedback. Though it is difficult to access Native voices from the 19th century, Fast Dancer’s opinions proliferate, and we can feel and understand his anger towards British hypocrisy.

*Household Words* was not the only publication that ran extreme negative views of Catlin’s intentions, his show, or questioned his ability to reason and understand reality. He was painted as a scrappy and naive dreamer, who really had been taken in by the “savages” and who could not see them for who they really were. While many publications were more
moderate in their critiques, the logic was always that of the inevitability of destruction and death of Native cultures and people. Dickens’ negative spin became the primary circulated angle after that first couple of months of the live show, and it became harder for Catlin to find food, shelter, and payment for his Native show fellows in the entire following year. This initial backlash and negative reception followed the group throughout Europe and made their travels and performances more contentious and difficult. In the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* in 1842, the authors basically accuse him of being racist against white people, arguing that he contrasts white settlers with the “wild Indians” in a most unfavorable light (43). The authors argue that Native people don’t have any of the moral and honorable qualities he believes them to have, but rather that they are thieves and murderers as the narrative of colonial violence has brainwashed them to believe up to this point. The call this the “overenthusiasm for savage life-forms” (44). They complain that he speaks highly of a warrior from the Blackfoot tribe who scalped 8 trappers and tradesmen, and in his portrayal Native people, with its “strong Indian partiality, he hardly does any justice to the bold and untiring backwoodsman” (44). Catlin centered Native experience, and this was unpopular. *The Democratic Review* writers quote his own published letters and writings about his experience, outlining his naiveté from having special protections under the auspices of being a “medicine man” because of his painting skills. They basically argue that if he were any other non-Native person, he would be unsafe with Native people.

The moral and physical purity indicated by pure white “noble savage” teeth becomes increasingly fetishized and develops a portion of the discourse of noble savage in English periodicals. As some female characters used talking about their own teeth to assert their moral character, we see so called “savage” people participating in this discourse to reassert
their affective power in letters to the editor and in periodicals. In a letter to the editor in the late nineteenth century, a woman named Alvina writes an angry response to a tanned quote “savage” originally from the Caribbean who had written in a complaint about her party. She is not only upset that he talks about the party, but that he talks about his own teeth, saying in outrage, “what business has he ever mentioned such a word as “teeth?”

This is in part because talking about one’s own teeth as a supposed other unsettles the usual pattern of colonial discourse and attempts to control that affective space of the mouth and teeth, of the bodies and body parts that those in the center of imperial power felt they already owned. One way this colonial logic was counteracted in Britain by “savage” people on the ground was to talk about their own teeth, or, as Washkamonya did, to disposition British character through their teeth like they were doing to other people. The insidious ways that representations of teeth were used to racialize those living and imagined “savages,” and the creative ways in which people whose teeth were marked as savage worked against those portrayals via that same affective orality should be of interest to Victorian Studies as it shows us part of a very prominent but often unconscious discourse that impacted and continues to change the material conditions of women, Indigenous people, pagans, travelers, and commodity fetishism of land relations today. In Pierre Fauchard’s seminal dental text *Le chirurgien dentiste ou Traité des dents* from 1728, often considered the first text of modern dentistry, the teeth are considered, for the first time, as different substance than bone. Before that, because of their association with the skeleton, they were thought to be softer than bone. This association could be part of the reason why they are considered so powerful- the skeleton is a haunting image, and fundamental to our bodies’ existence, but it also remains beyond death.
Medical texts, periodicals, and advertisements for tooth implants and whitening services convey how teeth were marketed and valued as both a commodity and as a symbol of authenticity and noble character. Whether people whitened their teeth with powders, or participated in live tooth transplants, teeth of “othered” people were advertised as attainable. Taking teeth or other body parts from other people and putting them in ones’ own mouth as a commodity for enhancing the notion of purity was commonplace practice. Describing teeth as ivory, or pearls becomes a much less innocent metaphor when ivory and pearls were imported through the colonial violence of conquest and extractivism. Commodifying the land and extracting resources whilst simultaneously commodifying teeth and extracting the teeth of “others” with different diets and therefore less rotten teeth illustrates what Critical Indigenous Studies Scholar Aileen-Moreton Robinson terms the “logics of white possession.” Combining the desire of white teeth as a commodity, with all the implied colonial violence, with the desire for food resources such as corn, sugar, and tea that were rotting teeth within the hub of Empire.

Although Catlin was attempting to disrupt English oral culture and therefore English moral superiority, he instead created conditions through his writing to give colonial violence more specific information about the tribes he was trying to highlight. There was much romanticization of Native teeth in the years that followed his tour, with many people conjecturing how the teeth of the “American Savage” were so white and perfectly set, as one author stated even though they “have no dentists or dentrifice, their teeth almost invariably rise from their gums as regular as the keys of a piano” (Mouth Shut 474). They stood out to viewers because, unlike English teeth, they were so white and so straight. This is also the time when the term “Noble Savage” really spiked in the discourse, as shown by search terms
from British Periodicals database. Catlin did use the terms “savage” and civilized in almost all his published writings, but often used the term noble unconnected with the term ‘savage’ until later writings. However, despite this, the terms ‘noble’ and ‘savage’ used together had similar spikes in the years 1830, 1836, and then a steep decline between 1840-45, then a large spike in 1845, with steady spikes from 1850-1859, at which case begins a two- or three-year decline and then raises again. Overall, there seems to be a general increase though during this timeframe, and certainly the term savage and the term noble seem to have similar trends, even though they are not used at the same frequency. Catlin and Indigenous presence in Britain and Europe heavily impacted the usage of the terms noble, savage, and Indian, as evidenced by the following screenshots from the British periodicals databases, which show notable spikes both when he did his initial painting exhibition and again in the 1850s when Washkamonya and the other Paxocan travelers toured in England, Scotland, Ireland, and mainland Europe with him.

Through his attempts to showcase the beauty and value of Native culture, customs, and physical traits, Catlin’s presence in London ended up perpetuating racist and dehumanizing language in British print culture and periodicals in a way that were vastly reductive in their reception, but which posited him, at times, as the white ‘expert’ on documenting this disappearance because they praised himself. Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine wrote of his writing’s uniqueness, and that “these closely-printed volumes, which will remain an interesting record of the Homeric age and race of North America, when, save a few wild traditions and scattered relics, and a few of the musical and sonorous Indian names of lakes, rivers, and hunting grounds, every other trace of the red man will have perished on that vast continent” (53). He included a review from ‘The Literary Gazette, London” that reads Mr.
Catlin is the Historian of the Red Races of mankind; of a past world, or at least of a world fast passing away, and leaving hardly a trace or wreck behind. We need not recommend it to the world, for it recommends itself, beyond our praise” (54). These accolades were all directed to Catlin as writer, performer, curator, painter, historian, and these two examples are just two of twenty that he includes. Although some reviews praise the Native performers for being kind, “unprejudiced” or “stoic,” most dramatize their “wildness” and “savage customs” and most assume that they are “doomed” or dying, which adds value to the product they are advertising and reviewing. Catlin chose to include these perpetuations of the idea of a dying race and of the “noble savage” despite asserting himself as their friend and proponent, his subsequent texts make clear that he feels their way of life will not last, so texts such as The Mouth Shut are directed to improving a European audience with practices, customs, and purity of character that are for Catlin embodied in the idea of the “noble savage and also within the physical bodies of the people he introduces in his texts, shows, and paintings.

The following images highlight a spike in the terms Noble, Savage, Indian, and North American that mirrors one another right between 1855 and 1860 within the British Periodicals. This shows the impact that Catlin’s shows had on these language terms. We see that the term Indian and Noble were used far more often during the years of his shows, and the gradual increase of the use of the term Savage, which seems to have been very rarely used before 1800. Such was the negative consequence, whether intentional or not, of Catlin’s ‘advocacy’ for sharing Native lifeways, performances, and his insertion of himself as an expert speaking on their behalf.
Dickens’ 1853 essay “The Noble Savage,” details his negative emotions about being a spectator at Catlin’s show with “his Ojibbeway travelers” and describes his view of what it was like to see people persuaded by the concept of “the Noble Savage,” or beautiful beings deserving of compassion and admiration through Catlin’s outward support of this trope and of highlighting wonderful parts of Native people, customs, dress, dance, and embodied elegance. Catlin very much asserted in his writings that this angle of presentation and his paintings, performances, and texts would help uplift and protect the tribes he had gotten to know during his earlier travels as a painter. However, he also profited from the myth of “dying races” becoming more real and proliferated this idea in his exhibitions and writing. Starting in London with a gallery show only\(^{82}\), he had begun taking more and more extreme

\(^{82}\) He did invest a lot into this show, brought it and two bears over on a boat that almost capsized, and it was a living gallery with performances from himself and occasional volunteers dressing in “Native costumes” and portraying different
measures to capture the attention of the English public, even bringing a bear over to England at one point (journals). Through Catlin’s own writings about his experiences in North America and while traveling in the UK and Europe, and later publications surrounding oral culture specifically, through his quotes and footnotes quoting Iowan travelers (specifically Washkamonya- aka Jim) and through intense narrative response from periodical writers and society newspapers in England, we see three different positions of orality emerging in conversation and in response to colonization.

By highlighting Washkamonya’s critique of English orality and through utilizing experiences of Native customs that he has observed, Catlin minutely and methodically outlines every way in which the Native oral culture is superior to English oral customs in *The Mouth Shut* (and all other versions of this text that were published and circulated both as pamphlets and books into the 1890’s). His intensity of argument and his use of multiple examples for each point, his use of illustration combined with a variety of humorous footnotes, coalesce into a very clear picture of the evils of civilization and the benefits of living like “a noble savage” for individual and community health, but also for morality. In contrast to this practice of standing around with mouths wide open, Native people protect their teeth and their health, Catlin argues, by practices of closing mouths of babies when they sleep and keeping their own mouths closed as often as possible to not spread or inhale germs. As we currently live through a global pandemic, this seems like a solid medical practice. At the time of its publication, however, it would be safe to say that this text was controversial, in ceremonies after the art and artifacts (and bears) themselves either did not fully survive the trip or were not as interesting to the English public as he thought they would be (*Catlin’s Notes of Eight Year’s travels and residence in Europe*). He talks about the bears’ “jaded and humiliated looks” after a night in the storm, which he reflects on as being amused although frightened because of the chaotic scene around him for the passengers and the bears.
no small way because of all the unflattering illustrations of English people laying in their beds or walking around with their mouths hanging open.

By the end of the Victorian period, British readers had a variety of disseminating viewpoints (including Washkamonya’s) illustrating how North American teeth and cultural customs around child-rearing were better, and how therefore adopting more habits and characteristics of theirs was more wholesome. Catlin’s economic concerns and need for money/his own racism and concessions for his good intentions, conflicted heavily with his end goal of preserving and uplifting Native culture. However, the self-consciousness of the wound inflicted by the circulation of Washkamonya’s critique, and the collection of evidence presented in *The Mouth Shut* and subsequent periodical and medical texts may have lasted into the present. There was a large interest in Catlin’s texts despite the derision and hostility that “Jim” and the other travelers were met with, and despite the hostility and lack of acceptance that Catlin faced for his artwork both in the US and in England. This interest might have been because the “sins of empire” started becoming more apparent to the general citizens as news of violence, plagues, and wars was disseminated for so long and the intensity of foreign threats that had seemed so pressing after the Romantic period waned. On top of this, a self-consciousness about their own appearance and what it meant about the health of their culture and “civilization” were well documented as being increasingly discussed towards the end of the nineteenth century. Given the existing reliance on teeth and their appearance to symbolize differences of race, class, gender, sexuality, chastity, and

83 It can certainly be argued that this self-consciousness translated into the trend in upper middle-class families of removal of all teeth and be fitted for lifelong dentures, especially for the oldest female child in the family, as “prevention of future pain” of having one’s own impure teeth, and to increase one’s social value. This is discussed in depth in the dissertation conclusion, but this was common practice in late nineteenth and early twentieth century England. To remove all a young woman’s teeth either at 16 years old or as a wedding gift from her husband upon marriage.
character combined with contact with “noble savages” and many other cultures whose beauty standards were much different than theirs, ironically led to existential questions about the first part of the century’s confident rhetoric in British superiority and increase humility. Additionally, dental, and phrenological research, although claiming that people who were non-British were wasting the perfections of their physicality and mental capacities, consistently showed the physical and perhaps spiritual superiority of African, Native American, and Pacific Islander skulls, teeth, and lifestyles. It became more difficult to continue this assumed superiority when all physical and theoretical evidence portrayed the opposite. When British teeth began to decay at faster rates with increased consumption of colonial products, so did their confidence that they were better than the “savage” other.

Kate Elliot calls the La Salle collection in Catlin’s paintings “a particularly personal reflection on regenerative effects of the American West and Native American culture” (243). I would extend that point to argue that Catlin believed in this regenerative power in his own role and believed that it could be transferred to Europeans who were willing to listen and learn to Native customs, cultural, and medical practices. This belief in the transferability of this regeneration runs clear in his periodical writings published in England and in his short book on the dangers of English teething and mouth breathing habits entitled The Mouth Shut, the journal descriptions of “playing Indian” and of dressing in “costume” of various tribes, wearing face paint, and attempting to usurp the voices of Native people whom he learned so much from. By asserting himself as an expert while simultaneously building the discourse of the ”savage” and the mythos of the dying races of “red men” who he had made relationships with to gain this information from, he also participates in plagiarism. Washkamonya’s presence in the texts where he appears, however, cannot be covered by Catlin’s
showmanship. It is Washkamonya who makes clear the feelings of his tribe about English oral culture. Washkamonya makes his words count when speaking, digging the knife into the teeth of Britain’s lies.

It is Washkamonya who walks around critiquing the English alcoholism and reverses the British fixation on the oral, shining it back on their pale faces, possibly poking fun at Dickens, and performing an early ethnology of British culture, poverty, and the value systems which led to injustice within their own society. His point that they should not be attempting to teach other cultures in far-away lands when they cannot even feed or give shelter to their own people gets to the heart of the problem more quickly than Engels in his “Condition of the Working Classes of England in 1844” or than Dickens in any of his novels critiquing capitalism. In just a few quoted sentences, and through documenting what he notices along the way, he gives Catlin the ammunition to write these stories down. Within Catlin’s journals, he describes visiting heads of state, governors, and mayors of towns, aristocrats, royal family members, and their consorts. He seems more enamored of the wealth and focused on currying favor of people who could fund his projects than he does in advocating for the guests who he knows the material conditions of. Did Washkamonya give the observation notebook that Daniel was documenting his observations to Catlin? Was it the same notebook that Catlin took his own notes in? Clearly, Catlin had opportunity to hear from and read Jim’s thoughts on London, so instead of naming him even as a co-author, I would like readers to imagine that Washkamonya’s observations are just as likely to be the very basis of many of Catlin’s critiques. One of my goals in future study is to find this notebook if it still exists and see what kind of notes Daniel transcribed. My guess is that we
would find much more similarity to Catlin’s eventual critiques than he gives Washkamonya credit for.
maybe this mouth full of blood

a tooth will wiggle free

& i will make a fine garden

where i plant this molar.

burst from soil & gum

prairie fire.

Excerpt from jaye simpson’s “Orality” - *it was never going to be okay* (2021)¹

CHAPTER 3/4: Affective Orality and Teeth in Indigenous Women’s’ Writings of the late Nineteenth Century

Unfortunately, British colonial discourses and prejudices such as the discourse of “the savage” and its values about land and embodiment were often developed through a transnational imperial lens and distributed transnationally through publication, letters, circulation and physical travel of influential people from England and Scotland. These discourses were physically transported through settler colonialism to the Americas in the pamphlets, texts, societies, and minds of early fur traders and settler colonizers, especially North in places such as Canada and the upper East Coast². Just as Washkaymonya had reacted negatively to these ideologies as he encountered them in London, Indigenous people of these regions often rejected and openly disagreed with what they knew to be immature and unfounded worldviews. US colonizers, although they attempted to distinguish themselves from Britain through what Vine Deloria and others have termed “playing Indian” during the
Boston Tea Party, they had much more similarity with British imperial values and ontology than they did with Indigenous American mindsets, social systems, ontologies and epistemologies. Additionally, historians have found that most of the participants in the Boston Tea Party were specifically Scotch-Irish settlers, who had felt disenfranchised by Britain both in settling Ireland and then again in settling in the US. During the process of colonization of the Americas and migration in the upper plains region of British, Irish, Dutch, German, and Scandinavian settlers, Indigenous thinkers noticed and reacted to these differences. While European settlers had their own distinct cultural groups and were interacting with a variety of tribes, this chapter will focus primarily on the types of affects and colonial attempts to colonize the oral space of Indigenous people that are distinctly related to what has been laid out in previous chapters. Many Indigenous women, for example, responded in writing and oral narration against colonial views about land, embodiment, and family, as they saw them plague the land and proliferate violence. The affective orality and values surrounding teeth and character asserted in Indigenous women’s writings of the nineteenth century (long before and long after) work independently of and in opposition to the British colonial and settler-colonial commodified symbology of teeth-as-land. Instead, Indigenous women in the nineteenth century directly critique and counteract this objectification of land and teeth through their use of oral narration and affective orality, and through their use of representing acts of retribution against colonial orality. One Dakota woman named Wicapweastewin spoke in 1862 as a child, telling of the events of the Dakota Uprising, and especially her later 1934 oral narrative about the uprising and the war she had experienced and that changed her family and her tribe during the years leading up to and following the war. Directly and intentionally asserting her perspective through was an act of
response to the injustices she saw but was also something that could have had dire consequences. She felt it was important to tell, despite any personal risk. What she tells both as a child and later as an elder being interviewed. Her story undermines colonial narratives about the war and is a significant example of Indigenous women’s rejection of British colonial values around orality, teeth, land. Simultaneously, her narrative directly attacks colonial epistemologies, ontologies, and values surrounding embodiment and especially orality even as they were being encountered and gives additional contexts to the way that Dakota people felt about these colonial impositions before the war. Her story not only offers insight into the conditions of and imagery for the resistance to the ways colonial orality was attempting to impose itself during the 1860’s in what is now called Minnesota, but Wicapweastewin additionally asserts a form of cultural and storytelling sovereignty through both its narrative arc and her choice to share it at least twice with people outside her tribe who she knew were transcribing it and who would share it with a broad audience.

Sovereignty has been defined by Indigenous Studies scholars as assertion of Indigenous memory, knowledge, storytelling methodology, kinship, sexuality, language or linguistics. I will specifically talk about one woman who asserted a powerful image of Indigenous resistance and storytelling methodology, Wicapewastewin, or Good Star Woman, in the aftermath of the US-Dakota War in 1862 as a child, and again when she was an elder in 1934. This act of oral storytelling is one that has had lasting political, social, and narrative impact for understanding the Dakota point of view in relation to the US Dakota war since then, which remains important in part because of the continuation of genocide by the US government and settler society against Dakota people and ongoing attempts by Minnesota settlers to portray nineteenth-century settlers as innocent victims of violence from Dakota
people. Sarah Hernandez writes the imprisonment and murder of Dakota men that resulted after the US-Dakota war has left an ongoing wound for their descendants, who “are still struggling with the historical and intergenerational trauma caused by war, execution, exile, imprisonment, and many other harsh assimilationist policies meant to extinguish their language and culture” (110). Good Star Woman’s choice to tell the story of the events leading up to and following the Dakota war has resulted in a way for those ancestors to access Dakota truth behind extremely traumatic events that changed their tribe and the entire Oceti Sakowin experience forever and subsequent efforts by the US government and settlers to portray them as violent or “savage.” Her story shows that in the conditions they were facing, many warriors showed restraint, logic, and compassion for settlers as they determined which actions to take in the years leading up to the war, and were shown indiscriminate violence, punishment, and horror in return for actions that most people did not participate in.

As I begin this chapter, I state my position as a mixed-heritage settler scholar who has studied this historically significant war within a limited timeframe, through a limited lens in relationship to the colonial notions of orality originally outlined in this dissertation. I felt that Good Star Woman’s story was important to include as an example of symbolic narrative resistance to British colonial orality because of its continued affective refrains. However, for this chapter to become a contribution to any field, I will need to do much more archival research about the US-Dakota war, the literature and scholarship that has been written about it and speak with more people who still carry the oral tradition of this context. Therefore, this chapter is highly limited in scope and argument, both by my personal position and by time constraints in researching a very important and complex event with lasting repercussions.
Some of the scholars cited in this chapter, primarily Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Sarah Hernandez, Chris Pexa, and Linda Clemmons, have in contrast dedicated large portions of their careers to researching and addressing the horrors of this war within their scholarship, and therefore should be referred to as the experts on this event and its consequences. For people reading this to study the war, although I include an explanation of the war from some contemporary scholarship, please refer to the scholars listed above for further study. Limitations aside, it is necessary to offer some context about the war and the events portrayed in Good Star Woman’s oral history of the war because it is not well-known but also because it adds context to the decision that Good Star Woman made to share her story at least two times. There are other Indigenous women writers and narrators who also deserve attention from the nineteenth century, but because Good Star Women’s narrative has received little critical attention, I’m choosing to center her narrative in this chapter. The Dakota war resulted in terrible suffering for the Dakota people and unearned gains for the settler descendants, and there are testimonies available from Dakota people, including Good Star Woman, about the war and its aftermaths.

In a letter from at least fourteen named Dakota people, including Moses Many Lightning Face, on June 26th, 1863 to Rev. S. R. Riggs sent from internment at Davenport, Iowa in Dakota. Although Many Lightning Face frequently sends letters to Riggs, the people in internment were kept without mobility in this camp for three years, Moses reporting that many were dying of disease, broken heartedness, and malnutrition. They were separated from their families. In this specific letter, they state that “Many of our relatives have written this letter—It is so. Then we want you to listen, as we tell you, how we are living here in prison—It is so. The elders and non-elders met together and wrote this letter […]. The men
and the women who that are living here together met and talked, they said they will not take their communion—it is so.” (Letters 23). This rejection of communion is also symbolic of a broader rejection of the imposition of Christianity that Riggs, Pond, and other missionaries were attempting to enforce on the Dakota people as well as a rejection of being forced to partake in beliefs that were not their own, including communion. As Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Sarah Hernandez emphasize, the missionaries such as Riggs who Moses Many-Lightning was addressing had been attempting to colonize Dakota language and spiritual beliefs since the establishment of the Lac qui Parle Mission and its institutions between 1834 and 1854 (34). As Good Star Woman shares in her later years, this type of internment that Many-Lightning was suffering through was prolific and the separation of families was hugely consequential and destructive to Dakota people living through this frightening time.

A narrative about the Dakota War from Good Star Woman is available online through the Minnesota Historical Society Frances Densmore Records. Good Star Woman asserts not only her own history of the war in this account, but also the history told to her by her father of events that she would not have been present for. The Dakota War of 1862 has been argued as one of the most-ignored battles of US history. Kathryn Zabelle Derounian—Stadola points out that this occurs in part because the consequences of the battle went the way that many white settlers wanted it to go, with the removal and killing of many thousands of Dakota people, including the hanging of 38 Dakota men who may not even have been involved in the uprising. This event occurred simultaneous to the Civil War, so she argues that this is one reason that the reality of the Dakota War has been overshadowed despite the large number of deaths and its close relationship to the Battle of the Little Bighorn and Wounded Knee massacre (22-23). Because of the erasure of this event, both Hernandez and Zabelle
Derounian—Stadola assert that Dakota narratives of this history are incredibly important. Good Star Woman’s account, then, is particularly important, both as an example of an assertion of affective orality and as a critique of colonial orality. Andrew Myrick, a shopkeeper and trader, is historically known to have kept provisions meant for the Dakota from them. When confronted about this, he was witnessed by an Indian agent as saying “as far as I am concerned, let them eat grass,” showing his disregard for not only their legal right to the food from the US government, but also showing his disregard for his own wife, who was also Dakota. Good Star Woman’s narrative corroborates this, but adds details she heard from her father and mother, as well as her own memories and life experiences of the Dakota war, which is an incredibly valuable act of her use of storytelling. Myrick was one of the first people killed during the conflict and was specifically targeted for critique of his use of colonial orality and attempted control of the starving Dakotas’ consumption.

Through reading Good Star Woman’s narrative, we can better understand her interpretation of the events and her choice to speak on such trauma and to share the Dakota perspective of events with settlers who transcribed it. Much of Good Star Woman’s narrative shows the alarming sounds of crying and the gunshots occurring during the first part of the war, and the resulting abuse of Dakota people, most of whom were not involved in the war at all and many who condemned violence against people who were not seen as being responsible for their political situation. The starvation, disease, displacement, disenfranchisement, trauma and loss described in Good Star Woman’s story is also echoed in the stories of many other Dakota people during the nineteenth century and scholars of Oceti Sakowin literary and historical traditions today. This part of her story is transcribed as the following:
Good Star Woman’s mother had laid only a few sticks on her carrying strap when she heard shots. “Hurry,” she cried, “the Chippewa must be here,” and they ran back to the camp. There they heard more shots and everyone thought it must be the Chippewa as they had had raids of the Chippewa and were always looking for them.

When they returned to the camp it was still very early and the little children were in bed. An Indian came into the camp, so frightened that he could not tell them what was the trouble. They kept saying “Tell us, what is the trouble.” At last he said “The Sioux are killing the whites. This was taking place four or five miles away but they could hear the guns. The children wakened and began to cry. Later they learned that one of the traders was standing on the steps of his store when the trouble took place. He had been there many years and could speak Sioux fluently and said to the Indians, “Why are you fellows coming here? Are you jealous of me?” One of the Indians said “I’m the one” and shot him.

The two Indians who killed the white farmer were shot in punishment by their own people. One of them was sitting at the end of his wigwam, opposite the door, when an Indian came in and said, “You were the cause of all this suffering, making the women and children suffer so much,” and he shot him dead. The other went out of his tent and was walking along when someone shot him in the back. One of the leaders said, “this is what we ought to have done in the beginning and then this suffering would not have come, the women crying and the little children having to walk so far.” Every morning they could hear the women crying, and as they went from place to place the little children had to walk and they cried from weariness and fright.

The Indians who fought the whites turned against the Indians who refused to join them. It was a custom of the Sioux, when in danger of attack from the Chippewa, to put the women and children in one or two wigwams, and dig a trench in the middle so they could crouch in that and be below the line of fire. The earth that was removed to make the trench was piled outside the wigwam, forming an embankment. Good Star Woman’s family were “friendly Sioux” and she remembers being placed in such a shelter, with the other children and the women.

At length the friendly Sioux got someone to write a letter and take it to Fort Snelling. The man had to go a long way around, but he returned safely and said the soldiers were coming. He told the Indians what to do when they saw the soldiers and said they must make a white flag to wave and must point their guns down toward the ground. They did as he told them, and the soldiers circled around and had them pack their goods. The soldiers brought wagons for the women and children, while the Indians who had horses took them, and put their belongings on travois. Good Star Woman’s father had a horse and travois, and she traveled that way, with her two younger sisters. Her father covered them with a buffalo hide with the hair on the outside, but she sometimes lifted the corner and peeked out. When they passed through towns the people brought poles, pitchforks, and axes and hit some of the women and children in the wagons. Her father was struck once and almost knocked down. The soldiers rode on each side of the column of Indians and tried to protect them but could not always do so. A boy was driving an ox cart and the white people knocked him down. died from the beatings they received. Some Indians At night they camped close together, and the soldiers camped in a circle around them. Once an Indian was struck and killed. They scraped the fire aside and buried him under it, so the whites would not find his body. They went on the next morning.

In the meantime, the Sioux who had started the trouble had run away to safety.

At length the pitiful column of friendly Sioux reached Fort Snelling. A high fence was put around their camp, but the settlers came and took their horses and oxen. They were provided with food. The soldiers drove a wagon among the tents and gave crackers to the children and bread to the older people. Measles broke out, and the Indians thought the disease was caused by the strange food. This was the first time they ever had the disease. All the children had measles and one of her sisters died. Sometimes 20 to 50 died in a day and were buried in a long trench, the old, large people underneath and the children on top. A Roman Catholic priest brought a box for each body and put them in the trench until spring, then he "buried them right," He was good to the children and told them to come to church and he gave them candy and apples. The children like singing in church. (Densmore inserts “Who was this priest? Doubtless his name is recorded in history, but the Sioux remember only his good deed”).

Good Star Woman said that some Sioux were taken from Fort Snelling to St. Louis and put in chains. The remainder were kept there all winter, and in the spring were told they would have to move. They were put on a steamboat and taken down the river, but the boat was leaking, and some had to be taken off. After a while they were put in box cars and taken over to the Missouri river where they were again put on a steamboat. Their destination was Fort Thompson where they were kept in a stockade for three years. Many starved to death there.

The Indians were almost naked. They wound burlap around their legs to keep warm. Many of the women had to wear burlap gotten from the soldiers, and nobody had any sleeves in their garments. If the men got drunk, they had to carry bricks all day.

Even though we have accounts and oral narratives transcribed, translated, and at times heavily edited from often biased settler sources who often colonized these stories in the
process of transcription or attempted to destroy the heart of these stories (as Sarah Hernandez has rightly argued⁹), the voices of affective orality that permeate through Good Star Woman’s narrative through the crying out of the people she describes in her experience, including her mom, and the subsequent bodily suffering described within the narrative that discusses the heavy physical punishment and maltreatment of the Dakota people, many of whom were deprived of basic needs. Although the narrative points out that they were fed, they were given very little to eat of nutritive value that the story mentions (crackers and bread) received measles. Their modes of transportation and whatever goods they owned were stolen from them by settlers.

This account of the Dakota war by Good Star Woman, whose oral narration of the Dakota uprising and the killing of an evil agent of the US government when she was a child has helped historians and more importantly, Očeti Sákomín people, understand the conditions of survival for the Dakota people. By sharing a Dakota perspective of an act of deep symbolism around orality, her words echo in written perpetuity as well as continued oral storytelling¹⁰. Although much of this dissertation focuses on colonial discourses of teeth and “the savage,” I believe it’s imperative to show that simultaneous to this, and also to Washkamonya’s travel to London with his fellow Paxoceans, Native women authors across the great plains and upper Northeast were additionally countering European discourses about them and misinterpretation of their tribes within North America for a varied audience including but not limited to European and English readership. Additionally, Good Star Woman’s practice of sharing the Dakota narrative with white settlers was carried on by her daughter, who had her story transcribed in the 1930’s by Frances Densmore who met Good Star Woman and her family in Red Wing, Minnesota¹¹. During this visit, Frances spoke with
Good Star Woman’s daughter, who verbally relayed her story in English to Frances who transcribed it from her daughter’s translation. Although she spoke in her language and it is difficult to get her voice, we do get some of her words and her affect mediated through another person and can use that text and the written pieces of information about how she moved in the world and how she chose to tell the story of her people. As Waziyatwin has asserted, Dakota storytelling is part of a longer methodology in which culture, history, relationships, and epistemologies and other important survival information is passed down, with part of the process and responsibility being the stories’ repetition, so we can see that Wicapewastewin wanted this story repeated and fulfilled part of her obligation as a Dakota woman by re-telling it.

There are few Indian survivors of the outbreak in Minnesota who can recall the details of the tragedy. One woman, however, remembers it clearly, though she was only eight years old at the time. Her Sioux name is Wicapewastewin, meaning Good Star Woman, and she lives with her children near Red Wing, Minnesota. Although she is almost blind, she sews industriously all day, making patchwork of woolen pieces that her daughter cuts for her, laying the light and dark pieces in separate piles where her groping hands can find them, and keeping her supplied with threaded needles. She has an interesting face, her gray hair is in long braids, and her vigor belies her eighty-four years. Sitting beside the door of the wigwam, on the ground, she had her tobacco bag beside her, with its mixture of Spearhead and kinnikinic. When she had finished her narrative, she lit her long pipe as deftly as the woman of today lights a cigarette. Holding the red-stone bowl in her hands, she puffed the long stem of the pipe, sometimes taking it from her mouth to speak to her daughter who had interpreted the story and was discussing it with me.

The details that Densmore offers about how Good Star Woman was dressed, how she was sitting, the way that she sews and how she keeps active during their conversation, and even what type of tobacco she was holding in her tobacco bag all show the interest that Densmore held in Wicapewastewin and hearing her narrative as well as writing it down. More importantly, however, they also give us some indication of affective communications about how nervous Wicapewastewin might have been. It is unclear whether she was frustrated with Densmore or with her daughter, or if she is emotionally affected by the storytelling itself. We don’t know if she is always working despite her older age, but she volunteers the information regardless. Despite Densmore offering few opinions as to the facts she presents, she does
appear to be very impressed with Good Star Woman, both as someone who is able to use her voice to share such important history, although the translation through Densmore and Densmore’s additions primarily about her work ethic and her appearance make the reader question her intention in putting forth this narrative. The fact that the Dakota War and even Wicapewastewin’s story is so overlooked within the US historical context contributes to the erasure of historical knowledge about the Dakota War and the Dakota experience of the events of brutal colonial violence towards them before and after the war.

One way of recovering part of Good Star Woman’s intention and affect during the telling of this story would be through reading for Wicapewastewin’s affect as described by Densmore, and also what Densmore leaves out or seems to put into question. We can feel Densmore’s affect more readily throughout this transcription, which shows her discomfort with Good Star Woman’s story details through slips in her notations and punctuation, as well as her asides and assertion of herself into Good Star Woman’s narrative. While she did go into some details about Good Star Woman’s expressions, many are left out. However, because Densmore was focused more on the commodity value of her words for their rarity and importance than she is in describing her affective response, recovery of this affect is difficult. Densmore shows admiration of Good Star Woman and her mannerisms, which she describes as skillful, serious, and determined. Wicapewastin speaks in Dakota to her daughters, who then translate and relay the story to Densmore. Densmore then types their translation and shows them the narrative. They discuss changes with her, and between themselves, possibly also corroborating with Good Star Woman about changes that need to be made. They clearly also show intent to make sure that Densmore does not change the narrative too much from its original purpose. Densmore states that the narrative “is
represented exactly as translated [added: by another daughter, Mrs. Peter Logan, being in consultation with] Mrs. John Bearskin, daughter of John Bearskin’s daughter Good Star Woman. No attempt has been made to harmonize it with history. It stands as the personal narrative of one who remembers the Sioux "massacre" and shares in its sufferings. [It was read back to the daughters and some slight changes made [written in pencil after typewriter edits]” (1). Disturbingly, the word “massacre” is put in quotation marks, indicating that Densmore is attributing that term to Good Star Woman and her daughters and wants no part in the statement. Perhaps she disagrees that it was a massacre, or perhaps she is putting quotations for other reasons. The quotations act to distance the word from herself, showing at the very least discomfort with the term, and perhaps calling the use of the term into question of accuracy. This would match the tone of her following attempts to state how accurate her transcription is, since she also shares that Good Star Woman’s narrative is not in “harmony with history” and tells the reader that she is staying true to Wicapewastin’s words instead of what we may assume is the settler version of “history” Densmore references (1). Even though Good Star Woman talks about multiple perspectives in her story, describing what she has heard from a variety of family members in addition to her own experience, Densmore still writes personal before having it crossed out by the daughters (it is crossed out in pencil).

Good Star Woman is described as someone who “lit her pipe as deftly as the woman of this age lights a cigarette” so she has bodily and mental function from this description despite her age (1). We are told that Good Star Woman is very capable of remembering the intricate details of events that occurred long ago and corrects and offers repetition for her daughters. This is information Densmore offers right at the beginning of the transcription,
communicating her desire for the reader to feel impressed with Good Star Woman and the words she speaks. She also relays that there are “few Indian survivors […] who can recall the details of the tragedy. Good Star Woman is described as having “vigor,” and as being deferred to by her daughter, as being both physically and mentally capable of recalling and sharing what may be a traumatic story from her youth. This statement is not made in context of the killing of so many Dakotas in the aftermath of the war, which would help explain why she is one of the only people who remembers it. She is indicated to be an important key to understanding this history due to others having already passed on, but also is described as “having an interesting face” by Densmore, who says that she does not change the narrative but seems to willingly express opinions in the margins of the story about the input and edits from Good Star Woman’s daughters after writing.

Wicapweastewin seems to be barely given credit in historical documents for her decision to share this story and have it translated and transcribed, and was clearly not uplifted enough by Densmore herself, who seems to have been asserting herself as an almost local celebrity and “expert” on the customs of Native tribes in Minnesota. During the translation of the oral narrative, there are three people mediating the story. Good Star Woman tells her two daughters this story in Dakota language, and then they translate it to Densmore who writes it down. It is difficult to tell what may have been lost during this translation and more study of Densmore’s notes surrounding this conversation is needed. Good Star Woman is described as checking in with her daughter to make sure that she is telling it correctly (as noted below in Densmore’s notes), which illustrates her intentionality and shows that she is very concerned with its accuracy. Additionally, there are details offered in this second story that show Good Star Woman’s desire to assert the facts of the event, including the notes that
Densmore makes on the transcript itself about certain facts being changed after the daughters revised the narrative at Good Star Woman’s request.

The following is a transcription of the part of her narrative from Densmore’s document, a part that particularly shows the affect involved in this telling because of all the ink splotches and lines through it in various parts that betray the complicated feelings of the transcriber, whose family history as settlers in the US went back to at least 1805 according to the Minnesota Historical Society and who from readily available documents in her archive had already been positioning herself as someone speaking for Native communities, so was unlikely to be the most reliable transcriber of this narrative. Two years earlier, Densmore gave a radio talk about Native music where she stated that she was using the English names for Indian tribes instead of the Indian names because “the Indians are all Americans now,” which also shows her assimilationist settler position (Radio Talks 1-3). Some of the edits have been included for their interest to this study for emphasis, because we do have to read between the lines and truly attempt to understand the tone based on what information we do have. We have to listen to the silences as well as what is included. I decided to share a large portion of it within this chapter, typed, since it has not been explicated in literary scholarship to my knowledge and because I was unable to find any additional copies from the Minnesota Historical Society:

This daughter is represented exactly as translated [added: by another daughter, Mrs. Peter Logan, being in consultation with] Mrs. John Bearskin, daughter of John Bearskin’s daughter Good Star Woman. No attempt has been made to harmonize it with history. It stands as the [personal] narrative of one who remembers the Sioux “massacre” and shared in its sufferings. [It was read back to the daughters and some slight changes made (written in pencil after typewriter edits). According to Good Star Woman there were three outbreaks at once, the first being at Granite Falls, the second at Birch Coulee, and the third at Big Stone Lake. The family of Good Star Woman lived near Birch Coulee. Her father belonged to the Hemnica band, some of whom lived near St. Paul and others near Red Wing. They were not in the trouble, which was started by band the Sisseton Sioux. Some of the Mdewakanton [insert band] were involved and were blamed, while the Sissetons who really started the trouble fled to Canada and Montana, many leaving their families behind them. The Mdewakanton chiefs told their people to keep away from the trouble, but in the end, they were blamed and suffered severely. One of the events that led up to the trouble at Birch Coulee occurred a year and a half before. Two Indians were passing the house of a white man and asked for food, as they were hungry. The man was angry and
one Indian said, "Let us go on." The other said, "I'll ask the woman for a piece of bread." The first Indian went on expecting his friend to overtake him. Later he returned and found the body of his friend [insert hidden] in a swamp, with a tree laid over it. The Indian's head had been split open and a bloody axe lay nearby. The white man and his family had gone away, taking all their belongings. The Indian took the body of his friend, which was wrapped [insert it] and placed [insert it] on a scaffold, according to the custom of the Sioux custom. The Indians did not turn against the whites because of this incident.

Hunting and trapping were the principal industries of the Sioux and they took the hides to the trader. Sometimes he went to the Indians in their hunting camps, taking pork, coffee and other commodities which he gave to the Indians in exchange for hides. He packed the furs on his sled and went on to the next camp. So far as the Indians knew, there was no account kept when the trader collected the hides nor when they took the hides to his store. They only knew that they "owed a lot to the trader."

After a while two traders called the Indians to a council. Good Star Woman's father did not go, and when the men came back he said "What did they want to tell you?" They replied, "The trader said he wanted everybody who owed him anything to sign a paper and then he would collect the money from the Government. He didn't show us any papers, he just wanted us to sign. He said the Government would allow each Indian twenty dollars a year, and what he owed the trader would be taken out of that. Then we won't have to go hunting any more."

The trader also told the Indians that if they didn't sign the paper they could get nothing at his store, saying, "If grass you have to eat hay [grass inserted] go ahead and eat hay [grass] but don't come around here asking for food."

From that time the Indians and the trader were unfriendly but the trouble did not begin right away. The trouble at Birch Coulee actually started with four young Sioux, two from near Birch Coulee and two belonging to the [many words crossed out] Pezutazizi (yellow medicine) group living near Granite Falls. They went hunting to get some meat, perhaps staying two or three nights. On the way home they came to the farm of a white man, and one said "Let's ask this man for water, so we can cook some supper. I'm hungry." A hen flew up and left some eggs, hidden in the grass. One Indian said he was going to take the eggs. Another said, "Let them alone, they belong to the farmer." The first Indian said, "That is nothing. You are just afraid of this white man." So he stepped on the eggs and broke them. The farmer did not see this as it happened some distance from the house.

[The Indians] were still hungry so they two of them took a pail and went toward the house to get water, to cook some of the meat they had brought. The farmer saw them and motioned them to go away, then he went into the house, got his gun and threatened them but did not shoot. The Indian who had advised leaving the eggs alone [lots of letters crossed out that appear to read who had taunted him] turned to the other and said, "You called me a coward. Shoot this man. If you don't I'll kill you right here." So the Indian shot the farmer and his wife. Some white men chased them toward Birch Coulee.

That night some Indians who had been hunting came home and found what had happened. This was late at night, but they talked it over and the head men got together and said the trouble must not go any further. But then the Indians who had been told [insert to eat grass] got angry and the attack on the trader followed in a short time (2-5).

There is so much to discuss within just this excerpt of the story. First, I would argue that what we see early in the narrative seems to indicate in a clear way that Good Star Woman and her daughters intended for this telling to be a community narrative of the Dakota version of their history. This is evidenced both by the word “personal” being crossed out in the line “It stands as the [personal] narrative of one who remembers” and in the penciled in note reading “It was read back to the daughters and some slight changes made” after the word “suffering” (2). This is interesting for a variety of reasons. It is important to note that the daughters had some of the last words in this transcription, and that they made sure that it was more representative of their own goals and their mother’s story. Additionally, one of the
changes that the daughters may have made to the document was the word personal. Crossing out this word may represent the group decision to make this story a tribal story, or at very least a story of their band, in contrast what perhaps was Densmore’s addition of a word that their mother would not have said. Regardless, the change indicates a move from individualism to group writing, identity, and a story that represents much more than one woman’s memory. It additionally represents the multiplicity of voices involved in this transcription, and the authority of the daughters in translation.

The site of the violence was oral space, and the site of the revenge was also oral space. I would encourage readers to approach this as not only a very clever response from the Sisseton and Wahpeton people, but as a direct writing and authorship of their response to European settlers attempted control of their food and lifeways. The stuffing of grass in Myrick’s mouth is a very loud and clear response to the violence of European attempts to control their orality and consumption, as well as an assertion of their tribal sovereignty and self-determination as a nation willing to make such a statement, willing to go to war, and willing to have personal and close contact with an enemy. It also permanently connects his life and death with the ugliness of his words and maltreatment of people he was supposed to be giving food rations to. Good Star Woman did something incredible, because of her telling this story we have all these artworks, echoes, and the story lives on. Good Star Woman’s story is still important to the Oceti Sakowin and the affective echoes of her choice to use her voice and highlight are repeated within contemporary times. While the narrative from Good Star Woman is often shared as part of a larger history of pain and frustration, the moment of victory is also celebrated by northern plains tribes and is discussed often still, in part because the act itself (of killing Myrick and stuffing his wasicu mouth with grass) represents
thoughtfulness and strategy even through starvation, a measured and specific response to the ongoing attempts to slowly kill the Dakotas. Although there may be some complicated feelings from contemporary Dakotas\textsuperscript{17} for some of the actions taken during the war towards other settlers beyond Myrick\textsuperscript{18}. As a piece of narrative in literary history, Good Star Woman’s telling of this response and its subsequent written accounts in the 20th century indicate how sticky and interesting that symbolic moment is for so many people. The victory of the Dakota at that moment was not simply symbolic, but it also gained them material resources to survive starvation, although the tragedy that occurred when Lincoln ordered the hangings of 38 Dakota men has also been commemorated. The potent symbolism of Myrick “Eating Grass” himself is incredibly unforgettable. As a result of Good Star Women’s decision to tell her story, Myrick is now known in perpetuity for his wrongs against Dakota people. The way that his own words and the attempts to control and coerce Dakota people failed him in a humiliating and very orally focused response, can act as an echo for hope of potential retribution for the wrongs against Dakota people leading up this moment and echo in scope beyond his own actions as an individual to encompass a rejection of Wasicu orality. The image of Myrick with his mouth full of grass easily and powerfully resonates, but it is imperative to keep in mind that retribution is still being fought for and has not arrived. As Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang argue, there will be no possibility of decolonization without the repatriation of Indigenous lands\textsuperscript{19}. There is strength and cleverness in this imagery and in the continuation of the story. It connects both to the land and to the oral space, and the connection between the two so powerfully and beautifully.

This action spoke very loudly and subjected Myrick to his own violence, also represents the ability of the tribes to take back control of their own food if any settler stood in
their way. Although this moment is a materially consequential and short-lived retribution, the
critique of colonial orality and revenge upon Myrick for his violence did not protect the
Dakota people for very long. Additionally, although Myrick was targeted because of his own
words and the way that he acted as tyrannical regulator of Dakota consumption, he was one
of many colonial actors who were attempting to control Dakota life. The uprising was used to
create anti-Indian propaganda throughout the Americas and led to an increase in suffering,
which Good Star Woman’s narrative describes in the aftermath, of her dad being attacked by
a settler even in transport to the internment camps and one person dying from attack as they
were paraded through settlements. Unfortunately, although Dakota warriors had gained
ground during the Dakota war, the negative consequences soon overshadowed the victories
because of the massive numbers lost and the response of both the local settler and
governmental agencies in harsh responses that resulted in mass death, murder, disease, and
other slow sufferings against the Dakota including the exile from and loss of their homelands
One of the letters from internment from Stands on Earth Woman in 1864 shows the pain that
was experienced by women with children who were sent to internment camps after the war,
because so many children died in the camps. She writes to her relative asking for help to
prevent her child from dying, saying “I am suffering for the lack of food and clothing. […] It
does not seem right, and now I am suffering very much. […] I need shoes and something to
eat. I am suffering very much, I came home, but then they said my husband died long ago,
because I don’t remember now, maybe he will see us, because I did not see him then. Now it
is very terrible” (111). According to some many of the letters from internment, Stands on
Earth Woman’s experience was similar to many – people were separated from their parents,
from their husbands and wives, from their families, and were often not given any food and
clothing despite the intense weather such as “very deep snow” and freezing temperatures of
the upper plains region. These death camps were horrendous and clearly meant to traumatize
and destroy Dakota kinship and hope. Wicapewastewin’s role in disseminating a Dakota
response and sharing this story through the missionaries is one of many communications
from Dakota people, who often write to Riggs about feeling forgotten by him and the Great
Spirit and who fastidiously describe praying to try to be forgiven for actions of their people
in a Christian paradigm. Perhaps part of the reason why the account of Myrick’s mouth being
stuffed with grass feels so gratifying and epic is because many of the white settlers and
Indian agents deserved the same treatment for their colonization and starvation of Dakota
people leading up to and after the war. The image of Myrick eating grass not only
communicates to Myrick’s body the foolishness of his own mistake, but also sends a broader
message to all settlers, missionaries, and European colonists that their words against will be
remembered after death. Although Good Star Woman is not writing the story of her tribe
down with her hands, I argue that she is writing it through her words and intentionality,
utilizing the powerful tradition of oral storytelling to help educate the people around her
about what really happened during the war, and providing additional context through this
narration. By including the emotional expressions of multiple voices within her narrative, and
by choosing to tell this story in the first place, something that would not have been easy
given the setting and ongoing affective tensions with settlers, Good Star Woman participates
in the practice of oral narration and story sharing practiced for many generations before her.
This oral storytelling tradition is outlined by Waziyatawin in Remember This, the Eli Taylor
Narratives as an assertion of this Dakota historical sovereignty. She states that Dakota
stories, like that of her grandfather, “become a decolonizing agent, a means for Dakota
people to assert an identity and worldview that will carry us into the future while at the same
time assisting us in resisting the colonizing forces” (1). Waziyatawin says that Dakota
stories are key to survival, and that each time she tells a story that has been passed down in
this oral tradition through so many of her people since time immemorial, she states that “my
connection to land and place is solidified with each telling of the story. As a Dakota I
understand that not only is Mni-sota a homeland worth defending, but through the stories I
learn where the blood of my ancestors was spilt for the sake of the future generations, for me,
my children, and grandchildren” (Grandmother 3). This re-telling is not only a decolonial act
as Good Star Woman is choosing to tell it but continues to be a way of fulfilling
responsibility of Dakota women20 and connecting oneself to truths about land and its
meaning in the past and the future despite colonization. Waziyatawin says there was a similar
purpose for oral storytelling to carry on legends in which boys and men were trained from a
young age through quotes from Charles Eastman. This storytelling methodology of how to
remember should not be considered unique to Good Star Woman but as her kinspeople are
asserting, as a clear part of her upbringing as a Dakota woman.

The context offered within this story adds a Dakota experiential lens to the historical
facts, both in representation of the attempts by government agents, traders, and white settlers
to control Dakota orality and in representations of quotations from other Dakota people and a
continuation of oral storytelling. Since Good Star Woman was not likely present during most
of the conversations represented between the various men described, it is likely that she
relied on the oral tradition, and the skills of deep listening when her father entrusted her with
these stories so that she could share them.21 The context additionally adds the reality of fear,
starvation and hunger, and of the confusing and complicated political conditions that Dakota
people were attempting to navigate. For example, in this contextualized version of the narrative, Good Star Woman and her daughters do show that the Dakota had previously been able to trade and hunt with the shop keeper (Myrick) before they were made to sign the document. At some point, they were no longer able to interact with him as they used to be able to, and their interactions were increasingly mediated through the US government and extreme differences in value systems.

The story and the characterizations of various people shows that some “friendly Sioux” were farmers, like Good Star Woman’s father, and that people were attempting to navigate new rules of what was expected or allowed of their lifeways and what they were punished for. As mentioned in many of the accounts that Clemmons outlines from Riggs, the misunderstandings between settlers and Dakota people primarily came from the white perception that they were “begging” even though sharing food and other resources with anyone who wanted it was a large part of their custom\(^{22}\) (74). Good Star Woman later mentions that her mothers and aunts gave away excess corn to the trader and his wife before all of these “troubles” occurred, thus giving evidence of the generosity of Dakota people and the lack of reciprocity or generosity Dakota people received from white settlers. This lack of generosity is also illustrated in one of the first events in named in the building tension of the story arch- the murder of the man who had simply asked for food because he was hungry. Although this was not excerpted above, we later learn that “Good Star Woman lived near the trading post. Her father had a sister who had raised more corn than needed, so she told them to come over and get it” (6). Even though the style of narration is really like a list of facts, these facts and the order they are told in are absolutely damning to the values of these settlers.
Despite Good Star Woman’s account being mediated through a settler woman, it does not lessen the impact of story itself. The markings on the places in the story that are changed (possibly by Good Star Woman’s daughters) increase where conflicts occur, showing that Densmore may have felt intensely about this narration, but also that she did attempt to leave her personal opinions out of the story. The line “has not been harmonized with history” is telling because it indicates that Densmore is privileging white settler history, but as far as historical translated transcripts go, this remaining evidence of Good Star Woman’s narration is now part of History with a capital H., and the transcription is available online for free. It would be incredible to have an audio recording of this story, but I am grateful that Wicapewastewin chose to yet again share her narrative with someone who wanted to document it in writing so that it could additionally be accessed by a broader audience. I also feel the need to affirm that having the story written down does not detract from the continued oral sharing of this story in less formal settings. Instead, the story has reverberated and will continue to reverberate as an assertion of Wicapewastewin and subsequent storyteller’s assertion of sovereignty.

Affective orality in Good Star Woman’s narration works by asserting sovereignty of her own attempts to speak the truth of the events as told to her by her other family members and through her own choice to use the methods of oral tradition. Sovereignty as a concept operates as both small and large acts, either of a Native experience of self within a colonial context or an assertion of tribal epistemologies and ontologies, but often of both. There is no one definition of the term, and Michelle H. Raheja focuses on what she terms “visual sovereignty” while Robert Allen Warrior utilizes the term “intellectual sovereignty” (Keywords 25, 30). Craig Womack argues that sovereignty can be asserted through story,
while Jodi Byrd, Mishuana Goeman, Joanne Barker and Leanne Simpson are a few of the scholars within the field of Critical Indigenous Studies writing about the importance of Indigenous narratives as part of assertion of sovereignty. Kim Tallbear writes on sexual sovereignty, and Mark Rifkin imagines the possibilities of “a sense of embodied and emotional wholeness” as fundamental to the possibility of sovereignty (Erotics 27). The understanding of sovereignty in this chapter is used to frame assertions of individual and tribal viewpoints despite great personal risk, because of the importance of sharing the truth of a Dakota worldview, in Good Star Woman’s case. Here I am understanding sovereignty less as the legal act but as a strikingly important assertion of personal power within the context of Critical Indigenous Studies theorization of the term. Because of the differences in the way that land and human relationship to the resources of the land were viewed, teeth become less of a focus in terms of commodity fetishism, even for nineteenth-century authors like Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Ojibwe) who were heavily involved with the economics of the fur trade but who kept asserting intellectual, cultural, and storytelling tactics to assert Native presence. Good Star Woman is one of many Dakota people who were forced into internment and suffered greatly at the hands of colonial violence despite this assertion of sovereignty.

This settler colonial violence included the use of medical and dental experimentation against Dakota people. According to Dakota artist Julie Buffalohead, “the mass execution and resulting grave [of the Dakota 38] became a source for medical cadavers for doctors eager for subjects to dissect. For example, William Mayo who the Mayo Clinic is named after, received the body of Cut Nose, whose skeleton he kept in his home for anatomy lessons for his sons.”23 The desecration of graves and continued use and abuse of the teeth and bones of Dakota people to advance European medical research is part of the continued practice of
theft, colonial disconnection and dehumanization outlined in the first chapter of this dissertation, where people are compartmentalized through their teeth, skulls, and bones of colonial people are circulated as a commodified object to increase the wealth of colonizing people without any regard to their personhood or how they were killed. Along with this theft of bodies, Clemmons has referenced the theft of teeth and other body parts from the Dakota 38 after they were hung, leading to further traumatization of their relatives (150).

Good Star Woman’s story works in the way that Paula Gunn Allen discusses oral storytelling by Native women whose role is important for asserting national sovereignty. She famously states that “strong women make strong nations” and that we need to pay attention to the stories of Indigenous women to better understand their tribe’s narrative traditions and values (30). Good Star Woman’s story, with its vivid imagery of Myrick with his mouth stuffed with grass and the violence leading up to that moment, as well as its significance in asserting a continued historical truth in the consequent attempts at erasure by missionaries and settlers who were present for the events that occurred, but who made the Dakota out to be the only wrongful party and previous colonial co-optation of Dakota language, culture, and customs by missionaries like Stephen Riggs to further support the colonizing project of the US and assert individual authorship where there was simply theft (Hernandez 44). She asserts that “to repair our connection to the land, we must challenge and critique settler-colonial land narratives that transformed Oceti Sakowin land and women from “the givers of life and nourishment” to mere property” (10). Good Star Woman’s narrative critiques Myrick’s statement that reduces human beings to what they can pay for, his refusal to offer food to hungry people, and his disregard for his Dakota neighbors. Myrick was participating in this notion of women and land-resources as “mere property“ because he did not make an
attempt to get to know. Despite circumstances that led them to try to navigate people like Myrick, Good Star Woman’s narrative shows that Dakota people rejected his notion of orality and consumption, of generosity versus ownership even before the Dakota uprising, and were eventually pushed to react to their material conditions and the injustices they were experiencing. Her decision to tell this story despite overwhelming circumstances both at a young age and again as an elder does show her determination to assert Dakota sovereignty and epistemologies of historical truth in the face of ongoing efforts at colonization and erasure from many others like Myrick.

Although the need for assertion of sovereignty often results from violent colonial contexts and led to controversy surrounding the term in early Native Studies debates, many scholars within Critical Indigenous Studies have taken up the call from Robinson, Raheja and others in 2015 to expand the use of the term and reclaim it outside of socio-political and legal contexts alone (Keywords). Many nineteenth-century Indigenous female authors, despite various levels of interaction with colonial discourses, schooling, and professions, remain committed to their tribal worldview and defend Indigenous value systems of their tribe both ontologically and practically. Indigenous women’s writings of the nineteenth century illustrate a firm critique of British oral culture, along with a contrasting and holistic view of teeth as part of a whole person or system instead of an object or affective symbol for ideas of disposition, personality, or character. Though there are also similarities between some of the psychic meanings of teeth between British oral culture and the values around character asserted in nineteenth-century Indigenous writings, the purpose behind evaluating characters of other people in narrative form appears differently. Although I will briefly discuss these more well-known writers, this study focuses primarily on Good Star Woman (Dakota)
because her narrative is fundamentally important to the topic of orality, teeth and the rejection of colonial affects surrounding teeth. Good Star Woman’s story contains the powerful image about the rejection of colonial orality and affect. Her story continues echoing today as a strong image of this rejection, the assertion of affective orality, and the stark difference between Dakota and colonial value systems surrounding mouths and teeth. Her choice of employing oral tradition to share this story with a broad audience speaks to the material conditions and suffering of Dakota people leading up to and after the Dakota War, it speaks to the settler colonial greed around expression, consumption, and resource hoarding. Lastly, her choice to tell the story of the Dakota Uprising, the subsequent war and relocation, conditions during relocation in her own words and from her tribe’s perspective powerfully supports contemporary efforts for people whose ancestors are still denigrated in Dakota territory for their response to these unlivable conditions. Importantly, her choice to tell this story has emboldened contemporary Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota people to understand the conditions that led to the dispossession and genocide of thousands of people and share this narrative in continued oral tradition to educate those around them that colonial orality is fundamentally antithetical to life.

This deep understanding and willingness to speak out against the lies being asserted by colonial narrative, oral storytellers and historians who colonial writers may have attempted to silence or write out of history should be recovered in literary studies. Additionally, their narratives should be given more seriousness by the often European-focused literary and historical scholarship of the nineteenth century. Sarah Hernandez asserts that the field of “literary studies is a much more appropriate space in which to examine transcribed/translated Dakota oral stories, because the tools of literary analysis can be used to
help illuminate the unique features of Dakota narrative and poetics (32). This is contrasted with the fields of history and anthropology, which most often write about Dakota oral narrative to find the most legitimate lived reality of historical or contemporary Native peoples (32). One of the stories of this time highlights the violence against elders, women and children that occurred at the same time, and was told by Waziyatawin’s grandmother to her so that she would remember the historical events that occurred in the aftermath of the Dakota War, including the death of her great grandmother. This story also depicts the way that the white soldiers were feeding them unsanitary food, and how low the standard was when being taken to the internment camps. She writes down her grandmothers’s narrative of the war, saying that:

The old people were in the cart. They were coming to the end of the town, and they thought they were out of trouble. Then there was a big building at the end of the street. The windows were open. Someone threw hot, scalding water on them. The children were all burned and the old people too. As soon as they started to rub their arms the skin just peeled off. Their faces were like that, too. The children were all crying, even the old ladies started to cry, too. It was so hard it really hurt them but they went on.

They would camp someplace at night. They would feed them, giving them meat, potatoes, or bread. But they brought the bread in on big lumber wagons with no wrapping on them. They had to eat food like that. So, they would just brush off the dust and eat it that way. The meat was the same way. They had to wash it and eat it. A lot of them got sick. They would get dysentery and diarrhea and some had cases of whooping cough and small pox. This went on for several days. A lot of them were complaining that they drank the water and got sick. It was just like a nightmare going on this trip.

It was on this trip that my maternal grandmother's grandmother was killed by white soldiers. My grandmother, Maza Okiye Win, was ten years old at the time and she remembers everything that happened on this journey. The killing took place when they came to a bridge that had no guard rails. The horses or stock were getting restless and were very thirsty. So, when they saw water they wanted to get down to the water right away, and they couldn't hold them still. So, the women and children all got out, including my grandmother, her mother, and her grandmother.

When all this commotion started, the soldiers came running to the scene and demanded to know what was wrong. But most of them [the Dakota] couldn't speak English and so couldn't talk. This irritated them and right away they wanted to get rough and tried to push my grandmother's mother and her grandmother off the bridge, but they only succeeded in pushing the older one off and she fell in the water. Her daughter ran down and got her out and she was all wet, so she took her shawl off and put it around her. After this they both got back up on the bridge with the help of the others who were waiting there, including the small daughter, Maza Okiye Win.

She was going to put her mother in the wagon, but it was gone. They stood there not knowing what to do. She wanted to put her mother someplace where she could be warm, but before they could get away, the soldier came again and stabbed her mother with a saber. She screamed and hollered in pain, so she [her daughter] stooped down to help her. But, her mother said, "Please daughter, go. Don't mind me. Take your daughter and go before they do the same thing to you. I'm done for anyway. If they kill you the children will have no one." Though she was in pain and dying she was still concerned about her daughter and little granddaughter who was standing there and witnessed all this. The daughter left her mother there at the mercy of the soldiers, as she knew she had a responsibility as a mother to take care of her small daughter.
“Up to today we don't even know where my grandmother's body is. If only they had given the body back to us we could have given her a decent funeral,” Grandma said. They didn't though. So, at night, Grandma's mother had gone back to the bridge where her mother had fallen. She went there but there was no body. There was blood all over the bridge but the body was gone. She went down to the bank. She walked up and down the bank. She even waded across to see if she could see anything on the other side, but no body, nothing. So she came back up. She went on from there not knowing what happened to her or what they did with the body. So she really felt bad about it. When we were small Grandma used to talk about it. She used to cry. We used to cry with her.

This transcription from Waziyatawin of her grandmother's story shows the ruthless and highly controlled environment that the white soldiers created. These types of stories are necessary to understanding the reality of history, but as Waziyatwin states, you cannot find them in any archive and they are often erased outside of tribal contexts (1). She also repeats her grandmother’s re-iteration that “things happened like this but they always say the Indians are ruthless killers and that they massacred white people. The white people are just as bad, even worse. You never hear about the things that happened to our people because it was never written in the history books. They say it is always the Indians who are at fault” showing the misconceptions still being circulated and that were circulated about the Dakota in the nineteenth century (4). The only way that we can understand any of the historical reality of the nineteenth century, especially in an US context, is through more quotes and oral narrative from Indigenous women, show ways that each author represents their tribal views of teeth, land, and orality. They add to a corpus of written and spoken stories which directly attack the assumptions and assertions of British oral culture and the commodification of land, teeth, and character.

Although the attempted whitewashing and propagandizing of colonial land values through narratives such as “Manifest Destiny” and the portrayal of Native people as “savage” to both settlers co-opting Native lands and Europeans who had not yet arrived were prolific, these narratives continue to permeate US education systems and settler communities to this day and continue to be a threat to Native sovereignty, land repatriation efforts, and personal
Settler colonialism was never an innocent endeavor, and its epistemologies often erase or leave out responsibility of individuals and settler communities responsible for the active theft and murders leading to the deaths of thousands. Because language has been used as a tool for colonization and settler nation building projects, its reclamation is even more crucial and useful as a site of sovereignty, as Waziyatawin, Hernandez, and other Dakota scholars assert.

Scholars such as Christopher Pexa outline the historical erasure of events such as the hanging of the Dakota 38, which occurred after the uprising in Minnesota following the uprising. This injustice is memorialized each year by the Bigfoot Riders who travel from South Dakota to the site of the hanging every December, despite often freezing conditions. Pexa also discusses the lack of learning and knowledge regarding the subsequent interment, land-theft, and abuse in prison camps of Dakota people outside of tribal circles as being tantamount in scale to the attempted erasure of the history of the Haitian revolution in western historiography. Most people who are educated in a US school system never hear of the Haitian Revolution or the US-Dakota War in school at least until college or beyond (29). Sarah Hernandez argues that although the “missionary translations of the Dakota language set a dangerous precedent that denigrated Oceti Sakowin star knowledge and supplanted our tribal land narrative with new settler-colonial land narratives,” Oceti Sakowin writers (such as Good Star Woman, Zitkala Ša and Charles Eastman) used their boarding school experience and the English language to help their epistemologies live on. Hernandez adds that these stories live on primarily through the women, grandmothers, mothers as keepers of these oral traditions (xiv-xv). In the stories of Good Star Woman about the Indian agent, Myrick, eating grass, her telling of the story shows the difference in motive for Native people’s violence against Myrick and other settlers
(they were being dehumanized, killed, and starved to death) versus what Patrick Wolfe has outlined as the logic of settler colonial genocide, the desire to “destroy to replace.”

This story resonates today in continuous oral narrative so prolifically that even I, a mixed-heritage settler from Rapid City, have heard it many times proudly recited by other Indigenous women (primarily Oglala, Singacu and Cheyenne River Lakota) to speak of their power and maintain that response to Myrick’s insult as a continued victory over his attempt to control Native orality. I have heard much of my life that Wicapweastewin may have been the one who killed him, but Clemmons does not corroborate that with her research, and it seems like none of the online resources assert that either. It’s important as contemporary scholars to imagine her, regardless of her role in the actual act of self-defense, as a key figure in translating and authoring this moment for a broader audience. The idea that she was the one stuffing grass has not been corroborated in other interviews that I have read. However, as an Indigenous woman, she was powerful and as the story keeper who shared this narrative and translation of the purpose of the Sisseton and Wahpeton response, which was both symbolic and material, she is inextricably linked both with the story as tribal narrative and as the keeper of this knowledge. This blurring of agency in some of the stories can indicate an admiration, but also a cultural understanding of the capability of Native women. As the continuous retelling of her story can infer, she is considered very powerful and qualified to enact a symbolic revenge even though historical sources as well as Good Star Woman’s own narrative say a group of male warriors stuffed his mouth with grass. Despite not being present for the events described, Wicapweastewin is part of the Dakota resistance to wasicu oral culture through her narration of both the events and their justification in the telling. Therefore, even if she did not write down and publish her account of this historical moment,
we can and should consider her a famous Native nineteenth-century storyteller and as an integral part of why we still know that Myrick had his mouth stuffed with grass.

As a Dakota woman, Wicapweastewin was both interpreter and publicist for this imagery of Myrick eating grass and for additional Dakota historicization of the event. Not only did she make sure to let the English speaking missionaries know why this event had occurred (the consumption and orality of the starving Sisseton and Wahpeton Dakota were insulted and their lives threatened by this violent and selfish man when he told them to eat grass), but also the response was a direct communication to him and other settler and government officials that there was only so much abuse of their power that could be tolerated and control that could be exerted before they would take action in response. This response could have included the audience of missionaries, who even as they offered some food to people who asked for it, often withheld their resources from starving people and were called “stingy” by many Dakotas because they did not participate in generous gift-giving in the same way that Dakotas did (76)²⁷. Even though one of the missionaries disseminate Wicapweastewin narrative, in most cases, Clemmons says, “Dakotas saw missionaries as failed allies at best,” and they were faced with negative consequences for what white settlers viewed as favoritism for Native people (178). Although at least she is named in these translations of her story, she also offered the additional narrative that was transcribed in the 1930’s. Not only did she tell the story when she was youthful and in the moment, but she clearly wanted the Dakota side of the narrative to be disseminated again both using the oral narrative but also utilizing her daughters and their understanding of both Dakota and English to double check the settler’s rendition of the text. Both the act of telling the story and the story itself are important uses of affective orality. Not only does she relay what had
happened, but she uses Dakota oral storytelling methods to portray historical truth in addition to the raw emotionality and pain that affectively seeps through her story through the voices she chooses to include, the cries she describes, and the suffering described as well. Good Star Woman’s utilizing of her own affective orality to transmit the emotional memory of the events she describes to a broad audience show the power of stories to help counteract the false colonial narratives asserted by the US government and many of the settlers of Minnesota. Because of the determination that is described in her own affect during the telling of the story, it is possible to imagine that in telling the story she felt a responsibility and determination to get the facts correct. Perhaps she had hope that her story would additionally echo into the future to continue to exert affective power and assert the brutal reality of the Dakota war for herself and other Dakota people. That the story is double translated in the 1930’s does not detract from this intentionality.

Even though there are many archival gaps where she deserves to have been given more credit for her work in sharing the Dakota narrative of rejection of European orality with the world, her story has lasted powerfully through artwork, continued oral storytelling, and cultural narrative. Her story still gives Oceti Sakowin people and their allies strength, lessons, and counterargument to the notion of the “ignoble savage” that are continually placed onto the Dakota uprising through white settler narrative. Because of the story, and specifically the symbolic imagery about revenge on a greedy wasicu man, there are countless retellings and artworks showing this moment. The story lives on and on, showing both the greed of a wasicu way of life and of the intelligence and literary skills of the Dakota warriors who critiqued his orality in a way that would re-write the history of their people and of Myrick’s orality forever, and of Good Star Woman herself as storyteller and coauthor of her
tribe’s history. As Edward Said has argued, the power of narrative to combat imperial hegemony is also the power to create a nation (Culture and Imperialism xiii). As Wicapewastewin seems to have foreseen, a narrative can provide identity and meaning for a nation for many lifetimes.

The image of Myrick’s mouth being stuffed with grass is a potent and memorable part of the story as well as a critique on British oral culture through the telling of the story. There are many visual and narrative echoes of the affective power created by Good Star Woman’s narrative, even in contemporary times. One example (Figure 1) shows an angry settler man flipping off a group of Native Americans and saying “let them eat grass” while that group of three masked and disguised men (one wearing a bunny hat, one wearing an AIM shirt) encircles Myrick, who has been killed and is laying on the ground with his pants down, grass stuffed into both his mouth and bottom. Another artist, Dwayne Wilcox has ledger art showing the men feeding Abraham Lincoln, who ordered the mass execution, a pile of long grasses on a table. He seems to be very excited to eat them and has his fork raised and a
picnic napkin on his leg. However, this image also depicts another man lying in wait with a knife, protected by long grasses, cutting more to feed him, and a man behind him carrying a bucket of crow, which is another joke. According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary online, “to eat crow” means to “admit that one was wrong or accept defeat.29” Both of these representations were part of the same show called Ded Unk’unpi—We Are Here30 that opened in 2012 in Minnesota.

The critique of wasicu oral culture inherent in Good Star Woman’s telling of this story and its aftermaths in visual, oral, and written cultural survivance is that there are lasting consequences both for what you say and how you speak to people. The contemporary
artworks show the humor and irony in such a heartbreaking situation, and the ludicrousness of Myrick and Lincoln’s use of their own orality.

While the story has been retold countless times and misinterpreted, translated, and potentially changed by white missionaries and settlers, I would argue that it does not negate the intention of Good Star Woman’s telling or the consequences of the event of the uprising or the decision to share the story. Native people have been strategically savvy about utilizing white men with social power to convey messages to the public who would be more likely to listen to them. As Ed McGaa, Eagle Man (Teton Oglala) has discussed, Oceti Sakowin warriors, political figures, and historians have often utilized white men at appropriate moments within his lifetime to get their narrative into the mainstream so depending on the relationship between specific people and the folks they are interpreting for, the texts of white historians may be taken somewhat seriously at times, instead of being rejected simply because they are written by settlers (Crazy Horse and Chief Red Cloud, 95). From all the evidence and the account, itself, it is very likely that she knew telling this to the missionaries and having them write it down would publicly circulate Dakota's reasoning and truth. She may have even asked Riggs or some of the other missionaries (who were both complicit in the violence but wanted to preserve positive relationships with Dakota people in hopes that they would convert to Christianity) to publish her testimony and disseminate it amongst the settler community. While white European accounts of Native stories are not without fault, bias, or mis-telling, there is also something to be said for the resonance of truth that lies in this story and reasons why people still enjoy and find importance in re-telling it orally today.
The importance of historical specificity in resistance to racialization, whitewashing, and attempts at erasure under whiteness is outlined by Sherene Razack and Jennifer Nez Denetdale in *Dying from Improvement: Inquests and Inquiries into Indigenous Deaths in Custody* and *Native Historians Write Back* where they discuss the importance of story, of knowing how to look for more specificity in the zone of whitewashed, ancestry-lost zones of academic scholarship. By writing counter-narratives and asserting Native truths in the face of an attempted colonial amnesia, texts using historical specificity, culturally significant imagery, and Indigenous strengths and truths in the face of attempted erasure builds on what Robert Allen Warrior term “intellectual sovereignty” which undermines the implications of whiteness or the attempts to assimilate and co-opt Native storytelling into a Eurocentric or British worldview. This practice not only brings the human consequences of law and political economy to attention, but it also asserts a narrative and cultural sovereignty through the process of storytelling and value systems allowing for these truths to be highlighted.

The often-willful misunderstandings about the events which followed this oral symbolism and revenge for forced starvation and torture continue in settler communities to this day, so Wicapwewastewin testimony is continually brought up by Native people and in Oceti Sakowin research such as Sarah Hernandez’s. We can continue sharing this story as a useful counterargument to feigned ignorance and refusal of white settlers in Minnesota and surrounding areas to take accountability for their histories (often people will say the hanging and other acts of colonial violence was or is justified because of Native violence towards settlers, historical murders, etc., without referencing the larger context). According to Pexa, the Dakota language used to describe the missionaries who transcribed Good Star Woman’s stories is one of relationality, indicating that Dakota people had built strong relationships
with Thomas Williamson, Stephen Riggs, and Pond. His argument that “colonialism did not, despite the colonizer’s hopes, occur within a monologue, but rather in interactional and relational ways” discusses the usefulness of reading missionary texts of those like Riggs, Williamson and Pond who while they cannot fully be trusted as reliable narrators, did have some relationship with Dakota people and were trusted enough to be given the behind the scenes information about the uprisings and thus should be read for evidence of Dakota resistance to state control (34). He argues that this relationality was betrayed both by the white settlers and the missionaries, but also by the word that Dakota people were given, and instead 1,700 people experienced a “civil death” in unsanctioned prison camps where they were treated as wards instead of an enemy nation, left neglected, disrespected, and later brutalized by settler communities as they were “viewed through the lens of savagery” rather than as seeking a just Revenge for the violence against their communities (36-38). Additionally, the devastation that occurred after this for Dakota people, including the hanging of 38 Dakota men ordered by Abraham Lincoln on December 26th along with the horrors of being relocated and put into the equivalent of concentration internment camps after the hanging, show that Good Star Woman’s narrative was one of many instances of grief and that the story does not counteract the persistence of these horrors in Dakota memory. The relationship between Good Star Woman and the transcription of her work must have been incredibly complex to navigate because of the political inequity and the situation she and her people were put in by the US government and the missionaries, both when she was a child and when she told this to Densmore later in life. Despite this, as contemporary readers we can see how she used her position as keeper of stories to make sure that the truth and its symbolic power was sent out into the broader world, including to a settler audience.
Good Star Woman’s account also relates to the Oceti Sakowin term “wasicun” also spelled wasi'chu, wašiču, wašicu, wasicu which although is currently used frequently as a referent to white people and whiteness culture, is defined by John Redhouse, Bruce Johansen, and Roberto Maestas as “corporations and individuals, with their governmental accomplices, which continue to covet Indian lives, land, and resources for private profit.” According to these authors, ‘Wasi’chu’ does not describe a race; it describes a state of mind; however, it is also often defined as “taker of the fat” or “greedy one” and recently a post by the controversial “Lakota Man” on Instagram and Twitter indicated that the word also insinuates defecating out of ones’ mouth, (symbolic of lying but also of illness).

While the use of teeth to discern one’s character could be argued to be reminiscent of British colonial orality and the commodification of character, there is a clear difference in tone and purpose in determining character of the person interacted with. While teeth are described, they are not fetishized. They are listed as one of the markers of the person, and if they are a bad person or wasicu, their teeth may show some evidence of that. In the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota meaning. This could be viewed as an indicator of similarity, instead of difference, of perhaps a universal human tendency to notice and create meaning from the teeth. However, the way someone becomes determined as wasicu is through consuming community resources in an unsustainable way. Wasicu orality indicates that someone is thinking of themselves more than the community around them or taking the most nutrient dense and substantive part of the meal for themselves (the fat) instead of sharing. That is part of why this term has so often applied to white people participating in the culture of “white possession,” which is inherently very self-centered and hierarchical. In previous chapters, I discuss the relationship between teeth as a symbol for land-resources and the use and abuse
of lands through colonialism and settler colonialism. There is a stark difference between how Native stories, including Oceti Sakowin narrators like Good Star Woman, represent teeth and how they are represented in British oral culture and imperial commodification of teeth as land-resource. However, Myrick’s statement is very reminiscent of British colonial orality and resource-hoarding, especially in relationship to the commentary employed against Ireland by Britain around this same time, and the false critiques of consumption practices of people around the globe to prop up their own voracious and destructive appetites. Even though this occurs across the Atlantic, the ideas of colonial commodification of both lands and teeth were transported to Canada and the US through phrenological and agricultural societies, letters, and texts, with the wealthiest members of these societies travelling by boat and giving lectures. While I am not arguing that the US context is the same, there was certainly transfer of colonial values and ideas from Britain to the Americas and back throughout between 1770-1850 especially. There was also the transfer of ideas through what Paul Gilbert has termed the “Black Atlantic” through the Atlantic slave trade. Ideas travelled during this period more than we contemporary readers often assume. There is additional attack on the logics of colonial orality from Good Star Woman’s story, especially because of the repetition of the lasting image of Myrick eating his words, eating crow as represented in some of the artwork, eating the grass that he insisted Dakota people eat when he could have easily given them food and improved his relationship with the community.

Clearly, Myrick is influenced by European and British “logics of white possession” because he displays similar behaviors and values to the imperial land and ownership values about consumption and because he even says something similar to what Marie Antoinette was attributed to saying before the French Revolution (Robinson). As a shopkeeper who was
receiving shipments for the Indian agents, he was a fundamental part of the US imperial system of corruption that created the conditions of Dakota poverty and starvation in the first place, and hence was one of the bourgeoise of the society he lived in. Furthermore, he is quoted in early historical documents regarding the war as being asked by the Indian agents if they should give the Dakota people some of the money and resources that they were being sent as a peace offering, to which he refused. He made the final decision to withhold resources readily available, that even the missionaries and other government agents were ready to hand out if he said it was a good idea (History of Minnesota 232-33). As both a white settler and property owner, and controller of goods and access to those goods within that region, he held as much power as a person could in that setting. Under these hoarding logics transmitted from British imperialism to US settler colonialism, people use paternalism, racism, patriarchy, or other excuses to dehumanize people who they consider to be using them incorrectly, or not creating as much “use value” for capital as they would prefer. Under these logics, Myrick and other settlers took (and still take) resources without thinking of their neighbors, without regard to future generations, not because they need the resources, but because they are participating in capitalist modes of consumption, because they want to. People participating in wasicu modes of consumption take far more than they need and are critiqued because of their effect on their neighbors and surrounding communities, the world at large. One thing that Chas Jewett (Miniconjou) always says regarding this pattern is that “there is more than enough” in an Oceti Sakowin worldview. She also outlines how the term wasicu is used not because of a physical judgment but “the judged people on their actions” (7:37). The problems arise when people have a mentality of lack, and when greedy wasicu consumption is occurring at a mass scale. While the oral culture of colonialism and
the commodification of teeth, land, and character is a major part of the motive in British literature and cultural texts for describing someone’s teeth (as a visible marker of value or symbolic of what the narrator can take), the ongoing use of the word wasicu\textsuperscript{38} is based on someone’s actions and how that reflects their character, not simply their looks or how their body parts tie into commodity exchange, desire for land-resources, or etc.

As Elizabeth Cook-Lynne herself asserts in an interview with Nick Estes and Melanie Yazzi, “there are no two sides to this story” when it comes to the history of colonization. Instead, there is the truth and there are untruths. By writing counter-narratives and asserting Dakota truth in the face of an attempted historical colonial amnesia, texts like Good Star Woman’s translated oral narrative use historical specificity and what scholars like Robert Allen Warrior term “intellectual sovereignty” to counteract the violence of settler colonialism and the legal and political implications of whiteness as the ideology which governs these structures. Later authors such as Zitkala Ša and E. Pauline Johnson both played with their knowledge of writing and used their education, but additionally Ša’s work is often increasingly radical in the directness of her writings. Jaqueline Emery notes that “Native Americans used boarding school newspapers for their own purposes: to shape representations of Indianness that circulated in U.S. print culture and to foster and maintain indigenous communities of printers, editors, writers, and readers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.” For Ša, writing around 40 years after the Dakota War and 20 years after the Battle of Greasy Grass, or Wounded Knee Massacre. As someone who was trained as an ethnologist, she was potentially able to convey the problems of colonial mindset more directly and more safely than Good Star Woman had been able to. As Emery asserts, Indigenous authors in boarding school “developed multiple strategies to negotiate the
different and sometimes competing demands and expectations of Native and non-Native audiences in order to gain visibility and the authority to speak” (2). Although Emery’s work is about boarding school and the trickiness of that context, for a Dakota woman to speak during and after experiencing the intense violence brought on by settlers to her family and all Dakota people after the war, that context was even more difficult, life-threatening, and probably terrifying. While Good Star Woman and Ša were sharing their narratives in different historical and material contexts, and through different methods, it does not detract from the choice made or the probable intention and importance of sharing an Oceti Sakowin viewpoint and narrative of historical events with a broader audience despite hostile circumstances for both authors.

Wicapweastewin’s intent in her narrative can be corroborated by examining both the descriptions of her determined affect by the person who transcribed her story, but also the tradition of resistance through truth-telling and story that continued after her through boarding school authors and writers who were writing in English and other languages. the broader tradition of Oceti Sakowin narratives written to a diverse audience to assert a Dakota, Nakota, or Lakota worldview of orality, relating to their broader epistemologies and intentionally counteracting the messaging being spread by colonial newspapers and other written forms of communication at a later date. Zitkala Ša’s representations of teeth in her book American Indian Stories illustrate that teeth in her Dakota worldview are one of many descriptors of a person’s physicality, and while they can be used as tools for determining the character of that individual person, she avoids compartmentalizing and cutting of the body. Instead of a direct comparison with British colonial ways of representing teeth, I want to highlight how teeth are used in a text that was written, published, and circulated by
Indigenous women during the nineteenth century to uplift how teeth can be viewed and valued differently than we see them in British dentistry, literature, and periodicals. Additionally, while we have a quote from Washkamonya in Chapter 2, Indigenous women writers who are “culture keepers” and whose tribal responsibility it often is to pass down knowledge and story should also be considered in future study for their own merit as writers and in context of response to and critique of colonial ideas. In her story “A Warrior’s Daughter,” Ša talks about why the “chieftain's bravest warrior” was uplifted in the tribe: it’s because of his generosity and his “heroic deeds” not because of how many possessions he held or how much wealth he stole (137). We learn from the narrator that “he was also one of the most generous gift givers to the toothless old people” (137). In this passage, the phrase “toothless old people” is not stated as a judgment or valuation of these elders’ worth or etc. It is merely stated as part of the facts of their age, as part of the descriptor that is not particularly important or indicative of their personality, character, or their meaning. We are simply told they are toothless and that it is good that the warrior is kind to them. An elderly person losing teeth is a natural sign of aging, and describing the grandpa as having lost some teeth is more a marker of his advanced long life than it is of any defect of character.

Instead of being random or indicative solely of Good Star Woman or Zitkala Ša’s writing style I argue that this pattern additionally invokes broader Oceti Sakowin epistemologies of community, embodiment, and kinship. The cutting up and compartmentalization of land and human bodies into use and waste value is not part of Indigenous epistemology and is instead a colonial value coming out of land enclosure, subsequent allotment, and the “dispositioning” of lands discussed in Chapter 1 in relation to materiality and British commodity culture. Instead of being a sublime object as land is
written about in say William Wordsworth, Percy Shelley, or Gordon Lord Byron’s poetry about sublime landscapes they simultaneously want to fetishize, deflower, own, or be the first person to walk in, land in Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge traditions is a close and respected relative, a guide, and not something to be controlled, romanticized, or commodified.

According to Critical Indigenous and Native Studies scholarship, Land is a key figure both in Indigenous lifeways and epistemologies. Indigenous ways of relating tend to value the land as a relative to be respected. As I wrote in a forthcoming essay with Ryan Fong, “through honoring how specific tribes and nations responded to losses of land and sovereignty across diverse contexts and in multiple spaces throughout the nineteenth century, we become better readers of how they accomplished this work within the literary space. As Mishuana Goeman (Seneca) and Brendan Hokowhitu (Maori) have argued, for instance, Indigenous people were mobile, modern, diverse, and highly adaptive in subverting what is now termed “recognition” or “accurate” mapping by the modern state. Acknowledging these strategies helps to decenter and deconstruct colonial and imperial logics, including what Hokowhitu calls the “shallowness of its claims,” so that we can work in solidarity to build “knowledge beyond the ramparts of colonial taxonomies.” Those ramparts and the shallowness within them relies on violent and often homogenizing notions of “citizenship,” although according to Jodi Byrd, Amy Brandzel, and many others, the notion of citizenship in the US have always been exclusionary, violent, and used to prevent ‘undesirable’ people (any resisting heteronormative white supremacy) from entering the political sphere of influence. Although the word “primitive” has wrongfully been applied to Native lifeways by assumptions from European capitalists and settlers, the ways of relating to
land communally and through kinship created increased biodiversity and many of the practices from communities who lived in responsibility to the land within the Americas have been scientifically proven in recent years by western academic science. However, as many have written about, western science (and many academic disciplines) truly underestimates the knowledge of epistemologies of Native agriculture, spiritual and cultural practices.

The land holds much greater meaning than just what is grown on it for Good Star Woman, Zitcala Ša, and the other well-known Native writers of the nineteenth century. In many of the correspondence documented for the Office of Indian affairs between 1860 and 1862, it seems as those the compartmentalization of land into measurable units and agricultural yields is built into the structure of reporting by Indian agents. For example, one agent reports that “Sir: In compliance with your instructions, I report the condition of the agricultural department under my charge, during the past year. […] the improvement Indians in agriculture has been highly satisfactory” under the present “system” and that they are showing “all the attributes of good citizens” which meant behaving as farmers, producing consumable goods, and having their own orality monitored (the number of people who have taken drink from traders is also listed in this report) (67). The report later charts the details of each family and their yields in number of potatoes, acres of corn, acres in turnips, acres of land plowed, acres of garden vegetables, acres of beans, estimated yield of corn bushels, potatoes in bushels, etc. (69). This agricultural and oral “management” and seeing the land as yield after it was “inclosed” as they spell it in the report, heavily contrasts with what Dakota writers like Ella Deloria have discussed in relation to Dakota land values, but also differs greatly from the way that land is discussed in of the most well-known Native woman writers of this time (67). Deloria states, for example, that “if you make a promise audibly you are
bound to keep it” because it has been heard by spirit, and that nobody spoke quickly or
loudly without specific reason or interrupted their fellow speakers to get a word in (80, 37). 

In terms of land values, Deloria’s ethnology tells us that nineteenth century Dakota women 
would return their menstrual blood to the land to be closer with the earth, and to offer 
sacredness to the earth during this spiritual time (147). The land and women were both 
considered to have what she later terms on the same page, “special powers,” which illustrates 
the carefulness and respect given to the land, to the feminine, and to the values given to 
speech and orality.

Another nineteenth century author whose work can help give us more of the 
structures of feeling that Good Star Woman may have experienced is Zitkala Ša. Although 
she has been given her due as an author, she has some cultural similarities to Good Star 
Woman because, being Lakota and Dakota (both part of the Oceti Sakowin), both women 
were raised with the belief that everything is connected, that beings are connected to the 
sacred, and that everyone is made of stars44. This connectedness of everything and everyone 
is very different than the mindset that the European settlers were working with, which was 
one of hierarchical Christianity. As shown by Clemmons’ findings of the Riggs’s family 
complaints about Native generosity and gift-giving culture in the 1850’s and 1060’s, 
although Wakan and Creator centers prominently in many Oceti Sakowin origin stories, there 
is more of an interplay between humanity, nature, and the heavens and more responsibility 
given to man in the Dakota and Lakota theology. Wakan, or a basis of the unknown spirit of 
things in Lakota ontologies, is discussed by a variety of scholars as being much more fluid 
and transformative than Western ontologies45. In contrast, within Christianity, man is 
considered relatively helpless if not immoral, and only God controls human destiny. This
reliance on enlightenment dualism separates humans from their landscape and focuses
attention on lack mentality, rather than abundance. Additionally, the importance of language
and story is a large part of the Oceti Sakowin experience both in the past and into the present.
According to Elizabeth Cook Lynn, she knew because of her experience growing up in
multiple and complex language systems, like both Wicapewastewin and Zitkala Sa that:

in the beginning [of life] that all of the places, voices, and ideas of myself and being
would be held in language. I grew up with two languages and then went to a boarding
school where the Mass was still offered in Latin. It is true that all the things my
people (called the Sioux by their enemies) remembered about their times of glory
were held in language, both Dakota and English. Many of the things they
remembered about their times of grievance were held in English. This meant, for me,
that I had to become a proficient (In Defense 18).

Being proficient in English was a way to ensure survival of her own ideas, stories, and
experiences, as it was for Sa and Wicapweastewin. Because Good Star Woman spoke Dakota
knowing that it would be translated, and because Sa knew at least Lakota, Nakota, Dakota,
French, Spanish, Latin, Greek, and English, they had this tool of language ready to use to
navigate the world they wrote and acted within. They, as Cook-Lynn has done in her career
as a major founder of Native Studies, knew the meaning inherent in the words they chose to
use and the literary, cultural, and language choices of the stories they conveyed to mixed
audiences.

As Good Star Woman and other Indigenous women’s writings of the nineteenth
century can illustrate, Indigenous people have always known that the Western European way
of relating is unsustainable at best, and irresponsible to future generations at its base. Sac’s
mention of both the warrior and the toothless elders has much more to do with the way that
she relays information about the kinship structure of the tribe than it does with any
individual. Her framework is additionally informed by her work as an anthropologist with
Franz Boas and includes the realization that the ethnographic information regarding her tribe’s traditions and beliefs can be written down for multiple purposes. One purpose is to counter what the white anthropologists around her were recording, despite what she was telling them. Another is to assert her own sovereignty and the superiority of Native life ways over Christian European dualism. For example, in her essay “Why I am a Pagan,” she explicitly rejects her boarding school indoctrination in support of a more holistic and land-based spiritual practice.

The racial lines, which once were bitterly real, now serve nothing more than marking out a living mosaic of human beings. And even here men of the same color are like the ivory keys of one instrument where each resembles all the rest, yet varies from them in pitch and quality of voice. And those creatures who are for a time mere echoes of another’s note are not unlike the fable of the thin sick man whose distorted shadow, dressed like a real creature, came to the old master to make him follow as a shadow. Thus, with a compassion for all echoes in human guise, I greet the solemn faced “native preacher” whom I find awaiting me. I listen with respect for God’s creature, though he mouths most strangely the jangling phrases of a bigoted creed (2).

She was frustrated by the lack of understanding and unwillingness to listen embedded within the religion she calls “bigoted” and instead holds herself to a higher standard of “compassion” and determined that she needed to convey the reality of Indigenous ontologies. Additionally, this part of her essay rejects the notion that Native people are an essential racial group who are beyond indoctrination, saying that there is no longer a stark difference between white and Native Christians because of what is in their minds, and in their mouths. She chooses to self-identify as everything that the missionaries were against, rejecting Christianity and claiming Oceti Sakowin theology -aka paganism- and live with compassion for the people and lands around her. She later re-asserts how delightful her land-based spiritual practice feels, stating “I prefer to their dogma my excursions into the natural gardens where the voice of the Great Spirit is heard in the twittering of birds, the rippling of mighty
waters, and the sweet breathing of flowers. If this is Paganism, then at present, at least, I am a Pagan.” This passage comes at the last part of her essay and works as a clear rejection of boarding-school missionary fearmongering for acceptance of a better and more enjoyable life, where she hears the “voice of the Great Spirit” instead of the “jangling phrases of a bigoted creed,” rejecting not only the practice of Christianity but also the violence of the language itself.

The view of life, land, consumption, and narrative that raised Good Star Woman, in other words, represents a very different oral culture to that being imposed upon them through settler colonialism as asserted by Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota writers during and after her time. Zitcala Sa’s autoethnographic writings, the overt purpose of her fiction writing, and her subversive ethnologies create a locus of Oceti Sakowin thought and lasting information about cultural praxes which colonialism was actively attempting to erase within her lifetime and career, but they are part of a corpus of Indigenous women’s writings which clearly and overtly portray Native orality as more ethical and compassionate than European settler orality. Words are chosen carefully, and food is shared with anyone in need, regardless of household origin or concerns of scarcity. There is a mentality of abundance instead of resource-hoarding.

Even through supposed assimilation or hybridity, these Indigenous women writers resist colonial paradigms and share their own traditional knowledge for posterity in writing, and in English. Hernandez’s argument about the decolonial assertions and voice given through the tool of publication and written English, of using the boarding school education to undermine the logics of colonization and instead assert a Dakota and Iroquois value system, we can see how Johnson, Schoolcraft, and Ša are doing this as well in terms of the assertion
of Native practices of kinship, of seeing humanity in other people, and in carrying forth some of the epistemologies of their respective tribes for future generations. Jodi Byrd has argued that “Rather than framing justice for American Indians as the fourth horseman accompanying the apocalyptic “plague, pestilence, and famine,” it is time to imagine Indigenous decolonization as a process that restores life and allows settler, arrivant, and native to apprehend and grieve together the violences of US empire.” Because the British context of interpreting teeth is linked into the capitalist modes of an exploitative relationship with land, its resources, and colonial agricultural practices, the remnants of Indigenous women’s vocal and firm critiques against this type of land exploitation is a crucial piece of affective orality represented historically that yet to be dealt with today. Additionally, the bodies that the land supports act as counterarguments of the process of British attempts to control Indigenous orality. Through recovering Good Star Woman’s place as narrator of the Dakota side of the Dakota war and recounting her experience as a child who heard all about the white settler’s greedy attempts to control the orality of her people and their response to this after many years of injustice and hunger (including killing Myrick and stuffing grass in his mouth), we can see how her narrative’s affective orality brings the settler narrative into question. Additionally, although forced to move and become a prisoner of war, recounting countless historical injustices to her people within her narrative, she still maintains coherent and purposeful prose and utilizes her daughters, who likely were listeners to this story for their entire lives, as collaborators of her story and as witnesses to her telling of it. Additionally, they acted as editors of Densmore’s transcript to ensure that it was as accurate to her purpose as possible in a translation. Through viewing this narrative and its affective echos in contemporary time alongside other nineteenth century Indigenous women’s
writings, in addition to travelers who were sent to Britain earlier in the century such as Washkamonya, we can see a literary and cultural structure of Indigenous critique and assertions of oral tradition which act in multiple important ways. These stories part of a corpus of tools and ways to challenge British oral culture that we can use in the present to further unpack how these affects continue to infiltrate our psyches.

These stories can transcend their time and assert the affective presence of historical resistance to colonialism that still needs to be felt and acknowledged along with the violence and continued genocide of Dakota people as a result of the ideologies and paradigms asserted through colonial logics. More work needs to be done to recover Good Star Woman’s experience from this historical archive. The archival work to recover stories intentionally erased such as Wicapewastewin’s is difficult because, as Dakota scholar Elizabeth Cook-Lynn states, “The consequences of war, racial conflict, power, greed, a wounded governing policy tells us, unfortunately, no one really tells the whole story.” Even in 2019, the whole story was not being told” She adds that “because historical figures, both Indian and White often serve as wingmen for the alibis of history, and it does no good to engage in staying quiet in order to put ourselves out there for some kind of purity tests. Our lives as Indians and Whites in the Northern Plains reflect a rugged, unjust history of enforced death to tribal life, and the subsequent colonization of a struggling sovereign indigenous nation.” My life has been spent witnessing many of these injustices, and I plan to continue researching more narratives from Good Star Woman, who attempts to tell the whole story as she heard and understood it.
The name of God might be taken in vain, in nothing short of mocking blasphemy, which even to this day is the custom on the most trivial occasions, too awful and fearful for religious Protestants to hear; lying and deception allowed if not encouraged—the end always justifying the means; in short, every sin forgiven save one—the one solitary virtue the Irish are possessed of—at least we are led to believe so from the manner in which they glory in it, and through its lack in the teeth of the English—the chastity of their women from the lust of the heretic.

~“Ireland and the Irish” (1854)

CHAPTER 5: How Chaste is an Irish Tooth? Irish Peasant Sexuality and Controlling the Teeth and Oral Space of Pagan Lands

Marx states in *Wage Labor and Capital* that the “the starvation of Ireland into submission” was one of the “principal events which summed up the class struggle between bourgeoisie and workers and from which we proved that revolutionary upheaval, however remote its aims may appear to be from the class struggle, is bound to miscarry until the revolutionary working class shall have triumphed” (18-19). His inclusion of Ireland in this text explicitly outlines how English upper-class attempts to control Irish orality have damaged revolutionary movements around Europe. Without understanding the ways in which the famine was a symptom of longer attempted class warfare and control of Irish peasantry, their consumption, keening, singing, storytelling, and the attempts to “discipline” their mouths and teeth into submission, we will also likely fail at understanding ongoing attempts at decolonization of the oral space in the present. My primary aim, then, is to unpack the affects leading up to the famine and to understand how the abuse of working-class Irish orality by Britain has been counteracted by Irish affective orality. While anxieties surrounding the mouth in general and female mouths certainly pervade popular discourse and
political commentary of the Victorian period for all people, the stereotypes about the overactive Irish mouth became one of the most continuous and violent. Spanning from the 1100’s onward, the Irish are explicitly sexualized, infantilized, classed, and racialized through their orality, their consumption, their pagan ceremonial practices, and their teeth or mythical creatures’ teeth such as hydras or dragons that the threat of Irish resistance to British Imperialism increasingly represented through the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

I examine the history of this materially and symbolically targeting Irish peasants’ teeth and oral space through a variety of literary and periodical texts in addition to Irish Studies scholarship. David Lloyd’s texts on orality are an homage to the structure of feeling that exists within Ireland still of this attempted, and failed, control of the British targeting Irish oral space. As Lloyd uses the mouth to understand Ireland “with possibly unique cultural force, various sets of bodily practice are distributed in both their uncertain disciplining and their unruly eruptions” can help us understand both the colonial fixation of the British imperial narrative on the Irish oral space in fiction and poetry, periodical narratives, and the politics of dentistry in relation to notions of land and notions of chastity. By focusing on the teeth and unpacking more of the reasons why Irish orality was targeted under these circumstances, we can more deeply understand ways that the oral and dental obsession affected colonialism’s affects in material ways in long nineteenth-century Ireland.

It is important for me to connect Irish affective orality to the dissertation research on dentistry, since Ireland was an early target for colonial land commodification and attempted control of the oral space. According to Jane Ohlmeyer, “it is very important that Ireland be front and center of any conversations surrounding Empire” and that it is time for

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84 In the next chapter, I will explicate a specific medical case study of this phenomenon.
contemporary historians to deal with the real problematic complexities of colonization in Ireland and within the emigrant population as perpetrators of colonialism elsewhere (Landscape Research Group). Elaine Hadley’s work on liberalism in terms of the ways that working-class Irish people were left out of citizenship practices such as voting and could only be viewed as subject if they participated in a “political occupation” that was separate from the land and uprooted from their working-class soil (232-33). This so-called-‘progress’ into civilization and liberal individualism was threatened by the notion that not only could Irish people easily and happily exist outside of state control. Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt outline how Malthus’s great enemy of Irish progress for “improvement” was thwarted by the potato, summarizing that “bodies that can copulate and eat regardless of the demand for labor will become at once lazy and menacing […] What Malthus saw when he looked at the potato was the destructive potential of the creatures his own imagination had conjured” which would lead to “crop failures, persistent infant mortality, and perhaps eventual mass starvation” because of this burdensome sexual and eating being—the Malthusanized Irish peasant—and its relationship to bare subsistence (131). That false fear of over-population and proto eco-fascism was a large part of the liberal project, developing a “duty” to give back through labor what one was supposedly taking from the economy through seemingly ‘base’ functional pleasures such as eating and sex.

Victorian anxieties surrounding sexual purity, chastity, and marriageability can be seen not only in the site of the mouth, but also appear particularly in conversations surrounding dentistry and teeth. British nationalism in the wake of industrial capitalism heavily relied upon conformity and control of the body to further the colonial project. Being upright, modest, chaste, and productive were traits emphasized by the bourgeoisie, and Irish
cultural practices (e.g., oral storytelling, reliance on subsistence farming, drinking, enjoyment of bodily pleasures, marriage for love and/or sexual attraction, remainders of the clachan system) challenged English nation-building storylines (i.e., the way to happiness is through conformity and self-discipline) as outlined by Linda Colley and other scholars. Ireland was considered what O’Connell terms “a colonial oddity and irritation” and incurred much ire from Victorian reformists, social commentators, and eventually colonial law (Webber, O’Connell 8). Additionally, Ireland was blamed for the perceived instability of the colonial “agricultural and manufacturing interests” and was continually relegated to blame for the “wide-spread retchedness of the labouring classes” in England as well as in Ireland by political economists and social and moral philosophers (“The Agricultural Labour Market” 252). Through targeted Ireland and scapegoating Irish orality, sexuality, and food consumption, the existing ideology around affective orality and teeth themselves exploded when an Irish character, whether fictional or national, was portrayed. If teeth betrayed the most corrupt part of oneself, Britain’s anxiety about their own teeth included what the Irish working poor conveyed about the character and health of their Empire. This was in part due to proximity, and in part since despite attempts to control and regulate Ireland for thousands of years, the British were not able to subdue Ireland politically or materially until the nineteenth century, and even then, their affective orality was a threat to the colonial narrative.

Teeth represented a space of gendered sexual purity in England long before the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{85} However, the link between teeth and their cultural representation of purity, morality, and character became sharper and more frequently used to racialize, sexualize, and target people both within literary and periodical textual encounters of folks

\textsuperscript{85} See introduction and Chapter 1.
whose lands were targeted through colonial conquest and resource extraction. Less than two years after the onset of famine, a commentator in Ainsworth’s magazine rips into the Irish character. The writings in “Ireland and the Irish” outlines the population losses of Ireland post-famine with glee, basically asserting that Ireland has received its consequence for not pursuing capitalist wealth through the deaths and emigrations of its people. “Ireland and the Irish” contrasts the English with the Irish in terms of their desire to earn or maintain wealth in that the Irish exhibited “a great deal of waste, and sad to say, but little management, little show for much money, and withal a great deal of talk and ‘braggadocia,’ a great deal of robbery by the right hand and by the left” (404). This discussion of “braggadocia” and talking portrays the Irish mouth as out of control and as malicious and deceitful, but also infantilizes Irish people in relation to capitalist systems. However, the notion of waste is familiar and employed throughout the empire as a dog whistle for bodies that were ready for extermination, genocide, and violence. This passage additionally portrays the Irish as part “the savage” because of the ways in which their orality was coded during colonialism, because of the language of waste, and because of the paternalism. The word “barbarian” appears frequently in searches about the Irish through periodicals leading up to the famine as does the term “savage.” Barbarism seems to be more consumption focused on many of its usages, appearing most often associated with cannibalism and sparse diet.

As Early as 1188, Geraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales) published “Topographia Hibernia” (“The History and Topography of Ireland), illustrating a longstanding bias of English, Welsh and Scottish views towards Ireland and its oral customs, or Hibernia. In this text, translated from the original Latin, their language, customs, child-rearing practices, diet, and close relationship to nature is heavily critiqued. Cambrensis argues that in almost every
way except for musical talent, “Hibernians by nature’s gift are handsome, but shameful in their practices and culture,” and that because of “their external characteristics […] are so barbarous that they cannot be said to have any culture” (101). They are also said to have almost a ludicrous courage because of their choice to frequently enter the battlefield naked and without weapons and “are a wild and inhospitable people. They live on beasts only and live like beasts. They have not progressed at all from the primitive habits of pastoral living” (101). Because they leave their lives up to chance and the influences of nature, the author goes on to argue that they cannot be trusted with agriculture because, and their love of the land is too sentimental for them to be motivated to earn a living, grow a variety of crops, or mine their own resources. Instead, it is asserted that:

this people despise work on the land, has little use for the money-making of towns, condemns the rights and privileges of citizenship, and desires neigh to abandon nor lose respect for, the life which it has been accustomed to lead in the woods and countryside. They use the fields generally as pasture, but pasture in poor condition. Little is cultivated, and even less sown. The fields cultivated are so few because of the neglect of those who should cultivate them. But many of them are naturally very fertile and productive. The wealth of the soil is lost, not through the fault of the soil, but because there are no farmers to cultivate even the best land […] The nature of the soil is not to be blamed, but rather the want of industry on the part of the cultivator. He is too lazy to plant the foreign types of trees that would grow very well here. The different types of minerals too, with which the hidden veins of the earth are full, are not mined or put to any use, precisely because of the same laziness. Even gold, of which they are very desirous, --just like the Spaniards, -- and which they would like to have in abundance, is brought here by traders that search the ocean for gain. They do not devote their lives to the processing of flax or wool, or any kind of merchandise or mechanical art. For given only to leisure, and devoted only to laziness, they think that they greatest pleasure is not to work, and the greatest wealth is to enjoy liberty. This people is, then, a barbarous people, literally barbarous. Judged according to modern ideas, they are uncultivated. (102).

86 Even though the author originally proclaims many Irish people who grow up close to nature to be surprisingly attractive and hearty, he goes on a rant at the end of the tract saying that many have physical deformities and “natural defect” both of character and of body. He adds “it is not surprising if nature sometimes produces such beings contrary to her ordinary laws when dealing with a people that is adulterous, incestuous, unlawfully conceived and born, outside the law, and shamefully abusing nature herself in spiteful and horrible practices […] a just punishment from God that those who do not look to him with the interior light of the mind, should often grieve in being deprived of the gift of the light that is bodily and external” (109).
Not only are the people themselves described as uncontrolled, or “uncultivated,” but the people are being chastised for interacting with their land in a non-commodified way. They do not have a desire to control their land, and thus are “primitive” or “barbarous.” Irish embodiment is additionally compared to the land through descriptions of dirt and being dirty or unclean, as in a later passage they say “this is a filthy people, wallowing in vice” that also worships land-based spiritual paganism in many parts of the island, to much the ire of the author (106). This shows that the prejudices between the British and Hibernian Isles were tense even in the very early years of what the contemporaries of that time believed was ‘modernity.’ Furthermore, Cambrensis fixates on the oral space of the Irish, especially those who are non-Christian but additionally all Irish people. He argues that they cannot be trusted and indicates that they will be betray their friends and relatives (107). He additionally justifies this extreme prejudice against them by describing various “barbarous” ceremonies involving Irish orality which supposedly took place historically and continue in the time of his writing in more remote areas of Ireland.

Among the “barbarous” rituals, one figure most graphically. This ceremony is described as the coronation ceremony where the king-to-be participates in public bestiality with a horse, kills it, then bathes in its meat broth while feeding his people the meat, and announces himself also a beast before “he quaffs and drinks of the broth in which he is bathed, not in any cup, or using his hand, but just dipping his mouth into it round about him. When this unrighteous rite has been carried out, his kingship and dominion have been conferred” (110). The author repeatedly points out that many of the people in Ireland have never heard of Christianity or have heard of it but reject it, there are “many even still who are not baptized” or who have incestuous or ignorant priests and pastors who do not bother to
educate their people, and whose prayers are more like “treachery” and “treaty as if it were a kind of betrothal” than whatever the author assumes praying is supposed to be like (108-110). Instead, he describes them worshipping “under the guise of religion” where the priest’s orality is also put into question, they are doing human and animal sacrifices, even of their own relatives. Patrick Brantlinger has added that the “lightness” of the Irish did not match up to their descriptions of over consumption, the images of them eating carrion, being savage barbarians, or over-consuming potatoes, which Mathew Arnold had argued was due to their spiritualism (Taming Cannibals 137). This was used to further evident that they were a “dying race” alongside other so-called-savage nations and that Irish destitution, as opposed to being caused by English land-theft and landlordism, was caused by Irish defects of character such as rebelliousness and begging for food or money because of their perceived inability to pursue anything “substantial” and instead wanted to continue to be unpractical, artistic, musical, sentimental, or romantic (141, 147). The connection of their thinness as being associated with their land-based spirituality illustrates the firm link within the British national imaginary that Irish peasantry were pagan, heathen, and that they needed only the land to live, which did include them in an imperial economy.

There is evidence that the attempts to subdue perceived spiritual and psychic threats (often represented through teeth because of their relationship to land) from Ireland began as early as there is written evidence about English perception of Ireland. In fact, Kevin Kenny outlines how the English tendency to deride Irish customs and habits and to racialize them began even earlier than Spenser, in 1185 through Giraldus Cambrensis’ work “Topographia Hibernica” which denounced the Irish as barbaric (5). Kenny outlines the very specific contexts of the large variety of Anglo-Irish settlers, especially the lowland Scottish
Presbyterians. As Kenny states, only 5% of Irish people were landholding in 1774 (12).

There is a lot we can learn about the way that Protestantism in general, and specifically Scottish settler Presbyterianism was felt by Irish nineteenth-century people. The difference in notions of relation to land and property, the need to regulate and control vs the need to be in relationship with and learn from are opposing values. Through the colonization and “management” of nature, Irish people were also targeted, managed, and controlled by some of those same settlers.

A publication in The Saturday Review (1862) titled “The Irish Reign of Terror” indicates that the Irish are violent criminal barbarians, wild like the plants and animals of an untamed Australia who may “only be kept down by starvation and oppression? [...] Does it only accumulate wealth to lay in a stock of pikes and pistols?” (239). Their focus on laws and order, regulation, and control are clear in the statement that “Ireland is a social Australia. Laws come to a fault; proved order and regularity break down; experience fails in all its teachings [...] we cannot account for the violation of all rules. Everything has been done for Ireland which prudence and statesmanship could devise, and nobody can lay a finger on the cause of the present social dislocation” (238-239). The author’s anxiety about the supposed wild and uncontrollable nature of the racialized working class Irish, and their desire to keep them “down” appears to be a major pattern in periodical publications directly prior to, during, and after the famine (e.g. “The Agricultural Labor Market”, Irish Nationality,” Carlton, The

87 The ripples of these differences are still felt in Ireland, especially Northern Ireland where many of the Scottish Presbyterians settled. One example of this is the way that nature is treated differently by Presbyterian loyalists and Catholic republicans. More research on this may appear in a future study, but anecdotal. During my first visit in 2018, one of my hosts used the phrase “Presbyterian trees” to describe an intensely trimmed hedgerow that we were driving past. She indicated that in Ireland people could often tell who the fiercest loyalists might be by their style of tree trimming, because they were most aligned with the Presbyterian values of rigid neatness that they were obsessed with either protestant work ethic, controlling the world around them, or both. She said this in a joking manner, and until I learned more about the history of Ireland I didn’t think as much of it. In fact, this opinion came from specific historical conditions of Scottish Presbyterians
Caucasian, ART III, Smith, ART IV). The comparison between Irish natural states and colonial attempts to “tame” the “wild” Irish and their “wild” natural world mirror the way that agricultural management was discussed. The assumption of superiority is very evident. Both Celtic Pagans and Irish Catholics were considered targets of colonial control, but that they remained unmanageable is the real frustration to the colonizing forces. These English stereotypes of Irish wildness and in need of control occurred long before the famine.

This wildness, in part, came from the perceived connection between the land, the landscape, and Irish people in addition to the Irish national body. Sara Maurer, Elaine Hadley, and Sarah Townsend have all outlined the ways in which the connection between Irish land, Irish politics, Irish behaviors, and Irish diets were associated deeply with land in nineteenth-century colonial discourses. This was in large part to argue for the perception of Irish peasantry as affiliated with baseness and ‘savagery’ and with a lack of ability to be logical, but as Townsend and Seamus Dean additionally outline, this colonial symbol of land and specifically soil itself became part of a reclamation of the cultural revival and growing nationalist identity at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century through the Young Ireland movement to represent the “nation in waiting” which Townsend argues “endeavored to diagnose the deviance of the Hibernian national character in terms of the people’s relationship to land (148-49). Townsend writes:

Part of the aversion was undoubtedly racial, a reaction against the savage carnality ascribed to colonised subjects, but it also stemmed from recognizing in the Irish a different and potentially disruptive relationship to bodily need. Here was a peasantry onured to the logics of Victorian political economy. Decried frequently for their ‘want of wants,’ the Irish peasantry remained alarmingly contented with the level of bare subsistence that the hearty potato made possible. […] sufficiently nourished and thus capable of satisfying their own basic needs, the Irish would continue reproducing and outsized population, all the while remaining inured to the to the disciplinary coercions of wage labour or capitalist exchange. By the eve of the Famine, soil had
become synonymous for economists with land made alien and impervious to British influence. The terrestrial matter that, in an earlier era, signified sheer wretchedness, now came to index the Irish peasant’s disconcertingly intimate and sensuous proximity to the land (148).

This “disconcertingly intimate relationship” instead of simply indicating pagan spiritual practices as outlined in Cambrensis’ early text. Instead, it represented a bodily autonomy frightening and angering to capitalist colonists who wanted to force Irish peasantry into a more measured and hierarchical relationship to land, and who also wanted it to be easier to take and use their lands for British gain. The view that potatoes were seen as evil and as the cause of what Bigelow summarizes as “an unnatural regime of idleness and overbreeding” and were also used as currency to trade instead of money in many cases (127-128).

Therefore, this vegetable was moth symbolically and economically divergent from the goals of capital. This perception that not only was the Irish body and Irish land in need of discipline and regulation, that their bodies and lands were too wild to be tamed if their potato and their land could support them outside of colonial capitalism. Their relationship to the land was continually sexualized, and the connection with Irish peasantry, sexuality, and what was done through the oral space in terms of diet continued as a violent stereotype of colonialism throughout the nineteenth century.

Literature of so-called improvement sought to discipline the Irish mouth as part of this colonial industrializing project of control. The constant monitoring, dispositioning, and representations of Ireland as a feminized, monitored, and subversively sexualized part of the British national body (Bigelow, Foucault, Lloyd). The English and sometimes the Scottish nationalists attempted determining which parts about the Irish were to be disciplined and which aspects of their consumption (either sexual or dietary) could be targeted, with the English gaining resources and social capital at the expense of Ireland (and other places whose
lands and land-resources were being stolen for the formation of imperial capital) 88. The “Irish Question” for British nationalists related heavily to economic concerns and financial language was used to both justify the industrial colonial project and to discredit subjects of colonization, as an excuse for fixating on biopolitical regulation and compartmentalization of Irish lands and bodies. Whereas England was praised in colonial discourse for use of capitalist currency and pursuit of wealth, one way that the Irish were demonized and ridiculed was through financial disinterest and financial loss. “Ireland and the Irish” states “whilst England was falling down and worshiping the molten image, Wealth, Ireland was blindly pursuing a feu fillet in the name of Repeal. Whilst Ireland was leaving her fields untilled, her trade at a stand-still, and her people starving, to spout treason on platforms, [...] England was straining every nerve and thought to amass wealth” (405). In carrying on Malthus’s tradition of portraying the Irish as greedy, hungry, and undeserving of life 89, these types of pervasive welfare-esque discussions blamed the peasantry for their own suffering, voicing consternation and frustration at their perceived inability to conform to English cultural and capitalist norms, but also judgment at the ways in which Ireland is using its orality at this time, in all forms including their affective orality. The fear not only of these mouths being uncontrolled, but of the existence of teeth as a literal and metaphorical weapon, as monstrous, as evidence of the pervasive animality inherent in racist notions of “the

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88 In EJ Hobsbawm’s Age of Capital, he states that “The world of the third quarter of the nineteenth century was one of victors and victims. Its drama was the predicament not of the former, but primarily of the latter (xxi).”

89 In his essays and letters, “principle on population,” Malthus continually suggested throughout the early nineteenth century that the population was growing faster than the ground could grow food to feed the people of England and Europe unless some people either stopped giving birth or died to provide enough for the others to live. He argued for a scarcity model that is still in effect today in certain types of economic views, which are inherently opposed to some people living, stating that “to give full effect to the natural resources of the country a great part of the population should be swept from the soil.” Although his ideas have continued to harm oppressed people around the world through introducing the notion of commodity scarcity which is artificially produced under capitalism, the focus of most of his work was targeted against the Irish and specifically the Irish peasantry.
savage,” and as the primary weapon of the biting, snarling, and attacking hydra monster ready to attack English Protestantism, teeth play a long and intense role in the discourses of fear and of resistance to reductivist notions of Ireland’s culture, morality, and subjectability.

England’s anxiety about Irish sexuality and reproduction is inextricably linked with Irish poverty and ability to reproduce outside of Britain’s locus of influence. According to David Lloyd in his work on Irish oral space, “the regulation of oral culture [within Northern Ireland] and its paradoxically vociferous unreadability was replaced by the violent coercion of speech as a means to penetrate the opaque ethnic enclaves that were the residues of a colonial regime of domination and discrimination” (14). This passage showcases that the “vociferous unreadability” of Irish orality was a primary reason for its being targeted by British imperialism and “violent coercion of speech.

However, speech, language, and appetite were only parts of the targeted aspects of Irish orality. In addition to targeting these aspects latent to the negative representations of uncontrollability and inherent troublesomeness of the symbolic Irish mouth, teeth specifically had their own politics of fear, sexuality, chastity, and notions of both sexual and national purity. According to Lloyd, the oral space held the culmination of all the potentiality within Irish culture that threatened British colonial success. Lloyd outlines that:

For what must go down or be disciplined in order for the nationalist mobilization to take place are precisely those subaltern formations that would embarrass its modernizing drive. The destruction of the Famine and the silencing of mourning that followed in its wake are the very conditions of a nationalist subjectivity that is melancholic in not even being able to name the loss it mourns. The labile, wailing mouth of the Irish, the metonymic locus of their unruly desires, closes on the incorporation, the en-tombment, of a loss it dare not name for fear of waking the banished dead (The Indigent Sublime).
While I build off Lloyd’s assertion that the oral space was “the metonymic locus of their unruly desires,” I address more specifics about the historically gendered and classed ways that this orality is applied throughout the nineteenth century, particularly in Ireland but also in British territories everywhere. However, upon examining archival materials relating specifically to teeth and to dentistry, and relating to the famine, it becomes clear that the attack on Ireland had a large contingent from the professional class, including dentists and medical professionals, who were adding fuel to the already existing stereotypes, anxieties, and judgements about those “unruly desires” and whose views of Irish medical practice were used to deepen the prejudices against Irish patients and workers in England, Ireland, and abroad.

There was an additional undercurrent of commentary regulating Irish sexuality along with the profession of dentistry. In the periodical titled “An Irish Dentist,” (1867) author Emerald Green addresses the professionalism (or lack thereof) in rural Irish dentistry, but links dental practice with anxieties surrounding sexual misconduct directly. In this story, the anonymous author Green focuses on the licentious experience of a “mistress Molly Kavanaugh, the wife of a poor small farmer” and compares her suffering with “wild beasts--the lions, tigers, giraffes, &c., of the African jungle and desert” whose toothaches make them harmless despite their general ferocity (354). Green additionally spends time discrediting an Irish peasant man named Phil Reilly, who is described as both predatory and foolish because he is “an old bachelor, and likely to remain one, despite all his little love notes and poetic amatory epistles’ on wasted paper that he could not afford that “when he ‘missed fire,’ in one direction, he turned his amatory epistolatory batteries in another” (355-56). He is not a landowner, and has no wealth, and “no prudent girl would think of marrying him” since he
lacked property (356). Readers are warned through implications of his perversion and obsessions with the women he meets that if it weren’t for his sexual impotence, he would be dangerous. However, through his presentation of Reilly’s relationships with female “patients,” Green weaves anxiety regarding potential reproductive effects of uncareful and uneducated Irish relations, in large part because of uncareful Irish peasant women.

While Molly is described as wild, beastly, and loud, she is also described as “comely” “handsome” and attractive until Phil the untrained dentist removes her front tooth. Before he does, she is concerned beforehand, saying “it’ll lave a terrible gap, and it’ll look ugly, and I’ll miss it, couldn’t ye give me somethin’ that would chat it into good humour at this time, and we’ll let it alone?” (359). Readers understand that Molly is entrusting someone who Green outlines have no training and should not be trusted and becomes less attractive and sexually vulnerable through their interaction. Although Green never directly mentions physical sex in this piece, it is implied throughout the creation of a front-tooth gap that they have a sexual encounter, since gap teeth, as described earlier in this dissertation, were symbolic of female sexual impurity or prostitution at least since before Chaucer’s character the Wife of Bath was introduced. Therefore, because of the way Phil has been described and because of comparisons of both characters with animality and sexuality, it likely would have been inferred by contemporary readers that a sexual violation or penetration of Molly’s purity had occurred.

One consequence of the portrayal of Irish peasant women as highly gullible and susceptible to sexual impropriety was that the image painted of Irish dentists, with all the existing baggage of dentists being viewed as invaders of propriety from the eighteenth century combined with the stereotypes surrounding Irish peasants made Irish dentistry an
especially sexualized practice in the minds of British colonists. Despite the criticism of professionalization of peasant Irish dentists, British dentistry was extremely classed, dental implants, “purity” and ways of eating unencumbered being available only to the wealthiest of patrons throughout most of the nineteenth century but relying heavily on borrowed teeth from impoverished working-class subjects and desperate grave robbers (L.R, etc.). What becomes bizarre about the material realities of so many people being targeted as “savage,” with the inclusion of Irish peasant women, is that since so many Irish peasants had to immigrate to London in the 1840’s (Engels), it is highly likely that many of the teeth in their dentures from living working class people might have been from someone they considered “impure,” but whose teeth were extracted in order to increase their own perceived social purity. The uncanny horror that came along with this intimate and violent exchange may have itself been a reason for British fixation on the teeth and oral space of other people-not only were they attempting to own, control, and manage them in an overtly sexualized and commodified way. It may have been nearly impossible to escape the reality of affective transfer of who the person was in terms of their perceived purity and the licentiousness they were assumed to have participated in with their own oral purity.

This example of how Irish peasant orality was classed and gendered through dentistry adds to the already existing stereotypes of the sexualized and ‘unreasonable’ Irish poor, stating that “if, indeed, there is one class of women who marry for pure affection and nothing else, it is the Irish peasant girls. They have no other incentive than affection, for they generally bring to their husbands’ mud-wall cabin just what they get: and that is nothing; they endow themselves with each other and nothing more, often starting in life with as little forethought or preparation for the future as the birds of the air prepare to bring forth their
young in pairing time (356-357).” In this passage, Irish peasant women, marrying for “pure affection” and bringing “nothing” except themselves to their unions are explicitly linked to the carnal and unchecked reproductive and emotional capacities, since they start “life with as little forethought or preparation for the future as the birds of the air […] bring forth their young in pairing time.” In this entire piece, the Irish peasant women are not only linked with birds, an animal explicitly found in imagery of love and romance, but they are also animalized and reduced to their perceived sexual intentions. Molly is also perceived as very talkative and because of her toothache “showed an unusual reticence of speech which rather troubled and alarmed Phil” when he came to see her (358). She is just as critiqued as Phil is in this story because she allows someone without any dental training (he is a fix-it type who does favors for his neighbors), for letting such a rough man invade her oral space and touch her teeth.

The women in Green’s story are portrayed as beyond reform, led by emotion instead of reason, and as open mouths, ready to be invaded and penetrated by any dentist. Not only does this example illustrate how peasant women are a primary source of anxiety regarding Irish orality, but it also shows us how this anonymous gentleman dentist\(^\text{90}\) attempts to distance themselves from eighteenth century associations of dentistry with sexual violation. Furthermore, the comparison between Irish peasant women’s sexuality and animality also implies the desire and ability to have the type of unregulated sex that comes with marrying for sexual affection in the first place or motivated by the enjoyment of the act itself. Not only was this type of assumption offensive to an English Victorian readership, but it was additionally viewed as basely emotional and amongst the lowest type of emotion according

\(^{90}\text{Could have been TG Purland himself or another member of the Society of Surgeon Dentists attempting to distinguish themselves from working-class or untrained country dentists and the sexualized dentistry of the past.}\)
to the phrenological hierarchy. In other words, Victorian people in general, but especially women, were not supposed to be having or enjoying extramarital sex or even marital sex that was beyond the purpose of reproduction. Irish peasant women were accused of having the type of desire that “respectable” and “reasonable” women in Victorian middle-class marriages would not condone.91

Irish peasant women and their sexuality are charged in this article and many other pieces of writing throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century with being emotion-based and fertile like farm animals; therefore, their sexuality and the orality that represented it was a threat not only to the “purity” of the English dental profession, but to the “teeth” of the character of England. As Thomas Laqueur has argued that this binary view of gender started developing earlier, began to take formation as we have seen it within the eighteenth century, but that increasingly the view of the body and its sexual function as nation as “one corporeal economy” was increasingly solidified throughout the nineteenth century (14). Those who were viewed as negatively impacting the national body through their supposedly errant sexuality were targeted not only in terms of their individual embodiment, but what the existence of their embodiment meant for the makeup of the nation’s ‘anatomy’ and purity. While this illustrates the undercurrents of misogyny and paternalism in colonizing rhetoric, it moreover reduced Irish women to their mouths, teeth, and the dangers of their openness to physical pleasure, love, and an intimacy that threatens heteronormative marriage structures (or hence the British state project).

91 Sarah Stickney Ellis connects the “women of England, and the moral character maintained by their country in the scale of nations” and because of what she terms “moral power” (Victorian Prose 54). Elizabeth Langland has argued that even Ellis herself as a strict proponent of the separate spheres’ doctrine was willing to blur or dismiss differences in support of class loyalty in Nobody’s Angels, Middle-Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture, Cornell University Press, 1995.
Nineteenth century stereotypes about Irish peasant women often includes pregnancy, cannibalism, themes of corrupt papacy who have sex with uneducated peasant women and coerce them into sexual activity, Irish female peasant characters depicted as mischievous or as liars, and themes of inbreeding or incest. Many of these themes are focused on in the essay “Ireland and the Irish:”

...with all their boasted vain-glory of the “chastity” of their women, idiots are born, the progeny of incest; children were eat up with evil from their parents marrying “in and in;” and many a poor girl has been huddled off to America to give birth to her dishonour; and then, with no fears of the social inquisition before her eyes, laid her shame to the parish priest’s seduction. If you read Lever’s works, or Moore’s Melodies, you would be led to believe that every girl you met with in Ireland wout be a Venus de Medicis, but you would be mightily disappointed at the webfooted, thick-ankled, monkey-muzzled peasant girls, very dirty (water is plentiful enough surely), with a turf-kish slug across their foreheads, supplying the places of the Norahs and Kathleens your imagination had so romantically conjured up (403). 92

This passage really emphasizes both the sexuality of and the exaggerated bodily characteristics of Irish peasant women and girls. The term “dishonor” brings the notions of sexual purity and Christian heteronormative morality to the forefront. The author additionally associates Irish Peasantry with animality, incest, evil, and sexual licentiousness. The rhythm and the way that the “romantic” view of Irish peasant women is reduced and trampled in this passage acts as a reminder that Irish peasant women were also viewed under the lens of “savage” sexuality that counteracts images people may have in their mind of a romantic love story between a beautiful but simple Irish peasant woman and an Englishman that was portrayed in early nineteenth century novels such as Lady Morgenson’s The Wild Irish Girl

Additionally, the image of eating children brings discourse about perceived cannibalism and especially Johnathon Swift’s satire of British political economists “A Modest Proposal” where he, pretending to be an economist, asserts that if Irish people are poor, they should

subsist on eating their children and selling them to wealthy people who would eat them as they eat the food that their labor produces. Swift, who may have more deeply understood the affects surrounding the colonial discourse regarding Ireland because of his position as an Anglo-Irish. He reverses the British oral fixation on Irish orality and consumption to outline a plan that shows readers how ludicrous the discussions of commodifying human bodies under colonial capitalism and then asserting them as “logical” truly is. He first compares Irish people with cattle, offering a suggestion to breed them intentionally to produce children for consumption as was done to sheep and cattle (65). He then brings the claims of sexual impropriety back into the conversation, using the stereotype of sexually active and pregnant Irish peasant women to argue for their use as breeding animals. Swift mimics colonial stereotypes by saying that since “these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females” and that “no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, […] will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among his tenants, the mother will have eight shillings neat profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child” (75). His making explicit the hypocrisy of British consumption in the rest of the title, which reads “Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from being a Burden to their Parents or the Country.” His piece clearly portrays the heavily discussed links between Irish peasant sexuality and the way in which their population was portrayed.

Despite the heavily gendered and sexualized view of peasant women’s orality, men were also feminized, and their orality targeted throughout the period. In his now infamous text *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, William Carleton portrays Irish men especially
as stupid and infantile, as fiscally irresponsible, (read over-consumptive) and as drunkards.

There are many male characters throughout the text who get intoxicated and need to be taken care of (hence their ability to provide protection or labor is diminished) or do things such as “roaring, swaggering, and singing about the place,” which seems to be a critique on Irish peasant orality (148). Because of their perceived inability to become the type of male provider of a heteronormative nuclear family that the Victorian gender ideology propagated, and because the women in his household often needed to work outside the home also, Irish working men were attacked through their habits. It is still my assertion that women’s orality was sexualized more than men’s because of its association with another orifice. Although peasant and working-class men of Ireland were commonly feminized as were other working-class people targeted via colonialism, women’s genitalia, and by association their mouths, and the sexual purity supposedly represented through the whiteness of their teeth seem to have been more consistently a site of fixation by British nationalists and their supporters overall.

One reason I argue that Irish peasant women’s orality was associated with genitalia is because of the association of peasant women in Ireland with the Catholic Church. This association is represented through the common invocation of both the Hydra (a multiple-headed monster with fearsome mouths and teeth thought to be associated vaguely with the

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93 This doctrine of ‘separate spheres’ was challenged by writers and thinkers of the Victorian period. John Stuart Mill, amongst others, later interrogated this type of presentation of women. He wrote in “The subjection of women” (1869) that how women are portrayed is an “artificial thing” termed their “nature” and is instead the direct “result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others” and that “no other class of dependents have had their character so entirely distorted from its natural proportions by their relation with their masters” (128).
sea\(^{94}\)) and the Hydra often linked with the ocean, ships\(^{95}\), the feminine, and the symbolism of Vagina Dentata throughout history (a genital orifice filled with teeth that will attack penetrators). In some seventeenth- and eighteenth-century depictions of the hydra monster, she is depicted as a nursing mother and very feminine, such as the image below of Hercules and the Hydra, where she has just as many breasts as she has mouths:

32. Bloemart, Cornelius II “Tableau des Vertus et des Vices de l'antiquité : L'Hydre” (Dutuit p. 36, Le Blanc 113) 1633 \(^{96}\)

\(^{94}\) King, William. *An historical account of the heathen gods and heroes; necessary for the understanding of the ancient poets. Being an improvement, of whatever has been hitherto written, by the Greek, Latin, French, and English Authors, upon that subject.* By Dr. King, 2nd ed., printed for Bernard Lintott, at the Cross-Keys, between the two Temple Gates in Fleet Street. [1711]. In this text about Greek mythology, Hydra is named both as a monster and as a goddess-human daughter of “Scyllius the Siconyan diver” and shipbuilder who Glaucus the son of Mercery fell in love with (144).

\(^{95}\) “Ships and Shipping.” *The Gentleman’s Journal*, Apr. 1871, pp. 76+ Hyde is listed as one of the names of a ship in a British naval fleet (one of the only names out of 18 with an asterisk) and is described as “4 double-screw turret ship” (78).

The hydra was often used to symbolize Catholicism in British national texts, especially Irish “papism” from the 16th century onwards, but after the Act of Union in 1801 there is a shift wherein the Hydra symbol is also linked with Charity as a political tool and with Catholicism. This linkage with Charity is now used by far-right Christianity in the past two years to address conservative concerns of progressive “wokeism,” with similar implications and similar but updated language. The Vagina dentata was employed earlier, but it is still a symbol associated with the Catholic Hydra since both the Catholic church and its followers are feminized historically. Jill Rait points out that although the myth of the reproductive orifice with teeth can be found worldwide, Christianity created more mythos around the comparison between the sexual woman and the “pure” and wifely woman using this imagery. There is an additional fear of vaginal and oral teeth that is dealt with by Agata Szczeszak-Brewer in her essay on colonial masculinity and explication of fear of castration in performance and in Joyce. She describes a representative moment of minstrel performance representing masculine fear both of women’s teeth and their power to bite both the penis and masculinist notions of the nation-state (1). She argues that “purveyors of the nationalist narratives linking valiant and virile masculinity with Irish identity cast the other as voracious, lying in wait to pounce upon the nation’s manhood” (2). Szczeszak-Brewer’s idea that

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97 Although I will not cite a site that I consider to be fascistic propaganda, an article written in 2021 in an extremist Christian website states that “the Western world is the creation of the Church, and the crisis of the West is always at bottom the crisis of the Church. This is especially so where the Church has receded into the background of the Western mind – where men’s plans are hatched in the name of progress, science, social justice, equity, or some other purportedly secular value, and make little or no reference to religion. For liberalism, socialism, communism, scientism, progressivism, identity politics, globalization, and all the rest – this Hydra’s head of modernist projects, however ostensibly secular, is united by two features that are irreducibly theological.” Another similar website uses the phrase to “combat the revolutionary hydra.” Because of this, it is even more important that we understand the symbol being invoked and the history of its uses within imperialism.
feminization and vagina dentata are threatening to masculine prowess and the identity formed within a nation state also permeated the Irish nationalist movement into the 20th century. In other words, while Irish women are represented by English protestants as associated with threatening teeth and genitalia, they are also portrayed as a threat to men and nationalism within Irish texts as well.

In Spenser’s The Faerie Queene, Duessa, a “wicketch witch” is portrayed both through her grotesque genitalia and is representative of the Catholic Church (741- 335.28)). Her is shown to both be a sexually explicit and psychic threat to Una, the character representative of English Protestantism, and is a threat to all men (especially the Redcrosse Knight representing England) who she can lure because of her duplicity. She lures men into sleeping with her and through their lust kills or leads them astray, as evidenced by “Is one Duessa a false sorceresse./ That many errant lights hath brought to wretchedness” (305-306). Her name not only represents her dual nature, but she is presented as a beautiful maiden at the beginning of the text, until she shows her true nature of having a sexual orifice that would destroy his life. He sees her bathing before their copulation. Her genitalia are described as “her nether partes misshapen, monstrous,/ were hidd in water, that I could not see, / But they did seem more foule and hideous,/ Then woman’s shape man would believe to bee./ […] For danger great, if not assured decay” (365.41). Not only is the sight of her genitalia a source of fear and loathing from the knight, but he understands that her genitals have the power to harm him greatly. Spenser’s poem experiences a resurgence of popularity in the late Victorian period, with some authors even calling her an “enchanter” and reviewing the text
as if it were published a few years before their book review. An earlier reviewer complains that the first book is so focused on Duessa that the Red Cross Knight is barely characterized, and he caves so readily to Duessa’s charms that he is hardly brave. The fear of castration or at the very least, emasculation, is prominent in these reviews, but these quotes also make clear the early fear of witchcraft and the evil feminine directed to “witches” and to the Catholic Church. Since many people in Ireland were thought to be either peasant or Catholic, this association with false feminine lure and national castration was continually disseminated into and past the nineteenth century, used as an ideological weapon to denigrate Ireland and invoke fears of losing English power to Catholicism.

33. Chapman copper plate engraving From the Encyclopedia Londinensis or, Universal dictionary of arts, sciences, and literature; Volume X; Edited by Wilkes, John. London, 1811

98 Dowden, Edward. "Heroines of Spenser." The Cornhill Magazine 39, no. 234 (06, 1879): 663-680. British Periodicals. He laments that Duessa’s “loathsomeness of body” “is not slain” and that she does not seem to go through any internal change- instead she is strong and immovable from a moral standpoint (666,668).

Hydras were not the only mythical-real creature invoked regarding Irish teeth and orality, but dragons and their teeth were also invoked as descriptors for Ireland even by supporters of the Irish cause. For example, Johnathan Swift, who had earlier penned “A

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100 J. Chapman copper plate engraving From the Encyclopedia Londinensis or, Universal dictionary of arts, sciences, and literature; Volume X; Edited by Wilkes, John. London, 1811.

101 Bell, Agrippa Nelson, and Hurst & Company. A Knowledge of Living Things: with the Laws of Their Existence: by A. N. Bell. Hurst & Co., Publishers, 122 Nassau Street, [1860?]. In this image of what was later called a hydra, a squid is pictured but the tube that makes up its orifice is visually depicted in an almost vaginal way. The description of the hydra eating is highly graphic and almost mystical: “instantly, as if the hand of an enchanter had been laid upon it, […] slowly but surely, drags the victim towards the opening of the bag, the mouth of the hydra […] it is slowly dragged along the open orifice, and thus […] overpowered by their apparently contemptible assailant” (141). Whether some of the descriptions of the Catholic Church refer to this type of eroticized fish or the more graphic medusa-esque hydra, both depictions are sexualized and feminized.
Modest Proposal” defending Irish consumption and lampooning Malthus’s economy of “overpopulation,” additionally wrote directly against British colonization of Ireland because when he visited, he was moved to feel:

a sincere passion for the natives who are sunk to the lowest degree of misery and poverty; whose houses are dunghills, whose victuals are the blood of their cattle, or the herbs in the field, and whose clothing, to the dishonour of God and man, is nakedness. Yet notwithstanding all the dismal appearances, it is the common phrase of an upstart race of people, who have fundamentally sprung up like the dragon’s teeth among us, that Ireland was never known to be so rich as it is now; by which, as I apprehend, they can only mean themselves, for the have skipt over the channel from the vantage ground of a dunghill upon no other merit, either visible or divineable, than that of not having been born among us. This is the modern way of planting colonies […] When those who are so unfortunate to be born here, are excluded from the meanest preferments, and […] who are yet divided into factions, with as much violence and rancour, as if they had the wealth of the Indies to contend for (156-57).

This essay was not published in Sheridan’s volume of Swift’s works and was only published in 1789. It is unclear when he wrote the text although it would have been in the eighteenth century. However, while he describes the low levels of poverty and high levels of misery that Irish peasants find themselves in, he also calls them an “upstart race” and compares their cropping up to “dragon’s teeth,” which is not the most pleasant analogy. However, the use of the phrase “to sow dragon’s teeth” also referred to conflicts and fomenting revolution or controversy according to the legends of Jason and the Golden Fleece and Cadmus sowing dragon’s teeth. Swift later compares their state to a fable about dogs who were “perpetually snarling, growling, barking, and tearing out each other’s throats; nay, sometimes those of the best quality among them were seen to quarrel with as much rancour for a rotten gut, as if it had been a fat lunch of venison” (157). Although he is clearly sympathetic to “the

102 Swift, Jonathan. Miscellaneous pieces, in prose and verse. By the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick’s, Dublin. Not inserted in Mr. Sheridan’s edition of the Dean’s works. Printed for C. Dilly, in the poultry, MDCCCLXXIX. [1789].
103 Gantz, Timothy, Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, Two volumes:
natives” of Ireland throughout this essay, his comparison with dragon’s teeth and with fighting dogs who can’t tell their meat is rotten is yet unflattering.

As Luke Gibbons outlines in Gaelic Gothic, Catholicism was Queen Elizabeth I’s number one enemy along with all “savage” faiths, including both Irish and North American Native people as similar targets. As Gibbons outlines, however, there is something specific to the anti-Catholicism leveled at the Irish instead of the more general anti-polish sentiment that ran throughout the rest of the UK. He quotes Spenser’s plea to Queen Elizabeth that “till Ireland can be famished it cannot be subdued.” He also argues that “the otherness of Irish Catholicism thus possessed an eradicable ethnic component, being perceived as immersed in superstition, savagery, and the general credulousness associated with primitive cultures or ‘doomed races.’ (13). Because of their land-based spiritual practices, the existences both of Irish and Native North American people in presented a challenge to the dominance of Protestantism within the British Empire and the lands it desired to conquer. As Linda Colley has shown in her work, Protestantism was foundational to British nationality, not only in its militarism, masculinity, and notions of work ethic, but also in its anti-Catholicism leading up to and during the nineteenth century (18-33). Colley states that “Protestantism coloured the way that Britons approached and interpreted their material life. Protestantism determined how most Britons viewed their politics. And an uncompromising Protestantism was the foundation on which their state was explicitly and unapologetically based” (18). This Protestantism was used to fuse a multiplicity of cultures together, as Colley gives the history of. Welsh, Scottish, and British working-class men were able to take up arms just as the late eighteenth century saw a vast Atlantic revolutionary period (French, Haitian, and American revolutions) where previously only aristocratic men could join the military, so militarism and
Protestantism fused their sense of belonging to the “imagined community” of Great Britain. However, Ireland’s Catholicism posed a direct threat to this subsummation of cultures and languages, and Irish Catholics were seen as unwilling to give up their revolutionary potential because of the religious difference that remained, adding to newly identifying Britons that their supposed superiority as Protestants.

The purposeful employment of the image of the Catholic Hydra was given in a public meeting by John Chambers, Esq. at the Donegal Brunswick Club in 1828 and recorded in the *Belfast Newsletter*. He is quoted as arguing for increased charity towards the Catholics in Ireland for quelling the hydra, stating “I think it perfectly consistent with that Christian charity which we feel towards our R. Catholic countrymen, manfully to come forward and avow our sentiments, --If the protestants had so acted ten years ago, would that hydra, the Catholic Association, have reared its ten thousand heads? Had we spoken out then, in a manly manner, would disaffection have spread through the land, would treason have been vomited forth with impunity from that pestilential source [...] In using these expressions, I do not with to be understood as entertaining a feeling towards any R. Catholic individually either of hatred or dislike- - far from it; I respect and esteem many of the body-- it is their system only I object-- a system which has deceit for its end” (6). In a London magazine two years earlier, an author invoked the Hydra image to dissuade readers from feeling compassion for any Irish peasants or Catholics, saying that “though the aristocracy may complain [about tithing laws] the Irish farmer has no cause to murmur whatever” and later states that “the moral Hydra which frights the isle from its propriety--is the cause of

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104 Colley states that even poor and disenfranchised British people began to believe “precisely because they were Protestant, and because it was comforting to believe it-- that they were richer in every sense than other peoples, particularly Catholic peoples” (33). Although this was solidified through hatred of the French during the French Revolution, was an existing and deep stereotype that existed long before the Atlantic Revolutionary period, as Gibbons illustrates.
oppression on the one hand and murmurs on the other. Whatever is harassing in landlords--whatever is harassing in magistrates --and whatever is culpable in the people is solely attributed to the political degradation in which the country is kept” (The state of Ireland 140). While these statements in some ways contradict each other, it shows the specific fear of Catholicism and even Catholics themselves as part of a corrupt and sinister “Body,” being of a different “Body” than the protestant one, influenced by moral corruption of the Catholic Hydra and its many mouths.

The hydra was also evoked to symbolize fenian and United Irishmen fomenting revolution in a late eighteenth century through political contexts as well. For example, in a “letter to the Earl of Moira” an quote “an Irishman” says that the Earl has ignored his home country (Ireland) until it materially suited him and is now calling for a “war of aggression” to avoid what he assumes is a “war of defense” occurring later and will be supposedly more expensive and deplete England’s resources, which he is asked explain further in a very sarcastic tone (7)105. The speaker at first appears sympathetic to Ireland’s “oppression” and says that the Earl has not visited the soil of his home country enough to know it since he has “spent only infancy in the country” that his descriptions of Ireland have received “false colouring” both favorable and unfavorable –all points about Ireland are individual responded to and rejected on the basis of “too much pathos” from the Earl who we learn is being criticized because of his advocacy for the sovereignty of Ireland and his speaking to the press which the author says is dangerous since they are known to “act on their passions” and be swayed by publications because “they follow no other impulse than their feelings” (1-2, 25,

105 Irishman. A letter to the Earl of Moira: Containing observations on a speech, delivered by that nobleman, in the British House of Lords, on the affairs of Ireland; By an Irishman. [s.n.], 1797. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.
He adds that the report on resources from the Bank of England “speaks with most miraculous organ” according to the bankers, so even if a war of defense from Hibernian attack would be expensive, the author argues that England could afford it if it occurred. The person who reads the letter in the House of Lords and afterwards has it published in Dublin argues against almost every point the Earl has previously made about the need to subdue Ireland, invoking the image of the Hydra as part of Ireland’s revolutionary potential.

To attack the Earl, the letter writer his sympathy towards ‘savage’ Irish murderers\textsuperscript{107}, focus on Belfast and Newry in his report on Ireland, questioning the motive of focusing on “places in which rebellion first reared her Hydra head” are then “abandoned by the prudent, the principled, and the peaceful” and accuses him of lying and of sentimentality throughout the document and of being too empathetic towards the United Irishmen (9-14, 24-25). He is stated to have suggested a “lax and puny regiment” to correct Irish habits, and therefore risks the disease of Ireland spreading to other parts of the body politic/land body/body of the future union with Ireland- “with that danger staring us in the face, should some strong corrective not be tried to stop to gangrene before it reached the vital organs?” (24). The dramatic ways that this author shifts his points, and the way he employs both the hydra imagery and the “dangers” of Irish revolutionary uprisings and notions of criminality and lawlessness spreading across to England and its resources shows that this speech was meant to be both rallying to the audience and to undermine the Earl’s authority in speaking about Ireland. He is shown throughout the letter not to have the wherewithal to fight such a cunning

\textsuperscript{106} He later points out that “there is much more zeal than discretion in your communication” regarding the idea for a war with Ireland and continues to indicate that the Earl has lied to gain some personal power (14). He then critiques him for dealing with criminal Irish people as sympathetically as he has.

\textsuperscript{107} He also says that the murder was so vicious “it would have blunted the edge of an Indian scalping knife”\textsuperscript{31}
Hydra may it rear its head to bite England’s face and accused of exaggeration regarding the wealth and the decline of Ireland economically.

The vast number of heads and uses of the mouth of the Hydra monster (vomiting and pestilence) evoke Biblical and apocalyptic imagery. Even in 1904, the conservative loyalist paper *Nationalist and Leinster Times* featured an article that Catholicism spread through the “slums” and charity, instead of helping as in the prior example from earlier in the nineteenth century, as actually being the source of the problem. The writers argue that quote “philanthropists, as well as politicians, need to learn it, if the slums and poorer quarters of our home cities are not to be licensed furrows for the sowing of dragons’ teeth-- if the many headed hydra of the social problem is not to poison Great Britain with its foul breath,” later going on to argue for more progressive and transparent social transformations based in German practices where all classes of people, including “workhouse children” and “illegitimates” are subject to public vivid participation run by community businesses such as banks instead of “Baby Farming” laws and workhouses (2). The fearsome space of orality and the potential therein for the Irish poor lies, according to the authors, in the contamination that might occur to the British nation from its “foul breath” and in its “sowing of dragons’ teeth,” yet another contamination metaphor. Either it will sow as a farmer does seeds for the poor to gain “dragons’ teeth,” or the Catholic Church will implant its teeth into the unsuspecting poor.

The various heads of the hydra are referenced in this article as the various houses of charity and philanthropy, which are often privately owned by the Church or other charitable organization and thus separate from public (Protestant -Anglican or Church of Ireland) oversight and influence. Although the argument outlined in the remaining paragraphs that
including orphaned children and poorer classes into a more integrated society would be positive, it is not because the authors want the lower classes and orphaned workhouse children to have more equity and parity with their peers, but instead due to the fear of the hydra. The short piece (4 paragraphs) begins with the anti-Catholic dog whistles within its concern about the methods of indoctrination which could lie in Charity and Philanthropy in Ireland. Primarily, its concern is that institutions of charity give too much opportunity for Catholicism to sink its “dragons’ teeth” into the culture of the poor and working communities in Ireland. The hydra argument is still seen in white supremacist arguments today as a visible dog whistle but was very popularly used in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to represent the Catholic Church and its threat to the British protestant nationalism. This imagery was used to target Irish Catholics and the church in general, but then explicitly mobilized against the working poor and the Irish who were either considered pagan or Catholic.

The fear of contamination from Irish Catholicism, as Colonel Martin pointed out, was overblown considering that there were already some protestants in Ireland before the Act of Union, and folks got along just fine prior to Landlordism and English attempts to invade, rule, and control Ireland, creating much more tension between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants and much more reaction via Irish orality and other tangible means than they would have had if they had left Ireland alone. While there had been fenian uprisings and agricultural violence, and there were Republicans associations trying to fight for and assert an Irish cultural identity through counter-nationalism and cultural revival efforts throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, many of those resisters were cut down or shipped overseas to become colonizers themselves or participate in indentured servitude in Australia, the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa. Therefore, the perceived threat of Irish orality
was more symbolic and projected from the actual lack of English control or domination through colonialism. While many Irish people accepted colonial ways eventually, many also resisted and continued with creating counter-nationalisms, reviving paganism, folklore, and militant movements throughout the late nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty first centuries.

As David Lloyd indicates in his book *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity*, the colonial British views of the Irish mouth and oral abilities, the mouth of Irish people has a history of being “dissimulating, subversive, unstable” and ever resistant to the “disciplines of modernity” which continually confound coloniality and its bodily regulations (1). Interestingly, if not surprisingly, these stereotypes surrounding Irish consumption and Irish pleasures are often peculiarly fixated on financial discourse and obviously derive from political economy, a famine era term from the 1840’s where Ireland had for years prior been serving as the “test case” for “reverse colonization and “measures to monitor and control Irish population” and experiments regarding land measurement and standardization began (Bigelow 115-116). Ireland of the early 19th century and famine era defied what Bigelow terms the “protestant economic universe” and became an increasing focus of England’s colonial reform and improvement policies, lawmaking, and economic policy and a continual source of frustration to colonial projects (117). This was in part because Ireland's orality, viewed as problematic by the imperial project, was so difficult to regulate and control, despite England’s attempts to impose its own cultural values, anxieties, and biopolitical regulations onto the Irish.

Colonial frustration and anxiety not only seem related to Irish inability to conform or to become productive workers, but also of their disinterestedness in pursuing economic gain and their tendency to wander instead of staying in one place such as a workhouse. For
example, Sir James Phillips Kay-Shuttleworth outlines concerns about Ireland’s “backwardness” contaminating the English working classes as well. According to Kay-Shuttleworth,

Ireland has pour’d forth the most destitute of her hordes to supply the constantly increasing demand for labour. This immigration has been, in one important respect, a serious evil. The Irish have taught the labouring classes of this country a pernicious lesson. The system of cottier farming, the demoralization and barbarism of the people, and the general use of the potato as the chief article of food, have encouraged the population in Ireland more rapidly than the available means of subsistence have been increased. Debased alike by ignorance and pauperism, they have discovered, with the savage, what is the minimum of the means of life (109).

This passage shows how the immigration that Irish workers needed to do to survive in a capitalist marketplace was considered “barbarous,” dangerous, impure, “pernicious” and at times also labeled with the word “evil.” This type of language was used to excuse violence against Irish peasants at home in Ireland throughout the famine, and even then, their subsistence diet was heavily critiqued. Although Shuttleworth is commonly cited by scholars of Irish history or literature now, there were many other commentators who were widely read and some who were even considered progressive for their time, who used the peasant as a “noble savage” trope conflated with the land itself or conflated with the animal.

In *Irish Popular Superstitions* (1852) by W.R. Wilde (Oscar Wilde’s father), for example, he compassionately portrays peasants, but still compares them both with their orality and the land. He laments the persistence of “superstitious beliefs” and paganism within the peasantry but also why he believes they are emigrating in such large numbers due to abuses of land and enclosure for English agricultural projects (41-44). He states that the “condition of the tongue and of the land [...] both worse off than they were 10 years ago”
because the “bog and healthy marsh” have been turned to crops of “corn and green crops with several snug homesteads upon it,” citing over-development and land management both the failing health of Irish lands and Irish tongues (73). Although Wilde was an Anglo-Irish protestant and physician, he was ready and willing to blame England (in addition to the superstitions of the peasantry) for the increasing sickness in Ireland, both to lands and bodies. He does fall into similar patterns of critique for assumed wrongful consumption and licentiousness that occurs when “it is not uncommon for all the members of a small Irish peasant family to drink out of the same vessel” or saying that they are “willing to put a face” to anything around them (111, 82). He also references a peasant myth that people with red hair and prominent Adam’s apples have a “deformity transmitted from Eden” where they ate the apple and it ended up being permanently stuck in Eve’s throat, “where it ever remained an eye sore and a curse,” which clearly offers fodder for notions of impurity leading back to ‘original sin’ (90). Despite his efforts to offer a sympathetic portrayal of peasant life, he is primarily writing for an upper middle class or aristocratic English audience and tends to repeat concerns of orality that can be then co-opted by anti-Irish authors as part of the evidence for the need to target this orality.

Leading up to and during the famine, neighborhoods, and cities where industry was rampant (Manchester, London) filled with Irish laborers trying to survive famine and political upheaval in the years following the Act of Union. Because an analysis of capitalism was developing as capitalism was developing, many of the initial arguments against the Irish (and the Scottish earlier) are critiques of their “absurd” and “ridiculous” subsistence lifestyle, often targeting them for accepting low quality of life, “squalor” and poverty both in 1840’s

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108 Information gathered from my visit to the Oscar Wilde family home in Dublin, Summer 2022.
and 1850’s England but also earlier (Engels, Walsh). John Edward Walsh, for example, offers “helpful suggestions’ Washkamonya which are named in an “address to the world in general, but in Ireland in particular” suggesting that they are responsible for abusing the earth’s “natural productions” (10). Walsh suggests that they need to find cheaper and more nutrient dense food, abandon their “love of approbation,” since that is part of their supposed immoderation according to phrenology (10). There was no mention of their environmental or economic conditions in these critiques; they were simply portrayed as both barbaric and as infectious. Part of this constant public “concern” and consternation about poor Irish folks in Thomas Carlyle, Phillip Kay-Shuttleworth, and many others referenced outside of Engles’ quote, clearly displays a classed, racialized, dehumanizing perspective against the Irish. In addition to this paternalistic and violent view of Irish working classes in English publications, Irish physicians both had influence in the Gazette of representatives from English and Catholic “charities” towards the potentially contaminating qualities of the poor and their surrounding neighborhoods that was likely internalized. Because the lower classes were portrayed by so many as savage, especially regarding their orality (diets and drinking habits come up frequently), there is a fixation on “helping” them become more “civilized” and to become less sexual, less hungry, less thirsty. This is one of the intersections where notions of Charity quickly get caught in control, in “improvement” projects, in British national self-anxiety projected outwards onto the nearest subjects.

Despite so many deaths by starvation during the Great Hunger, Ireland was often portrayed as both in need of guidance because of their unruly appetites; portrayed as greedy,

109 Wash dedicates his entire text to the “catechism of phrenology” that he learned in Glasgow, Scotland. The dedication in his “address to the world” is dedicated to George Combe, one of the initial phrenologists in the first phrenological societies in the UK (Phrenological Society of Edinburgh). For more information on phrenology and its ties to these notions of land and embodiment, see chapter 1.
through the imagery of pigs, sheep, and other domesticated animals who need to be fed by a farmer or herded by a shepherd, and through the false projected narrative of Irish over-consumption by the bourgeoisie of England. In “Ireland and the Irish,” the author ridicules the Irish both for dying and for losing so much of the crown’s money through financial loss of “a million pounds sterling per month” on the part of England in the same sentence as it states without feeling that “thousands and thousands” since in this author’s mind, the economic losses are clearly outweighing the loss of life in Ireland during the famine, who are described as dying “off like rotten sheep (406).” The unruly Irish orality that David Lloyd explicates is clearly illustrated in the portrayal of suffering people as “rotten sheep,” reducing them not only to the already decaying but also to the animal and offers justification for their death through economic violence as too expensive to feed. England’s paternalistic control over Ireland’s economy and attempts to regulate and control the population of Ireland and the view of them as only what they consume from England and not what England consumes from them, is political murder. At the time this was written, most Irish crops were still being shipped away from the hungry people who needed them to survive and who were responsible for the labor of bringing them to market. Despite this, most English commentators discussed the problem as being caused by the Irish themselves due to their problematic orality. There were quite a few almost-critiques of the English government by English writers, but more importantly, Irish people were writing, publishing, and using that threatening oral culture to voice their responses to English colonization throughout the entirety of the nineteenth century.
There were critics of England’s response to Irish orality and especially to the lack of English action during the famine within and outside of Ireland. In an article from 1856 titled “The Legrees of Donegal,” which is clearly biased towards Anglo-Irish protestants who are suffering as a result of The Great Hunger (but in a way that is fairly complex), that with the famine “the victims now, […].… are not conquered Catholic Celts, but the sons of the sturdy Scots and Anglo Saxons who were induced to plant on the lands torn from those Celts in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles II.” The article does not lament the famine so much as it laments that the famine has affected such a variety of people, including morally righteous and hard-working Presbyterians who now also must emigrate to far off places “across the sea” because of the tragedy. In other words, the Anglo-Irish’s ability to become firmly upper class or even recognized as fully British is taken away from them, and they become lumped in with the Catholics, the Celts, and the pagan peasant Irish, in part because of the greed of their ancestors. The “perpetrators of this deed” are said to be “like at least a portion of their victims” are “alien stock” and that “the young princes and young nobles of England may rival red-men as hunters without the red man’s virtue” because it is likely that even though the working poor of Leitrim have been forced to pay taxes, they will not be listened to by parliament (8). This comparison of the British aristocracy with savagery, despite all the bias within this article towards the landlords of Ireland, was also an avenue to critique bourgeois orality’s negative influence on the wealth and ability to survive of the class below them.

There were Irish authors writing responses to what English authors were writing about the Irish and their sexuality, and there has been a continuation of the oral tradition through all these experiences. As Angela Bourke has stated, “not all important ideas are
found in books” and that “verbal art offers ways of of thinking and knowing which can be independent of the linear modes of writing and print” (1191). The continuance of this oral storytelling mode is something that is likely far beyond archival representation and archival silence. However, there is also a long tradition of writing in Ireland that directly confronts England’s prejudices and attempts to control Irish orality and Irish life.

In an essay titled “Paddiana” from Dublin University Magazine in 1848, the text of an English publication is quoted with rebuttals and defenses by an Irish writer. In one of the stories quoted, the conversation revolves around the sexuality of a young Irish peasant girl and the fact that she is too young to be receiving advances by another town romancer. Kitty, the woman in question, has just gotten a new tooth, and the other women are speaking of the man in question with peauqed sexual interest (721). The author responds to as a “vulgar, reckless, and libelous” misinterpretation of Irish peasant life and culture. England’s anxiety about Irish sexuality is inextricably linked with Irish poverty and ability to reproduce outside of England’s locus of influence. The prejudices manufactured by commentators on the “Irish Question” rely on concerns of loss of money in discussion of Irish female peasant sexuality. Anna’s tooth in the wonder symbolizes not only the attempted silencing and regulation of the Irish by colonial forces, since her community is using her to push back against those toxic stereotypes, but it is simultaneously exhibiting her discomfort with her own experiences thus far of Irish religious and familial culture and with Irish sexuality. Her family and community are deeply traumatized by the famine and Anna’s self-restraint mirrors what David Lloyd outlines in the “Indigent Sublime” regarding Irish anxiety and self-discipline to avoid embarrassing themselves for their internalized shame regarding the famine (175). The Irish do speak back, their voices and their mouths do resist, like William the journalist, whose
words of resistance model those like the author of “Paddiana,” who responds line for line to stories representing the Irish peasantry as monstrous.

Furthermore, Irish orality was and remains uncontrolled and uncontrollable by all of Britain’s hundreds of years of efforts. David Lloyd argues that “orality in Ireland is not a mode of existence or communication that is surpassed and supplanted by literacy and the modes of living it proposes and sustains. Orality implies, rather, a complex interaction of spaces, an intersection of oral and literate modes, each surviving in peculiar ways within the other and even preserving the other’s life within itself (3-4).” As Lloyd argues, the very fixation on the orality of the Irish working-classes keeps their culture of orality thriving and the threats it contains (he outlines the fomenting of revolution as included in this threat) active and flexible to resistance required to continue life and culture despite continued imperialism and threats to lands and people from capitalism.

Even in the nineteenth-century, Irish Catholics at times adopted the image of the hydra monster, however, and repurposed it for their cause even early in the Victorian period. They used the hydra to describe the threats to the “catholic cause” and critique Anglo-Irish plantation owners and landlordism in Ireland. The Freeman’s Journal, for example, writes a transcript of a speech given by Colonel Martin in 1811 about the history of the ways that protestant “Orangemen” who “strangled in its cradle the prosperous newborn Ireland” through the “atrocious Act of Union,” are described as being in great battle with a “hydra monster” (2). He argues that these attacks on the “Catholic Body” are numerous and despicable, and describes how he silenced the “great number of grand juries in Ireland, illiterate, and vulgar, promulgated to the mob of Bigots an unconstitutional manifesto to put down the Catholic cause” and also says that the fear of Catholicism is certainly overdone,
that most Catholic landlords in Ireland do not ask tenants their religion and that Protestants in county Galway are at least at “30 percent” if not more, and in no way under siege by Catholics. Although he describes the many blows that have been violently aimed at the “Catholic body,” even referencing baby killing, he chooses orality as the space to fight back. After he says that he silenced these grand juries, there is transcribed in parentheses as the audience cheering. This shows that not only were Catholic leaders responding to the presentation of them as threatening and as a hydra monster with similar mirrored imagery, but also that the oral space existed as a tense battleground of conflicting ideas about the Body as nation, as community, the Body as Church. As David Lloyd argues about discourses surrounding Irish orality, the very concept of the mouth becomes distorted and repurposed, living on in strange ways. Lloyd’s point that “even the structures of oral space find ways to live on in damaged and distorted forms and in doing so continue to represent material sites of recalcitrance and resistance both to the disciplines of labour and to the governmental institutions of the state. In doing so, they continue to confound the boundaries that divide public and private, proper and improper, in singular and persistent ways. They furnish what we can call counter-modern spaces and practices, captured and determined by the institutions of modernity, yet preserving and refocusing elements of the non-modern that remain recalcitrant or antagonistic to the disciplines of capitalist labour or state formation” also applies to these early formations of hydra reversal, I would argue (9). In fighting the protestant and British national “hydra monster,” the Catholic cause ends up creating the recalcitrance of the image of the hydra and its terrifying orality. Not only is the hydra a powerful symbol because of its many oral orifices, but it as a symbol represents being attacked from multiple heads of power and through multiple angles. The use of the hydra
both by Protestant British nationalists and then again as repurposed in response to these attacks from Britain on the “Catholic body” are a powerful image of mouths and teeth gnashing at one another, showing the importance of orality as a symbol and as Poovey terms “uneven developments” within the applications and contestations of this monstrous orality.

Additionally, I would like to note that despite the use of and reaffirmation of the symbol of monstrous orality via the Hydra, there is a stark difference in the way that most Catholic publications utilize the image of the Hydra. Within publications like the Freeman’s Journal, there are more references to the bodies and the heads of the Hydra, but less discussion of the teeth specifically than occurs in most protestant Irish newspaper publications referencing the hydra. In Nationalist newspapers and journals, there is much more focus on what the monster does with its head and teeth, rather than it just being a monster. There is a more specific imagined description of the mouths of the hydra and its “vomiting” of it “biting,” with thousands of heads at times, hundreds of times at others. I believe that this indicates more fear of Irish Catholic orality and its longstanding relationship with the notion of “the savage,” and with an imagined violence. The difference is that for the “Catholic Body,” the Protestant hydra had already been inflicting violence towards both its lands and its physical and emotional body for hundreds of years.

The difference is clear. In Ireland, there was intensified pain, experience of being targeted, and loss. Whereas with the British nationalist and largely protestant propaganda projected the imagined violence that settler colonialism and the British military had been continually inflicting on Catholics and on Irish peasants because of their association with Catholicism, the fear of contamination of an outside invader coming in to destroy or change their culture. Clearly the ones in power were affiliated with England and the British system,
and the descriptions of the violence from the many mouths and teeth of the hydra more hypothetical and more anticipatory of retaliation than is materially possible for most Irish Catholics at that time. The truly fearsome violence was primarily colonial, psychic, economic, institutional, and coming from one side. That targeted Irish folks did what they needed to do to keep beliefs alive through the experience of over a thousand of years of colonialism is quiet testa to the strength of that connection to the land and the strength of hope that land offers those willing to listen to and respect it.

Although many imagine and experience Ireland as a lush green paradise, the land and water is under threat yet again from the ongoing history of use value. However, instead of being just utilized for English resource gain, it is now used for global resource gain through multinational corporate interests and fintech developers. James Orr of Northern Ireland, speaking on Lough Neagh, says that Ireland is just as susceptible to shifting baseline syndrome as the rest of the world. He states that “shifting baseline syndrome is the idea that severe ongoing losses of nature gets normalised in the minds of each new generation, redefining what we perceive as “natural” according to an impoverished standard. My children’s concept of nature’s abundance is far less than mine. [...] I cannot even imagine the abundance gifted to my great grandparents. [...] Nature slips away, so does our ambition. The silent movie of ecocide in slow motion. It gets harder to find a pulse” (*Freckle*, Kith 66). Lynda Sullivan writes when discussing Ireland’s strong tradition of oral storytelling that it has become undermined because of how people interact with technology and the way it has changed how we interact with each other. However, the affective refrains of storytelling carry on as a direct threat to the continued colonial attempts to silence Irish storytellers and instead turn them into book readers, something that Irish playwrights in the nineteenth
century resisted through “idiosyncratic poetics” and “polyphonic vocal narration,” amongst other tools, and which contemporary Irish storytellers and their advocates seek to reverse to maintain their cultural and linguistic sovereignty (O’Connor 162). Lynda asserts that “our ways of living may have changed, but our need to reaffirm who we are, from whom we have come and who we want to be is as strong now as ever before” (kith 84-85). These specific organizers have long been using their own voices and land-narratives to speak out against the ongoing injustice of mining, extractivism and environmental destruction. James and Lynda have both contributed to *Making Relatives Ireland*, which sent a group of Lakota Water Protectors to Northern Ireland in May and has organized to send Water Walk ceremony leader Sharon Day (Ojibwe) and 12 Native youth with the Ikidowin Theatre Troup to Ireland in June 2023, was organized through the activist networks in Northern Ireland who are very committed to international solidarity building and mutual reliance and support. While I have been involved in organizing and planning this summer’s trips, I have had the great honor of witnessing the way that Native and northern Irish people relate to one another and create kinship bonds. The history of knowledge in resisting colonialism and extractivism is already deep, and ties between Ireland and a variety of Native American tribes have left a legacy in Ireland, and hopefully will continue to be reciprocated.

Many working-class Irish Catholics are still responding to discrimination internal to Ireland, ongoing colonial British military presence, and rising political division post-Brexit. Some identify strongly with and assist in building solidarity for revolutionary movements in Latin America, South America, and Native America. However, as Laura O’Connor reminds us, for the Anglo-Celts, “the Anglicization that alienated them from their ancestral ethnic tongue also enabled many of them to enjoy the fruits of Empire” and colonize other places
(xiii). Although what she terms “linguicism” was heartbreakingly prominent during the nineteenth century and was a large part of the racialization of Irish orality, this language was both a win and a loss according to O’Connor, and is still something that is used to divide British nationalists who identify strongly with the colonial part of the settler colonial history of Ireland and generally identify as Scottish, English, or British (loyalist) from Gaelic (Irish Republican) nationalists. O’Connor asserts that one way contemporary people can identify as “not-Anglo” by identifying as Celt because although the term was originally applied by scholars alone, it encompasses a liminal language and heritage identity that helps assert the sovereignty of individual language groups subsumed under English during the process of colonization and the formation of the British nation state (xxii-iii). As Elizabeth Cook-Lynn asserts in a US context regarding settler colonialism and ongoing violence towards Native people in the US\footnote{Estes, Nick and Melanie Yazzie. “There Are No Two Sides to This Story”: An Interview with Elizabeth Cook- Lynn. no. 1, 2016, p. 27.}, “there are no two sides to this story,” there are not really two sides to the history of settler colonial violence in Ireland towards peasants and their orality, despite what is attempted by descendants of loyalists both in the nineteenth century and today. There is a difference between describing your target’s teeth as violent or their genitalia as having teeth; biting back is not the same as attacking unprovoked. As Lloyd asserts, the process of modernizing progress in terms of controlling Irish orality has not yet fully succeeded and that is cause for hope.

\footnote{111 By invoking Cook-Lynn’s response here as a tool for analysis, I am not asserting that Irish Catholics and Indigenous people should be directly linked, despite both experiencing settler colonialism and state violence. I have presented at conferences (primarily ACIS West) about the difference between international solidarity and over-identification with Indigeneity, since Irish people and their descendants also have skin color privilege, access to Europe, and often became violent settler colonizers themselves within one or two generations in Australia, Africa, and the Americas.}
when I was a child

you took me from my mother,

you said she didn’t know how to be one,

you stole her mother & her mother’s mother before her,

gave us to white women wolves

& got mad at us for having teeth

& sharp bones.

~jaye simpson, it was never going to be okay

CHAPTER 6: More than a Mouth; Patient Affect, Medical Charity, and
Irish Workers in the Camp; Richmond Hospital as Absolute Space of
Exception in Victorian Dublin

*Content Warning: This chapter contains graphic and sensitive historic medical images and portraiture as well as graphic depictions of medical procedures and violence against vulnerable patients.

In nineteenth-century Dublin (1830’-1860’s), there were hospitals in Grange Gorman linked spatially through one city block and well-known, both then and today, as the “Hospitals of Industry.” The Hardwicke Fever Hospital, Whitworth Hospital, the Richmond Surgical Hospital, St. James Hospital, and the Foundling Hospital of Dublin, were all part of the “Hospitals of Industry” system. Richmond was under heavily Protestant influence
because of its strong affiliation with Trinity College; although the workhouse hospitals began as both independent and government-sponsored institutions, they were eventually placed in the co-stewardship of the Sisters of Mercy, which is still part of their affiliation today (Jones 4; Workhouse 16). The Richmond Surgical Hospital is a large red brick building with multiple turrets, wings, two primary floors, and a hidden basement. The building has mint green copper rooftops, standing out from the grey and darker stone buildings on North Brunswick Street. It was and still is part of a sprawling hospital campus that included public charities, Hardwicke, and Steevens Hospital in what is still considered a working-class neighborhood with many tight apartments and tenement housing developments. While the view of Richmond history appears positive in contemporary historical documents, most accounts have not gone into archival detail about the potential consequences of the patients’ subject positions or what they may have experienced when being treated there. Richmond is highly visible because of its gothic architecture and red brick. Viewing Richmond as a case study offers a better understanding of the bioethics of the nineteenth century more broadly as well as David Lloyd’s concept of targeted Irish “oral space,” which acts as both a structure of resistance, a “recalcitrant” reminder of Britain’s inability to fully control the consumption, drink, singing, affect, or sexuality of Irish peasants undergoing the process of colonial land theft, change to their language and customs, and Anglo-Irish landlordism (9). The ways in which Britain attempted to control Irish oral space are well-documented in many respects. However, this part of my study focuses on the consequences of this attempted control regarding another space—the space of the camp.

Through examining visual and textual affects present in the space of Dublin Workhouse Hospitals and through studying the visual representation of affect through
watercolor illustrations of patient mouths and teeth, we can better and more viscerally understand what was happening for them in the nineteenth-century space of the hospital. In watercolors by J. Connolly, and quoted publications in the Dublin Medical Gazette, we witness the portrayals of and denials of Irish patient feeling. These patients, because of their position within colonial capitalism and industrial expansion, were at the mercy of Dublin’s Hospitals of Industry and associated Workhouses before 1860, although I specifically focus on Richmond Surgical Hospital. It is clear from these records that Richmond’s charitable presence in Dublin was a space of patient exploitation and at times, torture. A discursive pattern of racialization and dehumanization is present through both the way patients and their bodies are discussed by surgeons and through the lack of regard for their consent.

The difficulty of recovering voices of the patients treated at Richmond is evident by their absence and the continued persistence of their affective refrains within both the archival documents surrounding Richmond and the modern rental space. Before I begin analyzing the Richmond Surgical Hospital archive, it is important to note that the Richmond archive is not cohesive and is housed in multiple locations throughout Dublin. Finding the information that I have been able to piece together has felt like forensic archival work, uncovering some of the available materials through instinct, archival materials, emails, informal interviews, and visiting locations in person\textsuperscript{113}. The information presented here took years to piece together and is still yet incomplete in terms of uncovering the full patient experience from the nineteenth century.

\textsuperscript{113}Because the archive of Richmond is scattered around Dublin, and has been long overlooked, part of the forensic evidence that I have recovered is from seeing the names of surgeons on the back of medical illustrations, then looking them up in other Irish archives.
Richmond is no longer a functioning medical space; instead, it is now privately owned and operates as a rental space, educational, event, and conference center purchased in April 2018 for over 3.5 million Euro\(^{114}\). Many contemporary texts about the history of Richmond and its own website marketing highlight the positive side of charity, yet in this chapter I argue that Richmond has a complicated medical and social history. As one of the Hospitals of Industry that fed vulnerable patients to enterprising surgeons and students in addition to prescribing labour in workhouse yards, Richmond functioned as more of a prison than a hospital. As labor camp and what Giorgio Agamben terms “zone of exception” regarding the legal status of its patients, untrained surgeons, nurses, and physicians really could do whatever they felt they needed to increase their own social standing and education with or without permission from patients.

This hospital, one of the more overlooked Hospitals of Industry in Dublin, I argue, should be analyzed through Giorgio Agamben’s notion of “the camp” as both a space of “exception” to general human rights laws and the VP as subject who is both targeted for extermination by the state, hence without consent or rights and a subject of free bodily experimentation, as Judith Butler would later coin the term, as “ungrievable” life (Frames of War). I argue that Richmond Hospital is a camp in the notion that Agamben outlines, because, as the treatments were often “heroic” and dramatic, the patients and their bodies the least protected of all of Ireland, the hospital functioned as a “space of absolute exception,” where surgeons could and did create entire careers for themselves through use of the large influx of patients who were exposed to the brunt of colonial capitalism in Dublin (19). In his work on the camp, Agamben states that “the camp as the pure, absolute, and impassable

\(^{114}\) Educational pamphlet and website from the Richmond (https://www.therichmond.ie/history)
biopolitical space (insofar as it is founded solely on the state of exception) -- will appear as the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity, whose metamorphosis and disguises we will have to learn to recognize” (73). Hidden in plain sight (then and still) and based on donations from wealthy and middle-class socialites who had vested interest in Empire, Richmond makes for the perfect disguise of the camp. It’s only reason for being is capitalism, and yet it surreptitiously presents as a welcoming space for the people displaced by the social inequity which makes the patients who go to Richmond for treatment an example of bare life and at the mercy, perhaps more than other patients, of the whims and experimental natures of their treatment.

As Agamben outlines, the socio-medical figures of Homo Sacer and VP operate in society through the “thanatopolitics,” or politics of death, within relationship to law and medicine (119). Agamben posits that within thanatopolitics, death in addition to life is defined by the state and certain deaths become no more than a mere bodily death (119). “Bare Life,” or the state of defenseless bodies viewed primarily through biology under thanatopolitics in this estimation moves historical persons within the law from “man” or “homo” to “corpus” through the increase in biopolitics since the 17th century with the writ of habeas corpus. This, he argues, through state of exception and the space of the camp, allows democracies to act as totalitarian states and ignore personal lives in favor of the life of the state. His assertion that human life is not free life under this modern system of biopolitics, but some bodies are even less free than others. Irish peasants115 were already targeted by the state and were not necessarily “free life,” especially by the time they entered the Hospitals of Industry, working within both capitalism and brutal colonial violence from Britain, their

115 See Chapter 5.
bodies showing the scars of that unfreedom. Therefore, for the purposes of this chapter, viewing Irish working classes and peasantry as Homo Sacer within a British context can assist us with increasing understanding of the often killable and unfree conditions they lived in during the industrial boom in Britain and Ireland, but it can also help add back some sacredness and dignity to their unnecessary ‘sacrifices’116. As poor and working class ‘masses,’ the people who entered Richmond out of desperation or necessity during this timeframe did not necessarily have a legal existence within their society and were used, both in and outside of Richmond, for their “use value” to industry as workers117. Through the commodification and use of working-class bodies who had few, if any, legal rights, Richmond Surgical Hospital became a prominent testing ground for aspiring and ambitious surgeons leading up to and after the Great Hunger, the great famine (1845-1852) with bad years before and after118.

116 For all the unnamed and named dead who needlessly suffered in Richmond and all colonial places during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and whose deaths happened to contribute to contemporary medical knowledge, this chapter is dedicated to you.

117 See Marx Capital Vol 1. Whereas teeth and character are themselves commodities in my first chapter, the patients who entered Richmond and their body parts become the commodities targeted for use value in this chapter.

118 The forced starvation of the famine has been argued to be a direct result of the discriminatory ways in which the Irish peasant farmers and working classes were portrayed throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and the subsequent laws based in these discriminatory views. As outlined in the previous chapter of this dissertation, British and Irish texts presented the Irish peasant as an economic burden and a social problem to be solved or what Gordon Bigelow has pointed out was often termed “improved.” English commentaries consistently dehumanized the Irish peasant as what Giorgio Agamben terms “life that does not deserve to live,” as political economic theories of “improvement,” portrayed the urban and rural spaces designated as peasant or working class as chaotic and as out of control, animalistic, and contaminating. They were portrayed as a large threat to middle class comfort and as a degrading to the quality of life of the English working classes also suffering under capitalism. Even Frederick Engels casts this same discriminatory shadow over the Irish in England, saying that in 1844 Irish poor hygiene and pay standards were threatening the liberation of England’s susceptible working classes. He unsympathetically presents the following scathing review of the conditions of Irish laborers immigrating to London right before the height of the famine: “The rapid extension of English industry could not have taken place if England had not possessed in the numerous and impoverished population of Ireland a reserve at command. The Irish had nothing to lose at home, and much to gain in England; and from the time when it became known in Ireland that the east side of St. George's Channel offered steady work and good pay for strong arms, every year has brought armies of the Irish hither. It has been calculated that more than a million have already immigrated, and not far from fifty thousand still come every year, nearly all of whom enter the industrial districts, especially the great cities, and there form the lowest class of the population. [...] If we accept his exaggerated and one-sided condemnation of the Irish national character, Carlyle is perfectly right. These Irishmen who migrate for fourpence to England, on the deck of a steamship on which they are often packed like cattle, insinuate themselves everywhere. The worst dwellings are good enough for them; their clothing causes them little trouble, so long as it holds together by a single thread; shoes they know not; their food consists of potatoes and potatoes
The patients here were in a space where their bodies could be used for science with or without their consent. In other words, the biopolitics of death, “thanatopolitics” in Agamben’s argument, where some are deemed human, some inhuman or less than human, applies to the patients here at least between 1830-1860’s (139). Furthermore, using Agamben’s notion of exception (where biological experiments are outside the law and outside social notice) or “zone of indifference” to analyze the liminal space of Richmond Hospital, we can see how exception occurred within colonial medical practice in nineteenth-century Ireland as part of the process of developing legal categorizations of human life in general for the working classes. This also works if we view Richmond and the workhouses only; whatever they earn beyond these needs they spend upon drink. What does such a race want with high wages? The worst quarters of all the large towns are inhabited by Irishmen. Whenever a district is distinguished for especial filth and especial ruinousness, the explorer may safely count upon meeting chiefly those Celtic faces which one recognizes at the first glance as different from the Saxon physiognomy of the native, and the singing, aspirate brogue which the true Irishman never loses. I have occasionally heard the Irish-Celtic language spoken in the most thickly populated parts of Manchester. Most of the families who live in cellars are almost everywhere of Irish origin. In short, the Irish have, as Dr. Kay says, discovered the minimum of the necessities of life, and are now making the English workers acquainted with it. Filth and drunkenness, too, they have brought with them. [...] For when, in almost every great city, a fifth or a quarter of the workers are Irish, or children of Irish parents, who have grown up among Irish filth, no one can wonder if the life, habits, intelligence, moral status -- in short, the whole character of the working-class assimilates a great part of the Irish characteristics. On the contrary, it is easy to understand how the degrading position of the English workers, engendered by our modern history, and its immediate consequences, has been still more degraded by the presence of Irish competition.” Although the Irish were portrayed in a similar, if not worse way, throughout English commentaries of improvement, economics, and morality as out of control, and even as “idiots” and lunatics (Ireland and the Irish). The word barbarian appears frequently in searches about the Irish through periodicals of the time as does the word savage. A publication in The Saturday Review (1862) titled “The Irish Reign of Terror” indicates that the Irish are violent criminal barbarians, wild like the plants and animals of an untamed Australia who may “only be kept down by starvation and oppression? [...] Does it only accumulate wealth to lay in a stock of pikes and pistols?” (239). The same article sardonically argues that “Ireland is a social Australia. Laws come to a fault; proved order and regularity break down; experience fails in all its teachings [...] we cannot account for the violation of all rules. Everything has been done for Ireland which prudence and statesmanship could devise, and nobody can lay a finger on the cause of the present social dislocation” (238-239). The author’s anxiety about the wild and uncontrollable nature of the racialized Irish, and their desire to keep them “down” seems to be a major pattern in periodical publications directly prior to, during, and after the famine (e.g. “The Agricultural Labor Market”, Irish Nationality,” Carlton, The Caucasian, ART III, Smith, ART IV). Even some Irish people lamented the Irish ways and advocated for the adoption of colonial customs (see Irishman).

Although Richmond Hospital was comparatively welcoming to working-class patients and severe cases, there was also a very clear moral dilemma present in the hospitals in terms of the way those patients’ selves and bodies were portrayed. Because the surgeons at Richmond often dealt with those patients who had extremely rare or under-researched conditions, it made them more of interest for medical research. Whether maliciously intended or not, the doctors at Richmond directly benefited from easy and unmonitored access to the patients’ bodies and free reign to experiment with high doses of dangerous drugs (commonly used medications for oral cancers included mercury and bloodletting). When the patients died, as many of them did, their bodies were often operated and published on. While this site may be an under-represented site of importance for the history of medicine in Ireland and potentially the world, these patients’ vulnerable class position additionally may have allowed for unspeakable horrors, with potentially more confidence in the doctors who were using experimental treatments. Because most patients are listed in the medical illustrations with specific counties, family names,
as “camps” within this space of exception. As Agamben argues about the concentration camps during the Holocaust, the biopolitical regime eventually works under death as well as life, with figures such as Homo Sacer (Sacrificed Life), VP (Human Guinea Pigs), and the Camp (a liminal space of legal and social exception) which loom in the background of modern life and utilize both law and biology to normalize the social value of a human body. The VP’s in Agamben’s analysis are people completely expendable to science and medicine because they had moved to a place where experiments were beyond legal jurisdiction, since they had already been sentenced to death, and thus medical fields saw no problem torturing and killing them (157). While this was in no way unique in terms of the development of the medical field in the nineteenth century, the patients in early Richmond, as both socially and medically vulnerable and somewhat rejected or forgotten, come into the hospital by the thousands, often to die (workhouse). They were not protected by the law and therefore could easily be used as human guinea pigs by surgeons and medical trainees in need of bodies to practice on. Dublin Hospitals of Industry provided physicians, surgeons, and untrained nurses

general lifestyle, and at times religion, and because they were often without supervision of family members or community members, their situation was less than ideal despite being subjects of “charity.” Additionally, because they were workers, many times it does not seem like the family was or could be contacted to assist with the patient or supervise the patient, and they rarely got visitors. This was perhaps confounded by family members either living in far off counties besides Dublin or being full time workers who did not have full independence or being too poor to travel. Since they were already forgotten and subject to “charity” and the “mercy” of their often-untrained medical providers.

120Feminist scholars have thoroughly documented the ways in which medical history and the practice of nonconsensual experimentation and invasive surgery occurred against women in the nineteenth century. There are additional studies from a variety of fields which uncover that Black and enslaved subjects were operated on without anesthesia and against their will. Cynthia Prather has written on physician James Marion Sims’ horrific experiments on Black women in the 1840’s US South. Sims, as the supposed “father of modern gynecology,” used his enslaved “patients” Lucy and Anarcha amongst others were operated on repeatedly without consent or escape as VP (citation). Furthermore, brilliant work like Marilyn Nelson’s Fortune’s Bones, a Manumission Requiem has recovered additional evidence of use and abuse by one prominent surgical family from the 1860’s through the 1960’s in the US territories who used the skeletons of Fortune and other enslaved Africans from their plantation in their own surgical and medical education. By recovering stories like this of exploitation and lack of ethics, these authors, especially Nelson’s work on Fortune, have uncovered what has been hidden in plain sight for hundreds of years through the space of exception. The prominence of this type of medical practice and the abuse and dominant abuse of power in the medical field over vulnerable people is important to understand, and so is uncovering an imagined view of what the patients’ lives may have looked like before they were used as VP’s and sacrificial sites of bare life. The medical history in Ireland during this time and in the Hospitals of Industry themselves can be used as an additional case study of a nineteenth century existence of the “camp” and “site of exception” of Homo Sacer in biopolitical medical treatment.
with thousands of patients (whose political position was, in Agamben’s terminology as VP at worst, Homo Sacer at best), whose vast numbers of endangered patients could be experimented on, healed, or their conditions and body parts used for publication, public surgery, and non-consensual education.

The old surgical center, originally built in 1807, is assumed to have been largely remodeled; the current staff are not fully certain which parts of the older area are from 1807 and which were added in 1901 or somewhat earlier. While walking through the halls and former patient rooms (now filled with modern décor and conference seating), traces of the nineteenth-century hospital functions are clear. A plastered entry to a former surgical theater, Victorian-era iron fireplaces, and bricks inscribed with messages from patients as early as the 1920’s remain present and exposed in various parts of the building. One of the inscribed bricks reads “I have suffered.” The new still does not successfully erase the old, and echoes of patient experience can be heard by those who listen. The building is still clearly “haunted” with wailings, “refrains,” and continued patient affective presence of the history of patient affect. As Lloyd points out, these affects from “the space of orality not only embodied a set of material relations, but also contained a distinct set of social and cultural possibilities […]. Because they spoke to the needs, pains and pleasures of the ‘pathological subject,’ their contours could never be entirely erased (Irish Culture 9)” The statements inscribed on these walls are reminders even to the modernized structure of what the place has

121 Brick from a later date but powerful patient expression.
122 While many of the bricks are difficult to read, the staff told me that many people want to make chalk rubbings of the bricks to take home with them as souvenirs. Even though the affective expression of patients is very real in this building’s contemporary presence, it seems flagged as a tourist destination for groups of presenters or study abroad to rent as conference or classrooms, even amongst these types of emotive inscriptions and the remaining structures of the nineteenth-century work hospital. The high-cost rentals gloss over the fact that they are inside of hospital rooms where many suffered and died for at least 100 years.
been, and whose affects echo through its halls. The inscriptions range through a variety of “needs, pains and pleasures” from crush on a nurse to statements of boredom, feeling tortured, or the statement we see from J. Scully in the following image asserting their experience of suffering. It is a clear pattern in the inscriptions that patients want future residents to know who they were and where they are from, something that becomes increasingly erased with the developments of the hospital into rentable disembodied spaces.

These inscriptions are a reminder\(^\text{124}\) of all the many bodies and their experiences that we do not get to hear from through the archive, but we do get to feel the reminders of their emotional presence haunting this space.

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\(^\text{124}\) David Lloyd’s assertion about the way that the oral space creates material markers of recalcitrance is important to bring to bear here. He states that the “structures of oral space find ways to live on in damaged and distorted forms and in doing so continue to represent material sites of recalcitrance and resistance both to the disciplines of labour and to the governmental institutions of the stat. In doing so, they continue to confound the boundaries that divide public and private, proper and improper, in singular and persistent ways. They furnish what we can call counter-modern spaces and practices, captured and determined by the institutions of modernity [like Richmond] yet preserving and refunctining elements of the non-modern that remain recalcitrant or antagonistic to the disciplines of capitalist labour or state formation” (9). Not only is The Richmond unable to erase all the echoes of past patient affect despite attempts at using the space in a modern and different way, but they are additionally unable to completely own or interpret the patient affects that materially remain from this working-class expression of autonomy and emotion.
37. Photograph of Patient Artwork and Brick Writing Richmond Hospital

38. Photo of the Richmond Hospital Outer Gates by Author, 2022
39. Photograph of the Circular Drive at Richmond, 2022

40. Conference Hospital Room, Richmond Hospital Photograph by Author 2022
41. Photo of Staff Showing Old Entrance to Surgical Theatre, Richmond Hospital, photo by Author 2022

42. "NECES SITATI HAUD GRATIAE HAE PORTAE PATIENT" Entrance to Richmond Photograph by Staff
Although Richmond was heavily renovated in the twentieth century, there are remnants from the old hospital and some echoes of what might have been seen, heard, and felt there. The inscription above the door, thought to be from the “old Richmond” reads: NECE SSITATI HAUD GRATIAE HAE PORTAE PATIENT “These doors are open without the necessity of grace.” The current staff at The Richmond had puzzled over the inscription as well for many years, and could not come to a consensus, although they assumed that it was meant to be comforting. But the phrase has many trajectories. Not only does this inscription mark the space as open to the poor and working classes, but it also could signify a lack of religious affiliation requirement. Since the hospital was eventually religiously affiliated with a convent and had Catholic origins and endings, this is one possibility. There is no known date for the inscription. However, at least between the 1820’s and before 1861, Richmond is also thought to have been under Protestant influence because of its strong affiliation with Trinity College (Jones, 4). According to Jones, surgeons could not work there during this timeframe unless they were trained in British schools associated with the Church of England or the Church of Ireland. The presence of an “ideological state apparatus” of Empire, then, was present at Richmond before 1861 (Althusser). This leads to another conflict of interest of the surgeons practicing there, who were at least associated with Britain, Protestantism through Trinity and the Church of England or Ireland, and operating on Irish peasants and workers, many of whom were Catholic (Jones). At the very least, the complex and violent history of Britain’s presence in Ireland should place the assertion of charity and benevolence that seems so present in contemporary historical accounts on
Richmond’s past in question. Another interpretation could be that because the poor were seen as ungraceful and did not have dignity in general society, they are the ones being referred to in the message. Grace in Christianity can often be understood as forgiveness from God, and the idea that even though they are giving their best their sins are forgiven by the sacrifice of Christ. However, when understanding the social position of patients other troubling implications of this saying come to mind. Was it implying that the patients were sinners who needed forgiveness? That they were responsible for their illnesses? That they were not responsible for their illnesses or their own forgiveness because that could only come from God? That those who entered the building were without grace since they were forgotten by society and by God? Since most of the people who would have gone to Richmond for treatment were illiterate, who was the target audience of this imposing inscription? (Spatially, it spans the entire wide door frame). Was it the surgeons? The donors? The nuns who trained nurses beginning in the 1860’s?

Richmond Hospital and the workhouse structure of the Hospitals of Industry operate in the form of presumed “charity” for the poor, but that is not the full story. While my focus is specifically on Richmond, even the term “Hospitals of Industry” conveys the manufactured need for these hospitals to exist because of the ailments created through industrialism, because of enclosure, because of hard labor, exposure to the elements, and a punishing colonial situation. In other words, the reason for the Richmond and the other Hospitals of Industry exists because of the rise of social and material violence of capitalism and British

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125 Eoin O’Brien’s historical work on the Hospitals of Industry is one of the most cited at the new Richmond. They include a quote from the late 1980’s from Mayor Alderman stating that “The Hardwicke, Whitworth and Richmond Hospitals, collectively called St. Laurence’s Hospital, has served the city of Dublin for over two centuries. At the time of its foundation, the entire population lived within a two-mile radius […]. Poverty and disease were endemic for the majority of our citizens. The Richmond Hospital was at hand to serve the needy and matched the progress of medicine throughout the years. The Richmond Hospital must now bow to the population trends of modern Dublin (11).”

126 https://Washkamonya.britannica.com/topic/grace-religion
imperial ideologies and constrictions. These hospitals are intricately linked with the problems created by capitalism, desperately trying to tidy those messes, but all the while benefiting both from the positive associations with “charity,” aid, and alms. Raj Patel and Jason W. More state that the capitalist imperial narrative “tells us that such people aren’t being annihilated. They’re being developed” (63). At the time when Richmond was underfunded and unregulated, it was still advertised that patients being kept there were benefiting from this type of “development.” For example, patients were occasionally forced to labor within a work yard or at another Hospital of Industry during their stay. Medical and surgical hospitals functioned in collaboration with and alongside the workhouse hospitals (the Hardwicke was especially known as a workhouse hospital) throughout the time leading up to and throughout the famine (180, 235 The Workhouses of Ireland). The space of Richmond during the 1830’s through the early 1860’s in Dublin seems to be largely forgotten by social and governmental funding or oversight, which allows for a higher potential and probability of Agamben’s “state of exception.”

Materially, Ireland was impoverished because of Britain’s imperial domination over their lands, and violence done to their land-bodies and human bodies. The incredible amounts of illness exhibited by patients at Richmond shows what people were suffering under harsh capital/industrial working conditions and ongoing colonialism/theft and enclosure of land. Additionally, while it is not the purview of this study to cover the Poor Laws in-depth, but it is important to understand on a basic level how the British imposed the new system in Ireland.

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128 This is evidenced by multiple letters between physicians and funders at Richmond, including accounts of one man who was declared “insane by refusal to work” and then forced to the work yard. He later ran away, was returned to the workhouse, and then ran away again a few months later (National Library of Ireland Letter findings).
since the workhouses and Hospitals of Industry were revitalized in part because of these new laws. According to historian John O’Connor, laws to assist with relief of the poor in England and Wales attempted to provide better conditions in workhouses in both those countries yet left out Ireland, despite the booming population (it was “one of the most densely populated areas of Europe” (47). This later led into overcrowding and “impossible” conditions for the lower classes of Ireland as presented by Daniel O’Connell (49). The commission to inquire into this reality did not occur until 1833 and 34 when a Royal Commission was created, which later led by George Nicholls envisioned and then enacted what ended up becoming the workhouse system in Ireland, in part directly to loosen the peasant relationship to the land, in part to avoid any “outdoor assistance” and create more beggary, and in part to help landlords. In fact, as part of this new goal, landlord laws had also been changed to allow for evictions and give landlords more freedom so that they were less “burdened” by the peasantry (52, 63). This commission later enacted Poor Laws to suit the plan outlined above, but only to those “most in need” (63). Not only did this new system give more social and political effort to maintaining structures regulations in place to manage the conditions of those most in need of help, driving them from the streets into these institutions of “improvement,” but because the hospitals already had a need for financing, they eventually combined both Catholic charitable premises with English colonial protestant work ethic.

After the New Poor Laws moved away from outdoor relief and towards a culture of workhouses, medical and biological specificity curated by throughout the nineteenth century that we still benefit from often occurred at the expense of racialized and sexualized people within government sponsored medical institutions.\textsuperscript{129} The culture of workhouses was part of

a vast colonial system throughout Ireland and English “charity” expansion during the
nineteenth century (Jones 31, Workhouse 188). Richmond became part of this larger network
of English-modeled “charity” and “philanthropy” systems that targeted Irish workers for
“improvement.” As Gordon Bigelow argues, “improvement” narratives in the nineteenth
century were another way that Irish peasantry was targeted for extermination. Changing Poor
laws in the 1830’s addressed British nationalist concerns regarding the lower working classes
and the conditions of the land and peasantry, as well as Irish “pauperism” in particular; it
should therefore be no surprise that reform texts and legal projects targeted the Irish lower
classes for admittance as patients or wards within the workhouse system.

The Richmond, as part of the Hospitals of Industry system, aligned itself neatly with
the social and practical status of a colonial workhouse, used to discipline the Irish working
body. Organized and overseen by the colonial British system, the Hospitals of Industry in
Ireland emerged in general out of Benthamism and the system of the workhouses in England
(Workhouse 12). The Irish worker’s position within social medicine at this time left them
exposed to the potential, but also the increased likelihood of maltreatment within already
chaotic conditions. At this point, in even in many progressive English texts such as Engels’
“The Condition of the Working Classes of England,” Irish workers and rural peasants were

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We cannot forget that an aspect of the fixation on the productivity of the Irish working-class body and especially Irish
working-class orality was so fixed on and regulated at Richmond in the years leading up to and during the famine is
because of the fear of scarcity of land and public space. As a place where the food resources of land enter to be chewed and
digested, the mouth is a space of endless possibility in connection with land itself, as often unconsciously imagined. Another
factor was the notion of Charity as being connected to “cleaning up the streets” from disease and “filth” of “savagery” of the
poor. This attempt to control space always includes orality in mentions of disease since that is one way that communicable
diseases are spread. Reformers and charity workers, philanthropists, including those in association of Richmond Hospital,
were generally of a middle- or upper-class background and presented themselves as well-intentioned helpers; however, in
many of their writings their analysis dehumanizes Irish workers and places personal habits and behaviors (as opposed to
capitalism and land enclosure as a system) at fault. As Engels portrays in his work on the conditions of the working classes,
and as Hobshawn states, there were “winners and losers,” of this era of capitalist expansion, and the “winners” were upper
class “white European males” (4). Despite this visible suffering, a façade of nicety was placed over everything. Social
reformers and anti-capitalist writers, authors, and charity workers may have seen through that façade of nicety, but as people
with education, literacy, and access to changing or reforming the world around them, they were still part of the “winners’”
side of things in comparison to peasant farmers and poor laborers in Ireland.
described as criminals, as “savage” and as unreachable physically, mentally, and emotionally (39). Producing as much labor as possible with one’s body was the explicit goal of capitalism and sometimes explicitly written by surgeons working at Richmond to the boards who funded and advised them\textsuperscript{131}. While Irish lower-class workers were not generally enslaved, their bodies were certainly exploited within British industrial and colonial policies as both laborers and as VP’s within the medical realm. Patients at Richmond had little or no money, social standing, and many had nowhere else to go or were too sick to earn a living through the often-physical labor they were surviving by before entering Richmond. Once admitted, they were heavily monitored, and seemingly did not leave the hospital of their own free will, except for one man mentioned in the notes as escaping.\textsuperscript{132} Additionally, although the notes treat each case as individual subjects in some respects, patients often died undergoing experimental therapies at Richmond, especially by certain surgeons.

While true that the Hospitals of Industry had overtly charitable purposes, it is also true that surgeons and donors utilized and benefitted from the subjection of Homo Sacer for use and abuse value within a British context. This alone might have made their patient’s treatments in Richmond Hospital and potentially other hospitals tenuous at best. \textit{The Cambridge World History of Medical Ethics} asserts that the first use of the phrase “medical ethics” occurs in 1803 and not before, while the term “bioethics” was not in popular use until the 1960’s (3). Bioethics was not considered until long after the abuse of medical practices and experimentation during the Holocaust (17). Because of the use and abuse of body parts from dead and living people during the nineteenth century, and the general lack of oversight

\textsuperscript{131} In a letter to the board of trustees, surgeon Williams gives an example of an insane man being forced to go to work in the yard, despite there being not much gardening needed, as a request from the board to deal with the laziness of the patient as discussed in a prior letter. National Library of Ireland manuscripts collection.

\textsuperscript{132} P263//621 UCD Special Collections Richmond Hospital Archive
in medical practice for bioethics, patients could easily become victims of their physicians’ ambitions. In the case of Richmond and the Hospitals of Industry, the patients’ social position (working poor, Irish, peasant, targets of Imperial “improvement”) especially in its first years of operation pre and post famine, creates an untenable condition where their treatment is set within pressure both of social reformers who were running the board of the hospital and from the surgeons who operated on them. At least in the case of one surgeon at Richmond Hospital, R.W.. Smith, there is evidence to suggest that he gained public and career acclaim by working-class bodies, especially female patients whose complaints began in their mouths. Through attempting new surgeries on these especially vulnerable women, R.W. Smith gained professional success and was able to experiment on unprotected femmes who gave him their full trust. Additionally, the nineteenth century views of Irish orality seem to have contributed to their position in Richmond as Homo Sacer, their bodies as medical utility open for use and abuse of Industry and British nationalism. The “problematic” Irish Worker with uncontrolled orality and thus temperament directly benefited any enterprising surgeons who were often attempting to improve their own class position in Dublin and Britain.¹³³

¹³³The portrayals of the instability of the Irish working poor, alongside the “need” for improvement, charity, and other seemingly innocuous moves of control, illustrate the intersections of gender, colonialism, racialization, and classism inherent within the idea of perfect teeth. In Ireland, as in anxious writings about Ireland, charity and poverty are inextricably linked with the supposed “barbarism” and “savagery” of the Irish working classes and their sexuality. Irish affective orality becomes a large source of consternation and stress for Britain’s national project and hence the target of scrutiny both symbolically as David Lloyd outlines and materially. The often-hysterical propaganda disseminated by English political economists and social reformers about the Irish (both when residing in their own country and when they entered the London and Manchester worker populations during the years before and after the famine) was heavily fixated on the oral. As Lloyd points out, “the performance of Irish identity has always been deeply connected to the oral” and that portrayals of Irish savagery in terms of the potential for violence “is already an effect of the oral space whose recalcitrance to modern disciplinary institutions was always coded as unruly and insubordinate” (Irish Oral Culture preface 2). While Malthusian economics placed blame on the poor through insistence on personal responsibilities and divine rights in the late 18th century, moralists and reformists throughout the 19th century continued to demonize the destitute, especially the post-famine Irish. The orality of the Irish working classes becomes constantly examined through medical and agricultural language, both with English-trained surgeons as cure in charity hospitals, and through the metaphorical language of contamination, infectiousness, and disease. I determine how this targeting is evidenced through the echoes of Irish working-class patients from writings and medical illustrations from Richmond Hospital that were used in teaching at Trinity College Dublin and disseminated in medical journals throughout the UK and Europe.
The Richmond Surgical Hospital of the 1830’s-1860’s was a space where as surgeon and professor at Trinity College Dublin RW Smith stated, “anything is possible” in treatments\textsuperscript{134}, where patients can’t or don’t need to consent to be experimented on, where surgeons have hosts of fresh bodies constantly walking or crawling through the door in desperate need of care and shelter. Who were those patients? What did they feel and experience? We have some information about that. Richmond Hospital Archives often show that while patients were ironically more humanized than they are in today’s medical systems, there were often brutal experimentations and surgeries on working class people who were often far away from their families and might even stay in the hospital for the rest of their lives if they lived.

Patients entering these spaces, especially those depicted primarily through their mouths, teeth, and tendencies to complain about working through that space, were often directly subjected to the consequences of “improvement.”\textsuperscript{135} In the 1830’s, 1840’s, and 1850’s, many of these patients underwent extreme surgical treatments in Richmond at times, often resulting in their death or dismemberment. It generally appears that women were more likely to be used for surgical experimentation and performed on in surgical theatres as public spectacles\textsuperscript{136}, while men were more likely to be sentenced to “work” in a workhouse yard, especially to decrease “laziness” or mental illness. Both men and women were “dispositioned” and the term dispositioning used to diagnose their disease and give details

\textsuperscript{134}Medical Gazette quoted statement in article titled [find article title in notes], 1856.
\textsuperscript{135}“improvement” is an insidious term used in additional settler colonial contexts. This term is also employed by Native Studies Scholar Sherene W. Razack in her book \textit{Dying from Improvement: Inquests and Inquiries into Indigenous Deaths in Custody} which can be used as another text to further understand the violence of this term. She argues that “a death in custody is especially painful because it is untimely, and because, more often than not, families and friends do not ever learn why their loved ones have died and who is responsible” (1). Regarding Ireland, see Katherine Webber’s. \textit{Cultivating Civilized Subjects: British Agricultural 'Improvement’ in Eighteenth-Century Ireland}. 2012.
\textsuperscript{136}P263/456; P263/621 from UCD Richmond archive
about their character. For example, in one case, an insane man who refused to work in the “workyard,” who later ran away, and then was sent back by his employer, was determined insane but he was dispositioned sympathetically; the notes say that his behavior was so erratic, “his disposition is taken,” and that he likely had “aneurism” because “he had been insane during three years previous” to his entrance at Richmond. However, his refusal to work as well as another female patient in the same file, (both were unnamed) were both diagnosed as “dispositioned with the character to complain” when doing labor (P263/456; P263/621). That they were being “treated” through forced labor, while other patients who were in dire need of medical treatment were turned away is suspect.

Many patients were also turned away from the hospital and sent to the workhouses despite having severe conditions because of the thousands of patients entering the hospital during the pre-famine years (Workhouse 118). One woman who was turned away from treatment at Richmond in 1843 after breaking her leg in bed at the poorhouse she was staying, was not given explanation except that they could not understand her condition. In addition to the problems of massive quantities of working poor Irish folks in need of care without enough space to house or treat them all, the quality of care at Richmond was not consistent during this time for these vulnerable patients. The hospital functioned without trained nurses, and both nurses and surgeons worked in multiple other locations and therefore could not give patients their full attention (Workhouse 60). As evidenced by letters from some surgeons to private donors, for quite a few years the Richmond hospital did not have reliable plumbing despite growing by the thousands in capacity each year (164). In the letter cited, one of the surgeons, Gordon, is asking for a plumber to come because of

137 UCD archives P263/159
138 Letters from surgeons begging for a plumber to come because of flooding and leaking, unlivable conditions etc.
“constant flooding and damp” within the toilets of the hospital. One of the material issues at hand is just that there were such a large number of working poor in Dublin and the rest of Ireland (because of British colonial theft of food and resources) that no one hospital could do much for many of the people who came there except either sentence them to work until their condition cleared on its own or they ran away, or place them in a damp and probably smelly, crowded hospital setting with other people who were deeply suffering by the time they arrived.

Despite the material need for hospitals to the impoverished workers, the charitable associations and the ambitions of individual surgeons who made their careers off the numerous vulnerable bodies they had access to at the very least should put into question the claimed medical successes of these hospitals. A positive view of charity in a colonial context detracts from some of the abuses which clearly occurred in the Hospitals of Industry system. Although I have no doubt that some patients were helped here, especially as time and medical science advanced, it is irresponsible of us as contemporary scholars to assume that despite all the colonial, class, and religious prejudices at the time, that all the untrained physicians and surgeons had the patients’ best interest at heart.

Socially, the neighborhood of Richmond was a contested space even in the same journal published in by Richmond’s most prominent surgeons. Nugent Robinson, ESQ. wrote in the Dublin Medical Gazette in the 1850’s titled “The condition of the dwellings of the poor in Dublin, with a glance at the Model Lodging Houses” which in fact is a very long article compared to the others in the Gazette, most of which are a paragraph to a page (pages 284-288). Robinson laid out evidence of squalor but also of threat to the purity of Empire by stating that “the dwellings of the poor in Dublin may be justly termed a ‘disgrace to modern
civilization,’ the refuse, as it were, thrown up by the tide of progress. The visitor, whom necessity or philanthropy may drive into the lanes and alleys, with which our city is intersected, can alone form an idea of the styes in which the poor are compelled to drag on their existence. These places are like so many hot beds, from whence all diseases are transplanted into our hospitals” (284). Not only does this take focus on tourism and industry as affected by the aesthetics of poverty in this neighborhood in Dublin but connects these neighborhoods with the heavy presence of “philanthropists,” who would be dismayed at what they saw, likely upper middle class, aristocratic, or English moralists and missionaries who were there to ‘improve’ and to give charity to the working classes of Ireland (283). It becomes clear that Robinson is arguing for reforms because of the threat to the presence of these philanthropists instead of to help the poor themselves. Despite the economic inequity of capitalism contributing to this squalor and being a known contributor by now, he argues that it is because of the “savagery” and the difficulty to control the uncivilized working-class that they are not receiving more assistance from charity workers and are instead continuing to live as pigs, in “styes (283).” This dehumanizing portrayal of the Irish working poor and the perception of not only the lack of sanitation within poor (largely Catholic) communities, but also inside their family dwelling spaces was used as contrast to supposed order and management of middle class Victorian domestic ideology as well as the “protestant economic universe” with cleanliness and maintaining the home as a sign of domestic purity (Ellis, Bigelow, Mackay139).

139 “Modern Englishwoman. --no. XIII.” The London Review and Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature, Art, and Society, July 7, 1860-June 29, 1861, 2, no. 51 (Jun 22, 1861): 746-747. Mackay states of the “managing woman” that she “edits a new Transformation, not of the Ovid, but of homely domesticities” and not only “gets more work done” but is also “surrounded by dainties and niceties of cleanliness” (747); the comment about the “Protestant economic universe is attributed to Gordon Bigelow and is discussed in depth within Ch.5; Sarah Stickney Ellis famously coined the phrase “Angel in the house,” which was used as a measuring tool during colonialism to point out the faults with other societies and the
Although short and quippy, Johnson’s argument was not unique during the nineteenth century, but its publication in the widely read *Medical Gazette* by surgeons practicing on working class patients in the Richmond and other Hospitals of Industry (we know that R.W. Smith had copies himself and was a contributor and there are two other prominent surgeons from Richmond who wrote patient case summaries and published in the *Gazette*), shows that these ideas were circulated in the circles they were working in. As a professor of medicine at Trinity, it is a likely possibility that R.W. Smith was reading the *Gazette* and having his students subscribe to and read its contents. Either way, the *Gazette* becomes a direct link for the argument to view the working classes of Ireland as VP and Richmond as the space of Camp, both for the possible conflict of interest of ambitious surgeons wanting to get their acclaim through publication on their experiments on Irish working-class people and because they were its target readership as both philanthropists in a way themselves and as medical practitioners. This article in the *Gazette* further shows the insidious connection between notions of “charity,” the presence of charity workers in the slums of Dublin, and the relationship between reformist mentalities and the treatment of the poor as animals, as savage, as a disease to be “cured” through “improvement,” as targeted for extraction, as a threat to be fundamentally altered for the increased comfort of “civilized” outsiders.

The way that some of the surgeons at Richmond Hospital specifically coerced and experimented with working class bodies (especially women whose orality was often what led them into Richmond to begin with) whose presence as Homo Sacer and even VP within Irish and English society made their treatments tenuous at best, leads me to argue that Richmond itself can be viewed as Agamben’s notion of a camp. Through visual and textual

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supposed superiority of the middle-class English woman within the nuclear family and developing Victorian gender ideology.
representations of oral cancers and surgeries leading from an oral cause, the treatments were often extreme and gendered, benefitting most of the surgeons who performed them in terms of their publication and professional opportunity and often causing great physical pain or death to the patients themselves.

**IMAGE ANALYSIS**

In the next section of this chapter, I will analyze medical illustrations to attempt to get a better understanding of the structure of feeling that was occurring within the patient experience at Richmond and the staff who worked there. Graphic representations of patients’ mouths from Richmond Hospital drawings by J. Connolly work as evidence of how the Irish oral space existed as a colonized “space of exploration” and control through medical experimentation (Lloyd). By choosing the four primary images that I have chosen, I am explicating the images that additionally have the most patient diagnosis, treatment, or name information. I wanted to specifically focus on images that relayed as much information as possible regarding views of and affect from Irish patient orality within Richmond Surgical Hospital. Although I viewed thousands of images of different patient conditions, these four images below create the sharpest and most holistic presentation of the patterns I noted in my research. My analytic method comes from an art history background, so looking at composition, subject, coloration, movement, emotive tone, artistic choice including method are part of the analysis. All the drawings are in both charcoal pencil and watercolors. Before viewing these images, I was told by the staff member at UCD that all the archivists were
disturbed by this entire archive, and that nothing yet had been done with it since it was so unclear and often inappropriate.¹⁴⁰

In the first set of images, (Image 6.i and 6.ii), we see that the female patient cited as Mary McGuiness is illustrated simply as a floating mouth. This image startled me when I first saw it, because of its simplicity and lack of human context (many of the other images of patients with oral conditions show at least part of their faces), but also because of the gendered emotion and what reads as “enlarged view” portrayal of the patient’s mouth and throat.¹⁴¹ This drawing is by medical artist J. Connolly and was recorded from a female patient with an oral tumor (similar condition to the man in image 2.6 in terms of diagnosis in the record), and although part of the tumor is visible here, her even set teeth and her gaping mouth remind me of the sexual implications of being shown solely as an already sexualized orifice and possibly as vagina dentata.¹⁴² Whatever the reasons for the artist only referencing her through her lips, mouth, and teeth, we don’t have the opportunity of viewing the rest of her face or of receiving much additional information about her. Her name is Mary McGuiness, noted to be a young woman in her twenties, which is all the information that we are given by the artist about her.¹⁴³ She is represented only by an uncomfortably open and

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¹⁴⁰ I had this conversation with the archivist in June 2021.
¹⁴¹ J. Connolly note saying “enlarged view” on front of image (add number)
¹⁴² For more information about the historical context of vagina dentata and sexualizing Irish women’s orality, see Ch. 5
¹⁴³ Add Number of documents
outstretched mouth, the slight outline of a cheek and a nose barely visible but tilted up. Her mouth is distorted and looks to have been pulled open at the viewers’ left side.

Mary’s face, and therefore the primary way that a viewer would understand her affect (through lifted eyebrows, expression of the eyes, wrinkles on the face from a facial movement), is not visible. However, from the position of her mouth and the expression of the mouth, it does not appear that she is comfortable or that she is opening her mouth of her own free will. The artist's perspective is either higher (hovering above her) or lower than her face if she is sitting up and tilting her head back. I suggest that she looks like she is struggling to keep it open despite the assistance, in large part because while the corners are pulled, her lips are taught, and her expression is one of discomfort.

43. Illustration of Mary McGuiness from the Richmond Hospital Collections, by J. Connelly UCD Special Collections
It also looks like much more detail is offered for the inside of her throat, to her tumor, and to her teeth than is given to the man’s portrait in 2.6, where we see more detail in his facial features, coloration, and expression but less time is spent detailing the inside of his mouth or throat. Unfortunately, although we are given her name and her mouth, there is silence around her as well. There are not any quotes from her, so we must imagine what she might have said that was left out.

The time J. Connolly spent illustrating and detailing the inside of Mary’s mouth in Image 43 was clearly long, despite not portraying her face. While it is possible that because of the discomfort she is expressing in just that space, perhaps he was not able to have her sit any longer for the portrait or that her mouth was not able to be explored more.

44. Portrait of Patient Daniel O’Rooney by J. Connolly, Richmond Hospital Museum Collection, UCD Special Collections

There are no quotes available from her, but the image screams in pain and discomfort, her facial muscles that are represented in the image
are contorted, and viewers can easily feel that pain.

Viewing image 44 and 45 from similar years side by side shows us that while Mary was portrayed simply as a mouth, the male patient is portrayed as a fuller portrait. The only note available to Mary’s image besides her name in the notes offered by UCD reads “never any syphilitic infection.” This comparison offers one example of the gender bias present in the medical archive of the nineteenth century and in the illustrations of J. Connolly. Whatever the reason, she now exists in medical history as her exposed and gaping mouth, reduced to her orality and her even white teeth (a trait that was supposed to indicate sexual purity, in line with the note that she had never experienced a syphilitic infection). In contrast, another unnamed patient (Image 45), who is older and has almost no teeth and bleeding gums, has less detail of her mouth and an additional side profile view given with specified hairstyle etc.\(^\text{144}\). Although the patient from below is also viewed through her throat, she is not primarily viewed through her mouth and teeth; instead, she is given a dignified profile, details of her eyes, ears, neck, and set facial expression are illustrated in addition to the open mouth portrayed next to her. While there are no men who are portrayed with that type of additional faceless open mouth as the woman pictured below, there are men who are portrayed with their mouths hanging open.

\(^{144}\) Image from the year 1854 by J. Connolly, P263/1612
Comparatively, the male patient in image 6.ii, who we see named as Daniel O’Rooney, exists in this illustrative archive as a person looking head on to the viewer, with eyes and an emotionally expressive face, hair, and clothing. His illustration offers a complex expression, showing layers of emotion including sadness, determination, patience, worry, and in my interpretation, a potential willingness to be drawn because of that determination. His mouth is open as far as it can go, but it is also uncertain how long he needed to keep it open to have his condition drawn. In the notes of his condition, we see it described as “man with cancer of the tongue” and notes about the condition of his rotting teeth. The first set of images clearly show the men’s eyes, despite the detail and focus of treatment being their mouth.

145 Daniel Rooney, drawn by J. Connolly at Richmond Surgical Hospital in Dublin UCD Special Collections Archives, accessed June 2021. Access file P263/304
146 Mary McGuiness, as drawn by J. Connolly at Richmond Surgical Hospital in Dublin, UCD Special Collections Archives, accessed June 2021. Access file P263/512
In the image of Daniel O’Rooney, in contrast with both women pictured thus far, there is detail given both to the expression of the furrowed brow, the bruised eyes set inside of it, his pupils and eye color, and the symmetry of the face in relation to a more standard type of front-facing portrait (one that includes the whole head and the upper part of the neck and shoulders). The man in this portrait appears uncomfortable, yet determined, looking slightly to the left of the artist, perhaps focusing on something so that he can concentrate on his cooperation more readily, perhaps looking at something in the distance as a form of dissociation. He holds open his mouth and lifts his tongue through rotting teeth and swollen lip seemingly of his own free will. His skin has a bluish and bruised tint, his hair is reddish blond, and his ears and eyebrows are outlined. We see what type of medical outfit he is wearing, starched white cap and pointed starched gown with pointed collars. He looks like a human face with a condition of the mouth, as opposed to Mary who is portrayed as only part of a human body, and one of the orifices that has historical sexual and dehumanizing implications for women at that.

In the following two images, again from the UCD special collections archive of Richmond Hospital illustrated by J. Connolly, one of the primary artists working here, we see a clear difference in how the woman’s mouth in relation to her expression and depiction of her affect is portrayed (Image 43, 45)\textsuperscript{147} compared to the man (Image 44). In these two illustrations, as opposed to the comparison above, the woman pictured left (Image 45), does have eyes and clothing expressed. However, in her one eye that will open, she is looking down and away from the artist, and appears to be extremely sad and uncomfortable, her face, nose, eyes, and mouth stretched by the large protruding tumor in her throat. The coloration,

\textsuperscript{147}Artist and patient unknown, from the Richmond Surgical Hospital in Dublin UCD Special Collections Archives, accessed June 2021. Access file P26/734
whether from age alone, paper, or artist choice, adds a downtrodden and depressing quality to the image with its cool and shadowed tones. The print is not visibly signed by J. Connolly, however, so it is possible that this image is painted by another artist. The note on the back of her image does not include the patient’s name or the year that it was drawn. The tumor is overtaking her entire throat and mouth and looks extremely painful and uncomfortable. There are no quotes offered in the archival record from her, but the discomfort is communicated through the affect that we can feel as we view the image.

There is not much discussion on the notes behind the drawings of the artist or surgeon’s process of asking for consent (if that happened) to use the patients for their drawings. Generally, there is a pattern of representation and discussion in the notes on the backs of these images that indicates J. Connolly himself being a servant to the surgeons and physicians of the hospitals of industry. I say this because J. Connolly never gives his full name on the illustrations, and the archivists at UCD and at Trinity did not have any more identifiers of his history, his true name, or his class position. Because J. Connolly is a medical illustrator with a commonly Irish Catholic last name, he may have been working or merchant class. Perhaps this was pitched to him as an opportunity to contribute to medical knowledge, or perhaps he knew that being drawn would allow him a chance to be visually recorded for posterity by a talented and skilled artist, who by this time (when was this again) was making a career and name for himself all around Dublin’s medical community and who

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148 These images and notes are held in the UCD special collections archive and some copies at Trinity Anatomy and Surgical Center and are not currently available to the public record. However, mostly Dr. Hutton, Dr. Gordon, and R.W. Smith are mentioned frequently both in Connolly’s images and in the Gazette. In terms of descriptions of procedures, these surgeons’ patients seem to die more frequently than do other mentioned surgeons.
was about to begin actively training an apprentice, who, as a woman, actually did present patients’ affect and orality much more holistically, especially female patients (149).

46. Woman with Portruding Throat Tumor, artist Unknown Richmond Hospital Archive, UCD Special Collection (lower left). 47. Illustration of Man with Syphilitic Sores, Open Mouth, Teeth Showing, and Sympathetic Expression Illustrated by J. Connolly Richmond Hospital Archive UCD Special Collections.

While it is impossible to speculate more about J. Connolly in this study, I would like to point out that his representations of female patients in no way occurred in a vacuum since he is the primary documented illustrator of both Richmond and Hardwicke.

The notes always indicate that R.W. Smith or another surgeon dictated to him what they wanted to see of these portraits, so in large part despite his sympathetic portrayals of many of the patients, he was taking orders from a larger structure in which he was part but not powerful in. The medical illustrations from the Anatomy and Surgical Theatre in Trinity College show a very different and more humanizing perspective in depictions of women by J. Connolly’s female apprentice starting in the 1860’s than does his own pattern of representation for the female patients who he interacted with.

149 This is clear based on my time in the Trinity Anatomy and Surgical Theatre archives, which I still do not have official permissions to be specific about unfortunately.
In the images, there is a clear pattern of gendered representation in general, but especially in relation to the patients who are dealing with oral conditions such as tumors, gum, tooth, or throat issues. Connolly’s medical artistry allows us to feel part of the affect of what patients might have been experiencing, how they might have felt being there in the Hospital/camp, and the possible ways their cases were viewed and treated both by the artist himself, but also by the physicians directing him to paint these watercolor portraits. Because there were so many striking and overwhelming images in this archive overall, I focused my attention on the images which depicted oral concerns and were organized by teeth, mouths, or the throat as the primary complaint. By explicating these images and the structure of feeling illustrated, I seek to recover some of the humanity that may have been erased, but also to understand (Image 46) from her condition is not spaced within the frame- her entire face takes up the entire frame, and her mouth tumor spills out, filling her open mouth. The way the men are framed, and their clothes and faces drawn feels more like traditional artistic portraits of nobility, pictured with expression of intent and angled in a flattering way that conveys their humanity, including the patient represented in Image 47, whose sad eyes call out to the onlooker in a direct and piercing gaze.

All these drawings were done in this hospital of working-class Irish patients and their bodies without explicit consent from the patients themselves. However, having these portraits drawn or the act of drawing them could also be considered as an act of resistance by both J. Connolly and the patients he represented. By recuperating images of patient affect, we can recoup the expressions of their humanity as well as the empathy which some were portrayed with; these patients existed, and so did their individual conditions and experiences. Because of the existence of these portraits, we have clear evidence of their existence and what they
suffered through because of their social position and their experiences as workers under brutal colonial capitalism\textsuperscript{150}. In terms of what these images can tell us about the felt experience of the patients and their clear experience of suffering, it is important to remember to contextualize their extreme health conditions as exacerbated by poverty and overwork. Often these representations show brutal and bare emotional expressions in an apparent pattern of intense visual and affective representation of patients undergoing treatment at Richmond through the 1830’s, 1840’s, 1850’s.

In the Richmond Hospital Drawings and descriptions of diseases, people are visually and descriptively categorized by class condition and gender. Visually, it becomes clear that most female patients are not given full humanity in their sketches. Instead, they are viewed as an orifice. While the male patients are given faces, the women have more focus on the entails of their mouth and teeth, even by the same artist. One female patient is not even portrayed as having a face. The tongue and teeth in the female patient are much more descriptive than the inside of the male patient’s mouth, which has blurring around the tumor and less well-defined teeth and lip ridges. The man with syphilis has his teeth clearly depicted, but his mouth is not gaping, and his jaws are closed despite the skin coming off him (Image 5.6). In both male patients, their eyes and the sympathetic artist detail of their affect and expression is clear, the spacing and angle of the portrait is more artistic and traditionally associated with people of stature, whereas the women either have no eyes or their eyes are depicted as duller and less engaged with the artist (Image 6.i, 6.iii, 6.iv). The men’s eyes are more focused on or near the artist in all images above and in general within the UCD collection.

\textsuperscript{150}Despite their current lack of representation, archivists at Trinity College in Dublin are working to make an exhibition of some of Connolly and his female student’s artworks available to the public of Dublin eventually- they are generally later than the ones at UCD, but there are some duplicates and new originals that are not available in the UCD catalogue. I was able to view them but have not heard back on the permissions request that I sent in the summer of 2022.
To offer a summary of the findings from these images analyzed and compared with one another, primarily from the UCD special collections archive of illustrations primarily signed by J. Connolly151: 1). Women are generally portrayed in extreme close-up without a face, and only as a gaping mouth. The children are as well at times, especially female children. They less often are depicted with eyes or full expressions. Most men are depicted with a face, eyes, hair, detailed clothing, and a sympathetic expression; 2) Men are painted with many more colors in their complexion and hair than the female patients. In general, more depth is added to their skin tones and more details such as wrinkles, tears, and even clothing is depicted in great and specific detail. This humanizes them; 3) Women’s sexual history and marriage status is almost always outlined when notes are offered 4) Both men and women undergo being “dispositioned” like the way that lands and phrenological embodiment are dispositioned in chapter 1- in these images, when patients are noted to have been dispositioned, they are described through their emotional state and through their vocal emotional tendencies. In other words, in this context, the term “disposition” is used to describe both their medical condition and their character; The character of the patient is always given at the beginning of the medical descriptions, and sometimes their name, their profession, and where they are from. While these individual parts of the patient’s lives may seem to contradict their status as VP’s, I would argue that they play into the idea of the atomized individual as being at fault for their own condition of poverty, further placing them

151 These images are not in their official catalogue and the PDF document describing them was initially emailed to me through a librarian from Ireland. The top note on the .pdf reads: “UCD Centre for the History of Medicine in Ireland Richmond Hospital Drawings Reference code P263 Title Richmond Hospital Drawings Date(s) c.1828 – c.1870 Extent 17 portfolios, 41 sub-portfolios comprising c. 1,000 items Creator Richmond Hospital, Dublin Collection Description This substantial medical art collection contains almost 1,000 watercolor paintings, created on behalf of the Richmond Hospital, Dublin, and transferred to UCD Archives from the UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science in January 2012. The paintings are both figurative and highly detailed. The average size is approximately 45cm x 30cm though there are many examples of both much larger and much smaller formats. Also present are photographs which record the different stages in pathological experiments undertaken by the University in the early twentieth century. The paintings depict patients of Richmond Hospital suffering from diseases such as syphilis, lupus, elephantiasis graecorum (leprosy), various malignant and non-malignant tumours and cancers, hernias and ulcers, burns, anthrax, gangrene, congenital malformations, diseases of the skin, respiratory organs, digestive organs, nervous system, circulatory system and bones.”
into the category of exception since it may even be their own fault for being sick in the first place, for entering the camp in the first place, 5). Most images in the UCD collection that I looked at are not dated, but the ones that are fall in this range: 1834-1863; 6). Many archivist notes from UCD were not cross listed in the Richmond Hospital Museum or with Trinity college. Each place has put together a collection independent of collaboration with the other archives, and all are incomplete making it even more difficult to collate trends or patterns. Nevertheless, some cross-referencing is possible; 7) Many illustrations, especially of adult patients in the first 10 years of Connolly’s illustration employment, are listed with full names and ages either in the image or subsequent doctor’s description.

While not much is known or understood about Connolly or his position except gender and profession, he clearly has an artistic preference for male patients and depicts their emotional affect and subject positions in a very detailed and generally more sympathetic way than his depiction of female patients. In interpreting images that were drawn in the same three-year period, we can make a comparison both about the affect represented by the artist and his skill level at the time.

Looking at only the notes from illustrations coming out of Richmond and other hospitals of Industry such as the Whitworth and Hardwicke in the UCD archives, a large variety of different visiting surgeons and physicians interacted with patients in these hospitals rather than working there permanently. The surgeons seem to have been largely volunteer-based and working at multiple hospitals, schools, and clinical settings, and in part because the surgeons clearly had different motivations for their patient care. There are two surgeons who stand out for their mentions from represented person who frequently volunteered in the oral care for patients was Dr. O’Connell, who barely wrote any notes on patients for the
illustrator J. Connolly. Although the descriptions on the back of the watercolor images portray RW Smith as a heroic and compassionate Surgeon with the audience of artists and donors to the hospital, the text and print articles that were published on his behalf for a more medical audience within medical journals such as the Dublin Surgical Gazette paint a picture of patterns of coercion for extreme procedures in the name of medical science.

Adam R.W. Smith, a surgeon and Trinity College Professor of anatomy and surgery who also frequently saw the same patients as O’Connell, seems to have had more of a hawkish and enterprising medical gaze both because of his prolific presence in publications in the Medical Gazette, and because of his heavy dictation of notes to write on the backs of Connolly’s illustrations with clear intent to publish his findings alongside the images. Often, as in the case with…. the printed publication about the patient was later glued onto the back of the paper portraying that patient after its publication. Smith is quoted in extensive notes on the backs of these illustrations with are later printed verbatim in the Dublin Medical Gazette and other medical journals which circulated throughout Dublin, Ireland, Britain, and whose ideas likely later influenced settler colonial medical practice because of the large emigration of Irish surgeons and physicians to Canada, Australasia, and the Americas. Because Smith was not only a prolific published physician and contributor to the Medical Gazette and was a Professor at Trinity college who taught hordes of students about anatomy and surgery, he may have been especially influential to these exported ideas about patients, treatments, and medicine in the nineteenth century both in Ireland and in the colonies. However, he would

\[152\text{This phenomenon of Irish medical participation in immigration and settler colonialism and thus the influence of Irish medical practices and values in the colonies is discussed at length in Greta Jones’ book Doctors for export: medical migration from Ireland c 1860-1960.}\]
not have been able to communicate his ideas or the ailments of his patients without the assistance of the images of J. Connolly.

A deep investigation of the Gazette across its publishing history makes clear that most of the early submissions to the journal were contributed from physicians and surgeons recognizable from J. Connolly’s illustration notes as being affiliated with and working closely within the Hospitals of Industry, especially Richmond and Hardwicke. Names such as Smith, Hutton, and Gordon, make a constant appearance, especially in the first 7 years of the Gazette. Both in the Gazette and on the backs of the medical illustrations available, the treatment of mercury is popularly administered as a treatment often, generally resulting in swift patient death. Autopsies after death are almost always completed and then shared in the publications of the Gazette. Therefore, having access to Richmond patients was an accessible way for surgeons to increase their own professional success and knowledge, in addition to having large numbers of cadavers without having to rely on grave robbers or the timing of natural death of their patients153.

To get a fuller picture of the way that hospital work at Richmond was influenced by and was influencing broader medical Ireland, it is important to look at the publications that physicians pursued outside of the hospital and the way they talked about their patients and experiences amongst peers. One such avenue of publications was the Dublin Medical Gazette. There were a large variety of visiting physicians in the hospital’s life, but many were trained in England or Scotland. R.W. Smith, Dr. Hutton, Dr. Williams, Dr. O’Connell and Mr. Adams seem to be mentioned with the most frequently on the backs of the illustrations drawn in Richmond Hospital in the UCD collection, including the ones by J.

Connolly. In Vol VI of the *Gazette* in 1860 – Mr. Smith and Mr. J. Connolly appear named on the first page. According to this document, Connolly worked as an illustrator in both Meath and Richmond and probably many other hospitals. His work seems to be well-known and is noted as being familiar to the journal (5). George Catlin is mentioned in a lecture on dentistry in 1860, and in the piece, the author states that he agrees with Catlin’s claims that “savage” teeth have no carries, or cavities, on other evidence from travelers from around the world, including South Africa (212). In Volume 1 of the *Gazette* from 1854, an illustration from Mr. Connolly can be located on page 9 and description of empyema case from “a labourer.” (8-9). In this same volume, Professor R. W. Smith is mentioned again through an exhibited neck tumor cast. Pathological Society meeting minutes are published in the *Gazette* – for the January meeting, Mr. Adams is the Chair. In the meeting highlighted in Volume 1, R. Smith exhibits a skull with syphilis and is quoted as saying that it is “a remarkable specimen” (27). This constant repetition of R. W. Smith and associations with not only oral surgery patients but with phrenological terms and practices (he often showcases skulls of various former patients to his students and to lectures published in the *Gazette*), of being a “surgical genius” (*Gazette* 39), and constantly publishing in journals that were not associated with Irish-trained surgery (Jones 27),

RW Smith’s treatment of female patient orality, especially during the years of the famine, shows him experimenting especially on female patients who come into Richmond with oral complaints and degrading their consumptive habits. In volume 1 in 1854 of the *Gazette*, for example, an account of his interactions with a female patient, a girl who had a “derangement” and a “depraved way” of eating lots of raw grain meal from India and vegetables is highlighted. As a reminder, this journal account was published during the years
directly after the Irish famine and these patients who were treated in 1853 would likely have experienced the trauma of that time in terms of dietary and malnutrient deficiencies beyond their control. The girl is described as having a kind of binge eating disorder, called a “morbid appetite” where she “frequently ate a pound of starch at night” (163). However, this same section of the journal also details another ravenous patient dealing with mental illness because of starvation detailed in the paper “On some of the latent Causes of Insanity” from the Phycological journal from last April “who would “not let a blade of grass, or a weed, or green thing grow in the airing court in which he walked. If his hands were restrained, he knelt and tore up the weeds with his teeth. Noting this instinctive appetite, we directed that he should be supplied with uncooked carrots, celery, etc.” After they fed him, he was “perfectly restored to health and sanity” (164). The trauma of the famine itself is not mentioned in any of these articles in the Gazette as a potential cause or even influence of these ailments, despite the fixation on food and finding a way to fulfill the appetite; instead, in both cases, the patients are blamed for their own suffering and termed insane.

The patients at Richmond were perhaps accidental casualties of capitalism, but the reason this is important is that unfortunately this still happens when people need care and are at the mercy of their hospital staff and surgeons who may profit from using their bodies either as a site of personal education or for data gathering in scientific research for career advancement. Consent is a major problem. Folks went to Richmond, it seems, when they had no other place to go, when they could no longer work, and their employer would not pay for their care. They were generally people who had suffered for many years from hard labor first and illness second. The surgeons had more social capital, class mobility, and yet letters from the surgeons volunteering here show that the hospital was in desperate need of both funding
and physical improvements to the rooms, ventilation. One letter describes how the rooms were too filled with mold, damp, and wetness. The toilets constantly flooded, leaving surgeons to clean up the mess. In other words, they had to beg for their supper and for the suppers and rooms that were filled with rot, so it was not the most glamorous existence.

For surgeons and nurses such as RW Smith, it was a chance at both improving his teaching at Trinity, his social capital within medical societies and publications, for doing as many surgeries and treatments as he possibly could, and for getting credited in the notes on the backs of the watercolors from J Connolly that he then used to teach his students at Trinity. Gendered subjects in these medical images and descriptions, despite being portrayed with humanistic qualifiers and highly personal descriptions at times, can also be viewed as further evidence for the Hospitals of Industry as (perhaps unintentional) camp and the working-class patients as VP. With the oral cancers and the male gaze of the watercolor painter, seen as an open mouth and a space for “exploration.” In the Gazette during the description of surgery for the woman with the sore throat and then the publicly amputated leg, R. Smith is also quoted as being enthusiastic about the changing laws for surgeons, stating that “the law of the land now supports us” to his students and peers, meaning that there were fewer legal consequences of vivisection and possibly maltreatment within the prior mistrust that had existed in Victorian medicine because of the use of sketchily acquired cadavers.

Irish-trained surgeons eventually became “redundant” and faced discrimination from English surgical societies and schools towards the later nineteenth century. The trend of disregarding Irish surgical training and certification seems to have worsened throughout the nineteenth century, culminating even in calls against Irish nurses Irish-trained surgeons at
some hospitals even in Ireland. In an admittedly biased account of this discrimination, the
Sinn Fein Weekly published a summary in 1906 of the discrimination against Irish medical
professionals throughout the nineteenth century, stating that “the Irish medical profession [...] reputation was world-wide, yet it submitted to England. Even the Irish Pharmacopeia disappeared and the British one was substituted in this island, to the great profit of British drug manufacturers. The latest illustration of the work of West-Britonism is detailed in a pamphlet before us. The pamphlet is entitled “No Irish Need Apply.” It is issued by the Association of Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons. Later in the paragraph they state, it appears that for years, past efforts have been made to disparage the qualifications granted by the different medical corporations and universities in Ireland, and the diploma of the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, has been specially singled out for attract. The authors lament the fact that Irish gentlemen are now sending their sons to be educated at Oxford or Cambridge instead of at Trinity. While the article is highly political, it does outline a trend of movement away from Ireland in terms of Irish medical care, which only likely exacerbated the problems outlined in my essay. I would argue that these calls for alarm by the newspaper do not detract from the real problem of the continued medical objectification of working-class Irish bodies by surgeons and doctors who were either trained in England or whose research by experimentation on potentially non-consenting working-class poor patients was most often published for a Scotch, English, and Irish audience.

Even in journal publications that Smith and his students contributed findings to such as The Dublin Medical Gazette, there was no need for apology or accountability for causing pain or harm to patients already suffering. Instead, patients are explicitly used for their own medical purposes both without explicit consent, and at times with explicit dissent. In the
Gazette, a female working class patient who entered Richmond with a throat problem gets her knee bone cut out and her leg amputated. Here is the case from him and his hacksaw operator and surgical assistant, aptly termed “Mr. Butcher” through all publications:

Dublin- Feb 15th, 1861
Richmond Hospital
“Case of Excision of the Knee – Joint” By R. W. Smith, M.D., Professor of Surgery, Trinity College, Dublin. Pages 49-50. On the 10th of January, Professor Smith performed the operation of excision of the knee-joint. We give the particulars of the case and operation as Professor Smith detailed them to the Surgical Society. He said that he exhibited the specimen in accordance with the desire of his friend Mr. Butcher, having always had a very great objection to bring forward a specimen of anything until the case had fully terminated; however, the case to which he was about to refer was so far advanced as to enable him to speak with certainty as to the result, and he saw no reason why the woman who had been subjected to the operation should not recover with a very useful limb. She was unable to sleep either night or day, notwithstanding that she was given five or six grains of opium and an anodyne draught at night. […] She said she would commit herself entirely into his hands, and consent to either operation, but would prefer to have the limb preserved…he was determined to excise the joint. […] he had never performed the operation or seen it done before.

This article details the woman's medical journey before her dismemberment, but not her name (49). However, it does detail Smith and Butcher’s desire for this operation to occur. It also details that she did not want to have her leg amputated. However, the surgical desires override her own expression of concern and desire to preserve her body intact. She was first admitted into Richmond hospital and had a throat tumor. There is great suffering detailed as part of a justification of the public surgery. The patient described here was put through such an invasive procedure, in a room filled with men, drugged with chloroform so hopefully not awake for this experience, but we as readers don’t hear of what occurred or how she responded to his decisions after this surgery. It is celebrated that the surgery occurred, and it
is portrayed as a positive development for the field of surgery overall. Later included are
imaginistic and gleeful descriptions alongside quotes from RW Smith, and quotes from the
patient talking about how much she trusted RW Smith, was miserable without sleep (so not
in a great frame of mind to agree to such a dramatic surgery) and hoped that his surgery
would cure her.

The surgery described seems like it was quite the anticipated spectacle and was
desired by Smith in general before interacting with this specific patient. It also seems to be
dripping with a visual element and excitement or desire on the part of the writer themselves
(anonymous). The term “desire” making an appearance multiple times in an article about the
exploitation of a woman’s orality and then public dismemberment does have a potentially
sexual undertone given the representation of teeth and their symbolism in cultural messaging
in Britain and Ireland at this time. Regardless, it was clearly Smith’s professional end goal to
complete this surgery, with or without her presence as his patient, and that her body was
utilized to justify that existing desire. She just happened to be the unfortunate vulnerable and
potentially gullible volunteer who for whatever reason, presented an oral and physical
condition that lent itself to his existing desire. Because of the vividness of the description and
the inclusion of quotes from Smith about their prior conversations, readers can almost
imagine her high pitched and nervous tone of voice, portrayed with an implicit silliness (lack
of fully understanding about what she is getting into) and seemingly naive trust in him as a
physician before she is splayed out on the surgical table and loses the use of her leg forever.
That trust is written about pridefully, but he violates it knowing that there will be no negative
consequences for going against her wishes. Even the way it is portrayed is of a glowing
admirer of Smith. She is made to be a side character in the surgical performance, a puppet without a voice.

Reading this, we can see the worry and the trust that the patient had in her doctor, but also his enthusiasm and insistence for doing a more major surgery, and doing it publicly, goes far beyond patient informed consent. Many of the articles published in the Gazette show him doing this with both older women and young girls (them coming in for a throat cancer or a throat problem and having a leg amputated or dying of his experimental treatment with large doses of mercury etc.) This process of sore throat to excited and public leg amputation procedure with quotes of dissent from the patient herself is bizarre. Additionally, the quotes included from her are more related to something in her orality, demeanor, expression, and overall expressions of bodily suffering pre-surgery. It is never quite explained why amputating the knee was a necessary treatment response for her throat condition. It is also not explained if or how she survived the procedure.

Because of his prolific tendency to publish his medical cases and subsequent surgeries in the Gazette, there is a pattern of Smith seeing his patients’ orality objectified for the medical gaze. However, taking J. Connolly into consideration, later evidence of Smith’s increased carefulness with his patients and his lessons in the 1860’s onward, it is not possible to say this or that staff or surgeon is fully responsible for the deaths of hundreds of patients. It is rather the system of inequity in place already, the existing discrimination towards the Irish poor that existed both within the literate and professional classes in England, Scotland, and Ireland itself and the economic realities of Ireland as a British colony that these surgeons and illustrators are working within, trying to gain some class advancement within these conditions, potentially at the expense of some of their patients. It is also interesting, however,
to understand that the portraits that we have of the working poor patients with severe medical ailments and a lifetime of inaccessibility of healthcare are drawn by a fellow Irish laborer, who potentially saw himself in some of these patients’ lives and experiences, hence the decision to write their full names and counties on the backs of many images in his first 10 years working at Richmond. Despite Connolly’s clear gender biases, he often does offer viewers a sympathetic gaze of the patients and their affect, even when they are dealing with grotesque and often extreme oral conditions at presumably their worst point in life during and after a famine in a hospital that was also feeding laborers into the workhouses of Dublin. As David Lloyd outlines about Irish orality within the colonial context is that it can be viewed as “the resistance of certain forms of cultural and physiological practices of pleasure, desire, affect, and even of need and grief, to the rationality of the modern state. This space of the ‘Irish orifice is not an alternative abstract space, not a pure alterity that exists outside of modernity or in some ideal location sheltered and preserved from the destructive inroads of colonialism or capitalism. It is, rather, a counter space of modernity, or what Lefebvre describes as a ‘differential space,’ one that potentially represents, even under conditions of rationalization and discipline, ‘the seeds of a new kind of space” (15). Perhaps despite the inequities and horrors that existed for these workers in Victorian Ireland and in the Hospitals of Industry, J. Connolly’s illustrations can be viewed as a resistance to the patients’ dehumanization. He very clearly put time and care into many of the illustrations and made sure that at least the male workhouse patients were given some artistic dignity because portraits are notoriously difficult. That choice, in itself, challenges the reading of these images simply as exploitative and offers an alternative space of an Irish artist exiting both his own sympathetic feelings towards the experiences and expressions of the patients he
interacted with in his job, but also the space which he gave to his own artistic expression within this intensely varying subject matter of disease, decay, and depressive consequence of land tenure and British economic control over Ireland. As readers, we can at least consider this choice a strong expression of his own sentiments towards the patients at Richmond. Generally, they are brought to life and individual personalities within his illustrations. Through his brush, their faces and expressions can break the barriers of the restrictions of the hospitals as Camp and their positions as VP’s. Although as a medical illustrator, J Connolly’s function is to present medical ailments accurately for research and publication, he chose to give more life and more humanity to the patients who sat for portraits.

When reflecting on medical representations of Irish orality and its portrayals within the Hospitals of Industry, and the resistance to attempts to discipline this orality in that same space, we cannot assume ethical behavior of the hospital workers because of the simple fact of the vulnerable political and social position of Irish poor lower-class workers as a targeted group within a colonial superstructure. However, we can also look for Deleuze’s “moments and refrains” of refusal both from the workers themselves who were attending to patients in the hospital and through the sympathetic portrayals of oral space by J. Connolly. While the patients were clearly treated based on gender as well as class and profession, they were also able to be memorialized and discussed in relation to their personality, specific ailment, specific treatment, age, religion, county of origin, and specific humanizing identifiers that no longer exist in medical care and probably would be impossible to truly keep track of given the thousands of patients who entered the Hospitals of Industry between 1830-1861. Additionally, a perfect medical ethics still does not exist in any capacity after hundreds of years of abuse, patient torture, and error. Race, class, and gender bias are major factors which
continue to harm and exploit medical patients in today’s hospitals, prisons, and other institutions in Ireland, Europe, England, and the US that were influenced by medical practice and research from the 19th and 20th centuries. We still need to consider how the first world utilizes vulnerable people and lower working classes impoverished by systems that continue to utilize Malthusian economics to perform medical testing, blood and organ donation, and surgery, building the British national economy\textsuperscript{154} and national body bone by skull by tooth.

It is possible that we remain much too influenced by eighteenth and nineteenth century medical practice in our contemporary laws relating to medicine, biopolitics, and thanatopolitics. We still have camps\textsuperscript{155}. While the position of VP and the physical space of the Camp may continually shift within our modern systems and become even more invisible to the other classes of society, the history of Richmond and the Hospitals of Industry serves as an example of a colonial and Imperial project “hiding in plain sight” with a charitable functionary. While I make no claims that charity or medicine is exploitative, both spaces were built off exploitation of vulnerable people. Additionally, both fields still maintain influence of the state’s biopolitical mechanisms, uneven care, and ongoing inequity and injustice.

\textsuperscript{154} For more on the term “national economy” in the development of Britishness and Britain as a nation of Empirial military and economic domination, see Linda Colley’s Britons, Forging the Nation 1707-1837, or Hobsbawn’s Age of Empire: “‘national economies existed because nation states existed’” (41).

\textsuperscript{155} See the dissertation conclusion for more analysis of contemporary “camps” and biopolitical extractivism surrounding teeth and biopolitics/thanatopolitics.
CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

“Unexpectedly, the man yawned and his teeth were very white.”
~Elizabeth Cook-Lynne, Aurelia, a Crow Creek Trilogy

WHY TEETH?

Within the oral space lies an imagined character and spirit of emotional and moral purity, protest, animality, and resource extraction, and the undeniable truth that people and lands feel and express something unattainable even through extraction, something spiritual and emotional, connected yet personal. I know this because I have also had my own oral space fetishized and objectified during my childhood experience of cancer, beginning when I was ten years old. I was seen as an object of medical study and only as my mouth, teeth, and “fascinating” rare tumor by medical and dental practitioners. While the British need to define and categorize their own culture against the internal and external “others” has been researched, joked about, and is still discussed in countless talks and television shows about modern British culture, we will need to shift towards understanding how insidious this became and how brutal it was felt on the bodies of those attempting to fit themselves into those definitions or fit other people into those definitions.

What affects have we in our contemporary society inherited from the traumas of the past? How many unnamed people died or suffered behind every medical advancement? How can we find our voices and protect our orality from commodification and white supremacist

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156 The reason people fear the Irish mouth and the mouths of people they are perceiving as “other” and who they are attempting to control, is that the mouth is not only the site of unpredictable speech, sound, consumption, and sexuality, but that it is also the site where the person who is attempting to control sees the teeth of the person as they emit an unbridled emotional response to the injustice being done to them. This becomes what the perpetrator fears, since those teeth can bite them, but also because teeth are symbolic of that same unchecked power, eros, sensuality, resistance, and the animal previously discussed. The teeth lie the site of the unchecked potential.
colonial values? How do we reimagine and recreate the commons? What else in our strategies are we missing to stop further extraction? I agree with Edward Said’s assertion that, despite the ways in which our citizenship propagates a lack of knowing, North American US and Canadian citizens and intellectuals “have a particular responsibility to” attempt to understand how Western imperialism has shaped relationships with humanity around the globe and to attempt to influence the US in a way that would be less possible as an outsider (54-55). Because of this responsibility, I will end this conclusion with some thoughts on contemporary politics surrounding teeth, orality, and the “logics of white possession” and impatience that undermine the affective refrains outlined herein. Underlying this research is a personal, political, and justice-oriented desire to find the answers underlying unconscious power dynamics that I’ve witnessed and experienced throughout my life. I wanted to understand why these dynamics are always gendered, the underlying dynamics of colonial violence that still play out in our everyday lived reality. I have held a deep curiosity about race, medicine, and biopolitical impulses, about gender, class, and the treatment of animals, land, and the wasicu illness in which many people from my hometown

157 The consequences of the discourses of categorizing and marking “the savage” that proliferated from people with material influence in the eighteenth and nineteenth century (mainly literate and/or financially benefiting off imperial endeavors) were destructive in their time but additionally remain a force for destruction in our current time. The pain of that categorization is often discussed in a theoretical way, yet a more intimate understanding helps us to feel and therefore understand more of how this structure of violence was created and still operates under the surface of our everyday interactions and desires. Additionally, the hope that affective refrains of resisters can generate is potent and cannot be silenced. It shows that they can be a grievable subject too, and in a world where only certain classes of people are allowed to show and feel emotion, the affect breaking through disrupts this whole system.

158 The US notoriously has some of the worst conditions for prisoners in the first world already. The abuse of socially forgotten or targeted bodies within these spaces continues to be a major problem that has seemingly remained unaddressed, despite the publicity of human rights atrocities in the US in general. The nation, the empire, as it was portrayed in Britain and the commonwealth during the period studied within this research project continues to claim its own victimhood and innocence as it proliferates violence around the globe. The issue with the camps (prisons, refugee camps, immigrant detainment centers, and some mental hospitals), as at Richmond, is that they are hidden in plain sight, away from the public consciousness. They do not garner much news attention, and the notion of criminality and bad character has been in the zeitgeist so long by now that many people believe they belong there and whatever torture they receive, it is well deserved. We must do better, and I hope that my research can help generate more interest in the contemporary bioethical debates needing to occur.
have, often defining their behavior as led by individualism, racism, and violence towards the land for life. The heart of that desire to understand echoed in my mind throughout the research and writing for this dissertation. It helps to know we are not alone in this fight against greed, and we never have been. We are truly working against hundreds of years of indoctrination and effective segregation of people from their life ways, the use and abuse of disempowered people in further colonial and land violence, and a lack of interest in education.

The colonial fixation on teeth by the US and the UK remains inextricably with views of embodiment, gender, class, and race. At this point in time (summer of 2023), the body positivity movement still has not fully addressed teeth and how the desire to change our teeth to increase our body’s cultural capital is still highly valued. The UK and the US still culturally fixates on the “smile” and forcing others to smile performatively (think Metoo movement) despite the various cultures and their views of the importance of keeping teeth private. The teeth are intimate, emotional, and powerful spaces of analysis.

Necropolitics is with us throughout every facet of contemporary life in the US and increasingly in the UK after Brexit. It is especially with us at the dentist, as one writer indicates about their terror of going to the modern dentist and how it deeply disturbed their understanding of life and affected their psychology for weeks to come:

“Thus I told myself a psychological story, that my close encounter with the dentist must have reminded me that I was literally getting long in the tooth. And this concrete affirmation of a well-worn metaphor for mortality must have triggered a period of rational pessimism as I calculated how much longer I might have to live. To paraphrase my self-diagnosis and put it another way: I became momentarily depressed because I thought about the implications of my root canal surgery. My mental state was a reflection or meditation on my physical state, rather than directly caused by my physical state.\textsuperscript{159}"

This cognitive disturbance from a man contemplating his dentist appointment shows how linked teeth are to death in our unconscious still. Although the biopolitics and necropolitics surrounding teeth and oral space should be itself getting “long in the tooth,” it has not really left us and is instead becoming intensively commodified. Perhaps folks are no longer purchasing teeth that they know are from dead people to replace their own, but the reliance on this ideal of ‘perfect white teeth,’ originally fetishized and marketed from the bodies of Black and brown people from around the world, is part of the ongoing violence of necropolitical life. If you are not viewed as having an attractive affect and therefore as having social capitol, you are more likely not to have more negative medical, social, and economic consequences projected onto you and your body by the state.

The US and the UK still fetishize and place value on certain physical characteristics from “others” but especially when the “others” are physically absent. Teeth are one of the dissected spaces of colonization that are yet very under examined. How we still view the body as property and as land-commodity. The still yet unstudied logics underpinning constructions of whiteness and its connection to capitalism needs to be a focus in our field as we attempt to unsettle what it means to be the inheritors of these unconscious and dehumanizing affects.

As Cedric Robinson asserts in the 1980’s, “in America, the accommodation of Western historical consciousness to racial ideologies created a particular chain of social misperceptions and historical distortions that endured into the present century. [...] This intellectual grounding came to absorb the past of those peopling America as well as their present. [...] John Brown, closer to the artisanal origins associated with English working-class radicalism a quarter of a century earlier, was a suggestion of a certain strata not entirely
mesmerized by the still novel variant of Western hierarchical systems” (76). The topics addressed within this dissertation are still yet relevant today, perhaps more than they have been for a while, because of the Covid-19 pandemic and because of the climate crisis and insistence by extractive imperialists on continuing to find new “frontiers” and sacrifice zones for manufacturing. From the lithium mines in Chile, to the gold prospecting and mining that has started up again over the past 5 years in the Black Hills and in Northern Ireland, to the expanded use of prison labor, affective orality and the issues raised with the social, economic, and biopolitical structures of extractive capitalism are becoming increasingly violent again.

There is not very much left to enclose, so the last great forests that we all rely on to clean our planet’s air are being clear cut, including the Amazon rainforest. Water and land protectors continue to have state sponsored violence against them escalated, and as of March 2023, especially in the time of Covid-19, the heavily policed uprisings that occurred after George Floyd’s public murder, and further politicization of oral space. From school shootings, public murders by police of Black community members going about their days to the targeting of anti-fascist and environmental organizers, such as the recent killing of Manuel Terán in Georgia as he protested the clear cutting of an old growth forest where a massive “Cop City” is scheduled to be built, we (working-class residents of the US) are certainly closer to Homo Sacre than ever within our society.

Displays of Achille Mbembe’s “necropolitics” and the crystallization of rising power and coherence on the right is everywhere, every day in the US. The European and Anglo-Imperialist foundations of the institutions of the country are cracking and engulfing any hope of democracy that once was had. The time for liberal and neoliberal placating has come to an
end, and anyone not actively fighting with words or actions becomes complicit in the mass public death and use of prison labor to control the proletariat through threat of death. At the very time of crisis for capitalism and the health of the land that supports us, we are more limited in fighting it than ever because of modern technology, such as AI, police robotics, and billions of dollars of militarization of US police forces. They want to make sure that we have a more difficult time expressing affective orality, biting back. They want to make sure we cannot breathe.

Biopolitics, Agamben’s notion of The Camp, and Necropolitics pervades the US prison system and the rest of our highly policed society through abuse of labor, extreme use of surveillance and strategies that make the panopticon look like heaven, and through making means of bettering one’s position economically impossible. The Massachusetts Bill HD. 3822 attempts to utilize the space of the camp and the position of prisoners as bare life and exploited labor in the US by attempting to persuade prisoners to lessen their sentence through organ donation and bone marrow surgeries. However, the bill also states that incarcerated and medically exploited people (often Black or in targeted neighborhoods where poverty and environmental racism are rampant, working class, and marginalized in the first place), really don’t get that much time shaved off their sentence for painful and invasive medical procedures. The bill language states that “the Program shall allow eligible incarcerated individuals to gain not less than 60 and not more than 365-day reduction in the length of their committed sentence in Department of Corrections facilities” (2). Not less than 60 days is not much incentive, unless the experience of the prison is made even worse; therefore, not only does this bill continue a legacy of “civilization’s” reliance on the space of the camp but it
also creates an incentive to make prisons worse than they already are, to make them even less comfortable.

The various levels of psychic symbolism of the teeth continue to assert themselves in problematic ways and have yet to be fully interrogated in a meaningful way. Their signifiers include the physical, tangible, teeth, the teeth as sublime objects, the teeth as an economic commodity, the teeth as spiritual signifiers of truth, the teeth as spiritual signifiers of death, pain, strength, and force of will. Their language signs come in idioms like “never look a gift horse in the mouth,” saying someone is getting “long in the tooth” to signify visible aging or “straight from the horse’s mouth” to avoid hearing half-truths, getting through “by the skin of one’s teeth” to show tenacity, “fighting tooth and nail” with the only weapons you have left, to “lie through your teeth” (also a reflection of poor character), if something produces fear it “sets your teeth on edge” and if you are struggling and get another blow or betrayal we call it getting “kicked in the teeth.” I’ve heard the phrase “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” used to justify revenge or dissuade people from the logic of revenge. Additionally, if we “have a sweet tooth” we blame our teeth for our sugar cravings. Dental bills and modern procedures are anything but sweet, however. Dentistry is quite similar in some ways to what it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, including some of the racism and sexism that pervades the profession itself.

Beyond any specific field, contemporary US bioethics are stunted similarly to that include the recent attempts by Texas and other conservative states to overturn ICWA (the Indian Child Welfare Act) through the US Supreme Court, Massachusetts bill HD. 3822 proposed and accepted in February 2023, continued nonconsensual medical testing and forced infertility in Guantanamo Bay, Immigration and Ice detention centers in New Mexico
and around the country, and a large variety of private extractive industries threatening Native sovereignty in multiple states and counties. In the ICWA battle, non-Indigenous adoptive parents want the right to take Native children away from their tribal communities and raise them as non-tribal people, which has historically led to isolation, suicide, depression, and creates extra conditions for racism and abuse to occur\textsuperscript{160}. Although ICWA was recently preserved, the fact that this law was targeted at a time when women and queer people’s bodily autonomy is being actively threatened around the world.

Teeth and their representative values of purity or high character are more than a nineteenth century problem. It is our problem now. \textsuperscript{161}

While working-class patients in many locations are receiving more ethical treatment than they were at Richmond and other industry hospitals in the nineteenth century. However,

\textsuperscript{160} Many generations of Native children have been neglected or abused due to their position within adoption, including the author jaye simpson, who I quote in epigraphs to most of my dissertation chapters. These quotes are treasures because they are concise reminders of what we need to understand about the harmful psychic play surrounding bodies, mouths, and teeth from the “logics of white possession,” including the effect those logics have on children stolen from their families. The theft of Native children has left a traumatic legacy in the US for many people, including multiple people in my own family. For example, my sister in-law’s grandmother tied to her mother’s waist for the first 10 years of her life because she was so terrified that she would get taken in the night and forced into a settler adoption or a boarding school, which frequently happened when she was a child. We need to understand the gravity of this and other bills that are currently passing all around the nation which affect consent, bodily autonomy, and target marginalized people.

\textsuperscript{161} “Visagism” is one example of the continuity of eugenicist ideas from dental history that continue today. Recently reintroduced under a new name, the practice of creating associations about someone’s character, temperament, or personality through the shape of their teeth has been recently studied and popularized in India since 2015. In an article titled “Correlation between Dentofacial Esthetics and Mental Temperament: A Clinical Photographic Analysis Using Visagism,” the authors state that “Visagism,” a proposed novel concept, makes it possible for the patients to express the desirable emotions and personality traits, through their smile. According to this concept, clinicians can design a smile that blends with the patient's physical appearance, personality, and desires” (83). The construct of Visagism is recent and is primarily used today just as it was in the Victorian period- for dentists to sell a specific association of trustworthiness, diplomacy, or other personality traits that are grouped together as observable by very few photographic and dental studies and then distributed in popular culture outlets such as YouTube videos. In fact, the conclusion of the “Correlation” study finds that “although the concept of combining the principles of smile design and mental temperaments through visagism is an appreciable idea, it lacks a practical approach to create a personalized smile for each patient by including mental temperaments at present stage” (85). Many of the citations that come up on UNM databases of this term as of Jan 2023 were published in 2018, and come with a warning from EBSCO host, such as an article entitled “Assessment of Association Between Tooth Morphology and Psychology,” which says that EBSCO cannot verify the validity of this source. This study uses terms to describe dental patterns such as “phlegmatic” or melancholic and risks taking us back into the medical era of belief in the medieval Humors of the body, which was inherently sexist and did not use the same standards for medical research currently established. As much as the Victorian era supported this type of pseudo-scientific pursuit, it seems that the field of “aesthetic” or cosmetic dentistry is potentially influenced by these types of claims. While it may make it easier for them to sell a product that seems to be one thing (new shape or position of teeth, veneers, etc.), but is selling a much more deeply embedded and important cultural value to many who would pursue cosmetic dental surgeries for themselves (e.g.: success, rationality, and moderation), these studies are an alarming resurgence of a Victorian era trend.
we still have not progressed enough with medical and patient interactions, and that
dehumanization in the medical field is still rampant. How can we, through researching
medicine in the nineteenth century, encourage providers today to look past the objectification
of the body? A recent story from Robert Ray Jr, who speaks to the harassment during his
medical residency at Lehigh Valley Health because of racism from colleagues and medical
staff, says he was prepared for racism from patients, but was shocked to experience such high
levels of racial bias and violence from other physicians. He says, “I was not only the only
black person in my class but also only the second black person to finish the program since its
inception almost 20 years ago. […] What I was not prepared for was that most of the racism I
was to experience would come, instead, from my own colleagues.” His experience
How can we change medical racism if it is so baked into the practice of medicine, and the training
that the most high-level doctors are receiving is extremely biased? Additionally, are we really
dealing with the historical and contemporary reality of the ways in which medical racism is
blatantly employed to further marginalize the poor and working classes, Black people, fat
people, prisoners, unsheltered people, trans people, survivors of sexual violence, and
immigrants? There are camps all over this world which capitalism and modernity continually
relies on, including immigrant and refugee camps in the US, in Ireland’s Direct Provision
Program, etc. People are put into these camps and campaigned against as if they are enemies
of the state, even though they are often at their most vulnerable. They are ridiculed in the

162 Ray Jr., Robert. “Racism in Medical Education: An Unfortunately Ending to my Time at Lehigh Valley Health Network.” June 15th, 2023. https://rrayjr.blog/?fbclid=PAAbH8N4uobbHMTRMCSnNJOB_gQXo_oBu4j_jv56braU2zvPQ0f0vQfJGo_aem_th_Aeq2R1tXqSoNhv7MFbAkNurhqQNqeAd-wpA9jvU2mAUoMjgfKQFoc8m-3H2xYdWA%2F
163 Sabrina Strings has argued that fatphobia only began with Sara Baartman and anti-Blackness in their text Fearing the Black Body, stating: “Sara was the first Khoikhoi to complete a successful run through England. The infamy of her physique would only increase in the coming years when she made her way to Paris. It was there that she would encounter Georges Cuvier, the man responsible for turning Sara into an internationally recognized totem of racial and sexual savagery. Her “excess” fat was used as one sign of her primitivity” (93). It was at this point, Strings argues, that the medicalization of fatness as racially unacceptable for those trying to become “white” or those who were supposed to be marked with Euro-centric features of ‘racial superiority’ and that Black bodies were viewed as medically “savage.”
news for having needs, by news stations owned by the same families. Poor people are still painted by nationalists as a burden to society if only because their existence brings the fantasy of capitalism’s success into question. How are we to explicate the experiences of nineteenth century medical patients who were entirely subaltern in some ways because of their class position, without projecting our contemporary value systems and feelings onto the experiences of the past?

Over four years ago, I edited a travel blog piece for my friend Vera, who documented her friend’s “medical tourism” in Zagreb because he could not afford dental care in the US. In “Zagreb Story,” the first lines read:

“This story is about teeth.
This story is about complicated, stained, and broken teeth.
This is the story of my friend Carl’s teeth, teeth that stirred a village and sent us halfway across the globe.”

As a photographer, Vera sees how many people view their own embodiment, their insecurities about various parts of their embodied experience, and how people smile or refuse to smile because of insecurities about their teeth. Carl, the subject of this story, had such a classist experience with American dentistry that he had to fundraise and then travel to a faraway land to be able to afford necessary dental surgery and to be treated as a person and a patient, despite his poverty and lack of lifelong dental care.

My sister-in-law, who has given me permission to tell this story and quote her in my dissertation, is Lakota and a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. Her experiences with dentistry and medical racism regarding how her mouth and teeth are treated by white settlers is in no way unique- according to her, she knows many people who have experienced

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165 While I have written this over multiple conversations where permission was offered, my most recent talk with her where many of the quotes come from occurred Jun 18th, 2023, at 7:04PM
far worse pain and abuse. However, her story has been part of my motivation in writing this
dissertation because although I started the research a couple of years before we met, hearing
her experience confirmed my worst fears about what I assumed to be true.

She had a bunch of her teeth pulled out while pregnant. It was painful, and the dentist
didn’t use anesthesia, just a local shot. There was only one doctor in town who would work
with Medicaid, and he was rough with her, had little bedside manner, and didn’t warn her of
the likely infection that would or give her antibiotics to take if it did occur, so she ended up
with a swollen face in Oyate (formerly Sioux San) hospital at 2am to get it taken care of. He
told her that he pulls a lot of teeth in this way- she said he was fast about it. She recently said:

When I went to that doctor on East North Street and pulled out my 4 wisdom teeth, he
asked me “have you ever been to a dentist before?” In a rude way And then informed
me that I wouldn’t be getting anesthesia, just a couple of Novocain shots. I told him it
really hurt, and the nurse was holding my hand looking worried. That night, I had a
fever of 104 and was told at urgent care that he should have given me an antibiotic or
surgery wash, because I have RA and was pregnant. But he didn’t, so I had a
dangerous infection that could have killed my child.

Unfortunately, this experience was not her first or last time with medical racism at the
dentist. Throughout her experience with IHS\textsuperscript{166} and dentists in the area are “very
inconsiderate and quick to assume that you are from the rez and don’t know how to eat, but
they don’t understand our trauma and poverty and they don’t understand the complicated
health issues we have because of these things\textsuperscript{167}.” She says that dentists in Rapid City are
often rude and violently racist to their Native patients. Overall, she says her experience with
dental care in a segregated border town has “never been great. It’s often traumatic. We need
to have dentists that understand the body and our mouths, and who are also not racist.”

\textsuperscript{166} Stands for Indian Health Services

\textsuperscript{167} But even with the IHS doctors, they will help the national guard people before you- they only clean the top teeth, and they don’t do a thorough job. Then they insult us.
told me that she “had a root canal done at 17 and had incredible pain,” because the procedure was not done right, she had to have 4 other teeth removed and a bridge put in” her mouth. Her current dentist told her she has the “mouth of the 90-year-old” and has chronic dry mouth. He’s the best dentist she’s ever had because he does not cause her additional pain but still comments on her diet and her genetics.

Having multiple wisdom teeth pulled without anesthesia is not an experience that anyone wants to have. Incurring multiple severe infections because your dentist is ignoring your medical needs is something that should never happen. With the most vulnerable people on Medicaid, they are more likely to have to have their teeth pulled without anesthesia. Additionally, the dentist who pulled her wisdom teeth kept sexually harassing her. He was calling her at 11PM and later for a few months after the procedure “just to talk” and would leave her voicemails when drunk. It was disturbing that he treated her as a sexual object after causing her bodily harm. She said she made a report on him to the Dental Association of South Dakota, and was just told that “yeah, we get a lot of complaints about him,” but has not seen his practice close. Native women in Rapid City are familiar with this type of discrimination and harassment, and there is only legal justice for this malpractice in rare cases. For my sister-in-law, her teeth carry the affects of this experience and the strength of her persistence despite institutional and social violence.

I often say that “whiteness” is anything that does not threaten the state, and I believe this to be true because of my readings of Victorian texts. This is unfortunately still our

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168 In one case where an HIS dentist was fired for his racism, he compared one of her relatives to an African slave biting down on a leather belt while being beaten. He apparently told her it looks like her tooth had been worn down like she was chewing on a leather strap- he said, “what have you been doing to your teeth, chewing on a leather strap?” He was immediately fired after this was disclosed to the manager, but this person was also an employee of IHS who made the report and they had to work together for a time, so there were additional federal laws in place governing that decision.
situation in today’s contemporary global capitalist society, where the “protestant work ethic” is used in a Malthusian way to shame the poor, in addition to brown and Black people portrayed as lazy, as useless, and even as dangerous and animalistic. Very clearly, racism is rampant in our structures and society on all levels but is certainly present and strongly felt within the oral space. We are not escaped from Victorian forms of violence.

In April 2020, Dr. Fauci and news outlets like the New Yorker\textsuperscript{169} began reporting that Black, Indigenous, and low income communities were more affected by death and serious outcomes of Covid-19, and within the following weeks the anti-mask movement exploded. News began to break of white supremacist and alt-right organizers protesting masks around the US, then around the world. Being vocally anti-mask quickly became a dog whistle to participate in active biopolitical warfare against targeted groups (as shown also by an increase in violent attacks against Black, Asian, Indigenous, Jewish and queer people). Simultaneously, empathy was increasingly ridiculed and derided, with vocal expressions of ones “right” to oppress and even kill others for reasons of ‘freedom,’ also known as unfettered power. Protesters openly mocked the idea that people other than themselves deserved safety, comfort, or freedom of movement, using dehumanizing language, comparing targeted groups to animals, and invoking a long history of violence against Black people through masks used in slavery, etc. Anti-mask protests frequently included heavily racist undertones and imagery. Anti-mask protesters were so defensive when their teeth and mouths are covered similarly to the people they are attempting to objectify and control. The

\textsuperscript{169}https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/the-black-plague
conscious and unconscious interactions with the echoes of British oral culture are severely damaging, but also reflect broader colonial values.\textsuperscript{170,171}

Teeth are evocative, emotional, sexual, personal, elemental, and spiritual, they are strong, they last longer than our bodies last, and so do the affects they create. They “tell their own story.”\textsuperscript{172}

Emma Dabiri, a Black and Irish writer and scholar activist living in London. In Dabiri’s text \textit{What White People Can Do Next, from Allyship to Coalition}, she offers historical specificity for

\textsuperscript{170} When I say “broader cultural values” I am referring to the way that the commodification of land into resources alone has become so normalized, peoples’ body parts valued over their whole person, all leads into further extraction for the wealthy (in land- resources but also in usage of the living world, both the tangible bodies of living beings and their valued parts, but also the body as immaterial object of cultural obsession). Destructivism goes along with extractivism. The far right in the US want to kill, kill, destroy, not only their supposed enemies but also the idea of human connection, of empathy, of spirit, and themselves. Bumper stickers saying, “I’ll burn as much fuel as I want” and “the earth is not my mother” have been appearing in the middle part of the US with increasing frequency the past 7 years. In a time when the lack of land-relationship of settler colonialism has the most visible consequences and man-made disasters, it becomes clearer and clearer that “god’s will” is a self-destructing prophecy. Many proponents of extractivism and land violence seem to have an explicit desire to usher in the apocalypse.

\textsuperscript{172} “Advertisement.” \textit{Nash’s and Pall Mall Magazine, Oct.1914-Apr.1927}, vol. 74, no. 378, 1924, pp. 70. This shows a young woman smiling in the mirror, but the images of tooth brushing show that the teeth brushed are dentures. This is apparently because, according to both a taxi driver and my old host mother from my studying abroad in London during college, most middle class young women received a full removal of all teeth and replacement with dentures upon their 16th birthday or before their wedding to “avoid future pain” according to her, but also for her husband to avoid future costs associated with her dental care (discussions with them happened in 2021, corroborated via various testimonies on the internet- see https://www.reddit.com/r/history/comments/ugyegi/how_true_is_this_claim_about_victorian_england/ )
cohesion-building across racial specificity and segregationist or identity-based tendencies, stating that “Race is one of the most powerful, seductive, and enduring myths of the last four centuries as a ‘meme’ its success is unrivaled. [...] The concept of a ‘white race’ and a ‘black race’ is not something that exists in nature; on the contrary, it is a socially engineered concept invented with a very specific intention in mind. That intention was racism. Until we understand this beginning, there will be no happy ending. Until we come up with a convincing counter-narrative we are unlikely to achieve the anti-racist world we claim to desire” (27). In the first 40 pages of their text, Dabiri specifically and persuasively argues for the power of coalition building instead of allyship, or of meeting where there is a common goal and organizing around that common goal as opposed to staying within colonially defined identity categories. She refers to the White Panthers and powerful coalitions of the 20th century which threaten the state that would wish to separate people by race, class, religion, or other factors. Dabiri’s text further motivated me in my work in its last year because as someone who grew up in a segregated society and who has a deep concern for but also coalition goals and overlap of struggle with the Lakota community in my hometown\textsuperscript{173}, I

\textsuperscript{173} In 2014, I moved from Seattle to my parent’s home in South Dakota with great foreboding and depression to help resist the construction of the KXL pipeline. In July of 2015, I met my current friend Chas Jewett (Mni Conjou Lakota) at a friend’s birthday party wearing a No KXL through Treaty Lands t-shirt. I joined her and one Lakota elder that week in a school room to plan an action in downtown Rapid City to raise awareness and gain support alongside the Dakota Rural Action (DRA). The next week, we constructed a large black snake and marched downtown with about 3 organizers from DRA, Chas, me, and 4 Lakota children who Chas invited to join us at one stop, passing out fliers and talking with anyone who would listen. The snake sat atop our heads, and we had our arms lifted as we walked, following the footsteps in front of us. Later that month, we took a bus to Pierre with some of the DRA folks and mostly elders from AIM (the American Indian Movement) who braided our hair with sweetgrass oil and sage oil, and who told me to stand away from the drum at the water ceremony because I was on my moon. This group of organizers arrived, joining hundreds of Lakota water protectors and hundreds of settler ranchers. We marched across the bridge and towards the water to perform the ceremony. It was the first time in my life that I had seen that many people outside in South Dakota, and it was also the first time that I had witnessed so many Native and non-Native people together in one location, working in collaboration over a shared cause. It changed my life, giving me hope and showing me that I had returned home for a purpose. Over the next year and a half, I organized with Chas and water protectors who would later be an unsung base for the success of the Oceti Sakowin and Red Warrior camps at Standing Rock to resist the Dakota Access Pipeline movement. Chas, who encouraged me to return to school in 2016, had spoken with me about potentially returning at the beginning of the summer to join the camps and help her organize, but later told me that I had to get a degree because “we need smart people in our movements” and encouraged my writing. I had previously helped write grant language for a group that I had helped with called the Community
hold a deep and sustained interest in building connected overlap of struggle and of fighting side by side with Native people. Rather than being tangential to my historical research, I have found that my reflections from the experience of organizing with both Lakota and Northern Irish water protectors has significantly informed my focus in this dissertation project and in my work in general. It has also allowed me to learn from and listen to two different groups who both experience ongoing colonialism and resource extraction.

My interest in using Victorian studies for addressing contemporary race and gender politics will not fade if the much-needed move towards “decolonial” and “undisciplining” work being advocated for within Victorian studies eventually does. Even though I have not

Conversations. Chas was one of the founders of the group that was led and facilitated by Native women to desegregate Rapid City, decrease police violence towards Lakota people, and both envision and build a shared community. Since that time, it has been co-opted by neoliberals who have organized around capitalist business interests and have been unwelcoming to Chas and other founders. It has also unfortunately become ineffective at supporting the Native community in Rapid City and now assists businesses in the city with pretending to be less racist. Clearly, Standing Rock was extremely successful and reached international media outlets. In 2018, Chas took me with her to Ireland where she had been invited by environmental organizers to present on and do workshops relating to their own campaigns and methodology, she had utilized to help organize the Standing Rock resistance and KXL resistance. She took me, in part, because my dog had just died and she felt sorry for me, and in part because I had been a good note-taker in the Conversations, and she wanted a witness to the trip. We were discussing co-writing a book entitled “7 ways to Organize and Decolonize” based on the trip and our experiences (mostly based on Chas’ 30+ years of environmental organizing as an Indigenous woman) which never came to fruition. That trip also changed my life. As an undergraduate, I had not studied Ireland at all. In graduate school, I had not been able to take a class with Dr. Mary Power and had yet to take a class with my now beloved committee member Sarah Townsend. Instead, I went into the trip blindly. Because I was an unknown guest, I was unaware of our location day by day, the schedule of the trip, or the differences in experience with colonialism, capitalism, and racialization.

In 2021 after completing all the archival research that I could give the parameters of lockdown and quarantining of materials, I met on an outdoor patio to have lunch with Lynda Sullivan and James Orr, two Northern Irish environmental activists who I had met along with Chas in 2018. We had all recently participated in a walk of protest from the Sperrins to Stormant, the parliamentary capitol of Northern Ireland, because the Green Party candidate Eamon Ryan had sold Ireland off to welcome more gold prospecting in the North and in the Republic of Ireland. In 2018, when we visited the GPO, Greencastle People’s Office protest camp in the Sperrin’s that was modeled after the Oceti Sakowin camp at Standing Rock during the NoDapl actions in the summer and fall of 2016, Chas told the organizers of that camp that if they ever needed physical solidarity, she would coordinate to bring a bunch of warriors from Standing Rock over to help confront the mining companies. When I was on the protest walk, multiple people came up to me and asked when Chas was bringing warriors over to help them fight the mines. I was wondering if James and Lynda, who were at that time both working for a large NGO, would be able to help us facilitate this type of visit from a large group. We facetimed Chas, and that is where the seeds of Making Relatives Ireland began. The movement has grown and matured, and I ended up giving critiques last year when the initial trip that was meant to include 21 water walkers and water protectors who were supposed to arrive in late July was cancelled due to Covid concerns (in part because I caught covid travelling there at the beginning of the summer to complete my research). One of my critiques was that Irish folks had their own power and their own history of experiences with colonization to draw upon and should express this history as part of their resistance strategy. They are also water protectors fighting for their lives and have been part of a long legacy resisting colonialism. I shared that although Standing Rock was very prominent, there were many other resistance movements around the world and that at times, Irish reliance on comparison with social movements such as the Civil Rights movement and Standing Rock at times enters into uncomfortable centering of Ireland and decentering Black and Indigenous people who are dealing with this violence but who additionally deal with skin color racialization and have access to European economic structures. What Glen Coulard terms the “politics of recognition” has largely influenced this identification, which is part of the need to be heard and understood by the state as a certain identity, but Irish people identify now as water protectors and with their own cultural epistemologies and movement praxis relating to the land. Chas and two other Lakota water protectors completed a successful visit in late May 2023 and the Ikidowin theatre group from Minneapolis will visit in mid-June of 2023 to further repair and build solidarity networks, strengthen historical kinship ties, and share strategies and ceremonies around water and water protection.
always been able to express myself as clearly, quickly, and concisely as academia at times demands, I hope that I can continue building on the research that I was able to start for this dissertation and continue to try and hear voices from history and what they are still trying to tell us. I firmly believe our future depends on many people finally listening to and hearing them. It is incredibly time-consuming and difficult to do this work, but it is so necessary for a real understanding of our past, present, and future realities and possibilities. As Sarah Hernandez says in her text about the Oceti Sakowin Literary Tradition, both white settlers and Native people are colonized. Instead of denying that process has occurred, she suggests that as scholars and people need to accept that our understanding is skewed and to make increasing efforts to decolonize ourselves and our understandings of colonial history, and to change focus to condemning settler violence (6) There are many significant contributions coming out as attempts to decolonize what our understandings are of history.
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Simpson, jaye. it was never going to be ok. Nightwood Editions, 2021.


“The Humanizing of the Poor Law.” *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, Saturday, March 19, p. 3. 1904.


Wicapewastewin, Good Star Woman. “A Sioux Woman's Account of the Uprising in Minnesota.” Translated by and Transcribed by Frances Densmore, 1934.


PERSONAL AS THEORETICAL

As a mixed-heritage settler scholar writing about colonization, it is important to acknowledge that have a complicated position. I write this essay from the traditional territories of the Tiwa and Pueblo people currently called Albuquerque, New Mexico. In the tradition of feminist self-positioning, I will offer context about who I am in relation to this topic, because it both has affected me, and I have imparted my experiences onto it. These texts and images have at times created an intense embodied and affective reaction in me. I have had my throat ache, have vomited, have been unable to eat, and have become triggered or dissociated during this research because of its intensity and because of my personal experiences with this topic.

After having a panic attack while looking at the images I saw on a computer screen at UCD in the summer of 2021, that ended up being a large portion of my chapter 6 about Richmond Hospital, I had to reflect more on the ways in which my own affective orality and teeth have been sites of violence. I had been waiting to see the images since speaking with a librarian in Edinburgh who gave me a tip about this unadvertised collection in Dublin. I had waited for re-opening and flown to Dublin to view this collection before flying out of the country and back to the US. I had not expected these images to affect me in the way they did. I didn’t know what I assumed that nineteenth century medical imagery would look like, but they took my breath away and took me to a place of fear. I felt nauseous. My throat ached. I felt like I couldn’t breathe. In the pictures of the female patients with the oral tumor, I saw myself, as a child, as an adult, and was overwhelmed with memories of being a child in various hospitals, being looked at and treated as an object.

Although I tried to avoid it for many years, much of my life has been defined by my own oral space and people’s invasion of it. As a child, I had strep throat very commonly, and had to get my tonsils removed. At least one has grown back and gets a lot of comments because the other one is gone and will never grow back since I’m missing half of my throat.

Here is a photo of my throat taken by my dentist to present on to others in their profession for reference (in part because of the excitement and intrigue about my cancer scar). I have chosen to share it as part of my reclamation of this personal space for my own research instead of just for the careers of other people:

Images of Throat Scar

I now ask for female dentists. All dentists are interested in my throat, and many of my medical providers have asked me if they could take photos of my throat.

When I was in third grade, I remember coming back from the hospital to another student calling me “Cancer girl.” This was not because my astrological placement is in Cancer, which likely nobody would have thought about in my South Dakota elementary school in the 1990’s, but it was because I had missed a few months of school that year to have a cancerous tumor.
removed from my throat. My family and I had to travel to Denver and go through countless appointments and then about four operations, for blood draws, MRI’s, and CT scans. At the University Hospital, we at times had at least 30 people in a room, my parents pushed to the back of the room, my mouth wide open for a very long time so that all the interns could take turns staring into my open throat and taking notes.

After the tumor was removed, I was in the hospital for almost a month as the scar healed and tests were run around the world. Somehow, my original IV was left in my hand the entire time and was very painful to remove. The removal of the feeding tube that had a month’s worth of lining growing around it like moss was slow and disgusting. As they slid it through my nose as they removed it, finally, and the slimy tube tickled my throat and nauseated me, one of the nurses made a comment that I should have already had multiple changes both to the IV and the feeding tube. However, she said that I had really nice teeth and that they would be better preserved by the presence of my feeding tube. Not surprisingly, for most of my life after this experience, I couldn’t enter hospitals without panic, dissociation, lightheadedness, and psychosomatic symptoms such as my left hand going numb or hurting where my IV had been for so long during my experience after cancer surgery. Looking back, I realize that this was not the only space where my mouth, throat, or teeth had been objectified.

What felt like hundreds of medical professionals and medical interns after this experience have taken turns gawking into my freakshow mouth (it was a rare type of tumor with an even rarer surgical intervention). They tried to diagnose and would take turns poking, biopsing, and making a spectacle of my mouth for each other’s pleasure and excitement. I say pleasure because I cannot even hold on both hands the number of doctors who seem to forget that I am a person when they see the result of my childhood trauma. It is as if they have gotten a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see something that nobody else would see. If I am asked to say “ah,” I immediately dissociate and turn into that 10-year-old child, whose mouth is a spectacle for the world and whose parents are told by the experts that they cannot save her from this suffering.

As I was giving a talk in Ireland in 2022 against the practice of mining and its effect on communities, I realized that the cause of my tumor, noted as “exposure to high levels of radiation” as the closest guess of the medical community, was likely caused because of the toxicity of mining runoff into the waters of the Black Hills. There has been consistent gold mining since the Homestake Mine opened in the 1870’s in Lead and Deadwood, and as recently as 2014, students at the School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City had detected massive levels of mercury, uranium, and selenium poisoning in the places that I grew up going to all the time. I likely drank this contaminated water, and likely received cancer from that water with high radiation levels most likely because of extractivism and ongoing colonialism in the Black Hills.

As someone who was objectified through my mouth and teeth throughout my experience with childhood oral cancer, this topic was a feeling and an instinct within my nervous system before it was a dissertation research topic. These memories that are in my body are also embodied and echoed within the literature I was reading, both because of my relationship to them, but also because of what they spoke and could not speak. I relate to the feeling of tension, attempted control, the excited and exploitative medical gaze, and gawking that many of the people and characters discussed in the dissertation experience. I relate to having my gaping mouth stared into excitedly by surgeons and their medical students for what felt like hours, feeling a psychic pain and violation that I was unable to express until doing this research. I hope that this dissertation can be the start to healing for me and hopefully some other folks.

It also became clear to me that this personal experience was likely part of why this topic stuck so much in my mind, and why I’ve felt drawn to researching this meaning of teeth and the politics of oral space from my past. This additionally has added extra weight and intensity to the use of Dian Million’s “felt theory,” since my own various oral and dental traumas and attempts from others to control my orality have been part of my life for most of my memory. I also have noticed my own mouth create meanings for other people that I did not intend, especially in medical and dental settings. I have seen it bizarrely interpreted as a site for others to read my nation, class, and potential sexual behavior. I have been told I have beautiful lips by a leery dentist while my mouth was being held open to fill a cavity. The more I’ve researched about and talked with others about my topic, the more stories I hear from many women and femme folks about why this topic is important to them, and how their orality has been objectified and attacked as well.

Mouths are both a public and private space, and I have noticed that people feel free offering commentary on them. Perhaps this is especially true for the mouths of women (think “smile more” controversy) or people who are oppressed because their silence will make things easier to control. Those who are always seen as the troublemakers are the ones whose mouths are silenced, closed, and violated. So many women keep their mouths shut due to fear of retaliation— I would like not to be one of those people, but there is often no other safe option.

I was always a troublemaker, always had a strong sense of justice. This was in part because of my grandfather Bill Groethe (one of the OG antifascist people in my life along with many of his siblings), but it was also based on my neurodivergence and fixation on right versus wrong. I climbed a pen at that rodeo where a man was beating a horse to muscle and blood when
I was 7 and jumped on his back, beating him over the head. None of the adults in the room seemed to be listening to my screams or willing to act.

I grew up in a violent, segregated place. My entire life, I have longed for a connection between two disparate groups, for some understanding or attempt at understanding from white people in Rapid City about the presence of racism and their participation in it. I have recognized, as my grandfather long recognized, that Lakota people have a common political enemy with us. He taught me that the people who are the most openly racist are also often the most cynical capitalists, they are also the ones whose family members were part of the KKK when my grandfather was growing up, part of how they got their family wealth through land theft and deception of working-class people of all races. My dissertation project comes out of this understanding. My grandpa said almost every day, “it is important to document history, important to pay attention to who people are” and as someone who lived 95 years in the US and saw how and who moved ideas over that period, he shared some of that with me and made me the person I am today.

I became a vegetarian around third grade in protest of the violence I saw around me. Although this was confusing to my family, and I didn’t have the language at the time, I noticed that the ranchers who were racist, sexist, and yelling at my grandpa, threatening his life and calling him an “Indian lover” because of stuff he said on the radio against certain politicians or because of having Lakota people visit with him in his photo shop, were the same people who beat their animals, wives, and probably their kids. I connected their desire for violence instinctually, and I vowed to do anything to thwart them. Although I did not even know the word vegetarian, at that point I thought I would rather starve than have anything to do with them. Other people did not quite understand my mission. My parents did not know what to feed me because everything basically had meat in it on some level, so I ended up eating mostly raw vegetables, macaroni and cheese, bean and cheese burritos, and those are still some of my favorite foods.

I’ve been the beneficiary of braces, so some of my teeth are unnaturally straight, the gap between my front teeth forcibly closed, something I lamented in childhood because of my love of shooting water streams through the tooth gap at various objects and people. The mark of my grandmother, who never had braces but always had that large gap between her teeth as well. My parents worked many jobs to save money for braces and dental care that they either hadn’t needed or had needed or wanted and not been able to afford growing up. My parents were aware that I may be treated somewhat differently with a large space between my front teeth, my father talked about it openly as a liability to my social mobility in the future. They wanted me to fit in, not be discriminated against, and have as many opportunities as possible, which I don’t blame them for. They knew how cruel the world could be and they worked incredibly hard to give me opportunities that they never had. My father has crooked teeth and is very self-conscious about it, so he wanted me to have an opportunity to live without that insecurity.

I will never forget my first visit to England for studying abroad in undergraduate life and realizing that being around many people in London who would not speak to me otherwise were quick to comment on my straight, white teeth. Mine were particularly white during that time and garnered more comments as to their whiteness from strangers on the tube, walking down the street, and in my classes than I had ever experienced previously. This was in 2007. It stood out to me, and it had disturbed me. I often chose to take my lunch break in public places because I was not able to afford to purchase lunch for the entire visit, so the class differences between me and my classmates became ever starker during that trip. In a variety of ways, it was retraumatizing to my existing sensitivity to my own oral space.

Since that time, I also received a dislocated jaw when getting my wisdom teeth pulled out in my last year of undergraduate college (2008). I was not fully anesthetized, so I could tell that the dental surgeons were talking about their wild weekend at a party, and I felt afraid that they were not paying attention to what they were doing. The lack of care for one’s job when it is medical has material consequences on the lives of the patients. As I feared, they permanently caused further damage to my mouth through a dislocated jaw. The injury has caused discomfort, a crookedness of my mouth, neck, and facial pain/headaches for many years, and has also been a source of teasing from friends and family since at times my jaw will click when I eat. It has become increasingly painful and at times has been embarrassing throughout the years, but is mostly addressed now after later trips to the first woman dentist who I ever met in Seattle Washington. Her treatment was covered by my insurance at the time and was very gentle- she made a mold for me to wear at night to start realigning my jaw, which helped me be able to eat better.

Although in some ways I have been interested in this topic since the age of 10, I have been interested in questions of identity, representation, and violence for as long as I can remember. I am from Rapid City, South Dakota, a racially segregated border town near Pine Ridge Indian Reservation with residents primarily from the Oglala Lakota tribe. I came to graduate school when the Standing Rock resistance movement was starting to gain international attention which was led by organizers whom I had grown up around and organized with, but Fall 2016 was not the beginning of the resistance to pipelines in that territory. Beginning years before that, some of those same organizers had been fighting against the KXL.
pipeline. There was also some overlap with a coalition created by Indigenous women such as Chas Jewett (Wakpá Wašté) and Cante Heart (Singacu) against racism and police violence within our home community that I was closely involved with in its initial years.

My first semester in graduate school, Fall 2016, the Dakota Access resistance movement was heavy on my mind and heart. Before coming back to academia, I was organizing with the aforementioned Lakota women in my hometown both as a water protector and in a talking circle entitled the Community Conversations, which at the time was sponsored by the Barbara Schneider Foundation out of Minneapolis. I had a few friends there in the Standing Rock camps even in June 2016, and because of the increasing tension on the ground but major support, I was able to remain in graduate school. My mind was back home in the Dakotas with my organizing mentors (who luckily encouraged me to stay in school since so many folks showed up to assist with the NoDapl movement) and as I began researching and reading in graduate school everything was already indigenized in my mind. I came to Romantic and Victorian literary studies with the lens of contemporary Indigenous politics and found that the influence of Indigenous thought and spiritual practices on Romanticism, the Victorian era causes of current issues in late-stage capitalism were now clear to me. I could not forget what I had learned during my two years organizing with Chas and other Lakota women leaders in South Dakota, even as I read texts from the eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain and Europe in my first semester back in Albuquerque. This is where my interest in researching Critical Indigenous Studies theories, as well as historical Native travelers to England, Ireland, and Europe, land, and biopolitics really blossomed. I started thinking of the Romantics as “wannabes” and understanding how obsessed England was with a variety of tribes, especially Blackfeet and Iroquois. Although when I entered graduate school, I had always planned to study both Native and British literatures, I saw British literature from a very different perspective because of the time spent organizing within a Lakota framework and epistemology before I returned. All these experiences have informed my research, writing, and teaching.

Underlying this research is a personal, political, and justice-oriented desire to find the answers underlying unconscious power dynamics that I’ve witnessed and experienced throughout my life. I wanted to understand why these dynamics are always gendered, the underlying dynamics of colonial violence that still play out in our everyday lived reality. I have held a deep curiosity about race, medicine, and biopolitical impulses, about gender, class, and the treatment of animals, land, and the wasicu illness in which many people from my hometown have, often defining their behavior as led by individualism, racism, and violence towards the land for life. The heart of that desire to understand echoed in my mind throughout the research and writing for this dissertation. It helps to know we are not alone in this fight against greed, and we never have been. We are truly working against hundreds of years of indoctrination and effective segregation of people from their life ways, use of disempowered people in further colonial and land violence, and a lack of interest in education.

As I continued to write, I noticed myself feeling exasperated at the time limitations that have been enforced onto this project and the pervading feeling that although I was able to find some answers that satisfied my curiosity, I now have a million more questions. This work has been deeply rewarding as much as it has frustrated me, and I have shared some of what I’ve learned with movement leaders who I hope will also use this historical context to build new futures. From this experience, I have learned that one way forward is to build coalitions with and listen to people who have been up against Imperialism and its violence for a long time. I hope my work will be a tool for understanding where we are and imagining a future where property is less important than community.

What affects have we in our contemporary society inherited from the traumas of the past? How many unnamed people died or suffered behind every medical advancement? How can we find our voices and protect our orality from commodification and white supremacist colonial values? How can we reclaim Wicape wastewin’s vital role in the image of Myrick eating grass and uplift contemporary Indigenous writers and storytellers? How do we reimagine and recreate the commons? What else in our strategies are we missing to stop further extraction? Truly, all I want is to be able to keep finding answers to these questions.

We are up against so much now (climate change, rapidly intelligent and autonomous AI, the further surveillance of workers and protesters), but when we grapple with the realities of the truth of the past and present, we can understand how to better navigate this time and build a new future using different paradigms.

"LIMITATIONS"

Many of the original ideas that I had developed and materials I have studied or found in archives over the years will need to wait until my future projects. I appreciate the chance to write under the Bilinski Fellowship, but there were additional time limitations inherent to receiving the funding as well. Originally, I had planned to do much more literary analysis than historical analysis. There are so many texts that illustrate the idea of affective orality and the fixation on teeth as metonymy Sexual Purity, Character, Race, Gender, Class, and overlap within the discourse of the “savage” in such a way that would have been rewarding to analyze if there was time and space within this project. This study was performed over six years.
slowly and with limited time, under low-quality material conditions so it is still not complete. Additionally, as noted in the Personal as Theoretical notes, the topic is difficult emotionally because of my personal relationship with it in addition to all of the racist, sexist, and violent content that I needed to read through in order to make the arguments that I end up making. At many times during the project, I felt nauseous, dissociated, or physically unwell in other ways as a direct emotional response to the material.

Because of going through so much archival research and finding almost too much evidence for my topic, I was unable to include it all. Additionally, because of space and formatting constraints, Covid-19 accessibility barriers, permissions discrepancies, and material conditions of teaching when I was not on fellowship funding, I was shorter on time in the archives and to process the information gathered there after the fact than I would have ideally liked to be. In my original dissertation proposal for the Bilinski, I had planned to include voices from more places with British colonial history as part of this study, such as Africa, India, and the Caribbean. While I still have interest and materials about these locations, it became more important to me to focus on the two more specific places that I had done the most thorough research about (Northern US and Irish) and groups who may be interested in or affected by my research who I had the most personal experience with. I made this choice in part because of time constraints, in part to attempt to avoid over-simplifying and flattening the complex histories of colonialism and settler colonialism within various states and regions within each place, and to only give the English archival side of the material consequences and human interactions around the discourse of affective orality.

Many of my initial interest in these places was because of colonial literature and texts, so I felt like I would not be able to honor those complexities well enough to pursue them in order to finish the dissertation alongside the groups that I had already spent years studying. There would have been an imbalance if I had attempted to include my initially pitched chapter on African teeth, for example. The texts in dentistry indicate that Africa and teeth of African people were especially fixated on, but because I could not do the people justice who were mentioned in those dental texts, I felt it would be exploitative and unfair. This leads me to another material issue and limitation of the study. Materially, there are fewer specific people who were “othered” or viewed as “savage” whose voices and quotes were saved in British archives and are readily available. In the future, I would like to spend more time looking in US and additional small British archives to see if there are more items which quote and use Native or Irish peasant voices as co-authors. Part of the problem that I see in British literary studies is the assumption that European authors wrote or came up with ideas on their own. Oftentimes, folks were influenced by Native ideas, cultural practices, and oral or written authors without citing them directly or presenting their work as their own19. While their voices exist in multiplicity, both archivally and in living oral traditions, one limitation of this study has been the lack of ease with which I find so many non-targeted European authors in the British periodical databases. There were other limitations in attempting to assert a contemporary response that was either Irish or Native into my chapters. For example, although I have many individual relationships with Lakota people, most of the Native authors and figures I was researching are not Lakota. I attempted to reach out to Washkamonya’s tribe for information about the oral history surrounding the teeth from within their tribe in 2021, but I did not hear back from them or pursue that line of research or an IRB for interviews with living Paxocan/Iowan representatives given the time constraints and the lack of relationship with this community.

I have attempted to rectify what I see as both looking at available evidence to show how nineteenth century people interacted with and reacted to the discourse of “the savage Washkamonya which in part informs affective orality and its transits. Because of the bias inherent in my own position and in the position of the archives through what Raymond Williams terms “selective tradition” and what Jaques Derrida wrote Archive Fever to redress, I have also chosen to include and intentionally cite Critical Indigenous Studies, Native Studies, and Irish Studies scholars, many of whom are Native themselves or who are Irish, to include as much contemporary counterbalance to the glaring archival gaps within the British “selective tradition.” These scholars and writers are quoted throughout the dissertation, but each chapter begins with what Deheuze would call evidence of an affective “refrain,” from voices descended from communities most affected by British colonialism. This is especially true of jaye simpson, a poet who I quote frequently at the beginning of my chapters, and the politics of Native adoption and the way teeth and orality is targeted that are still so critical for advocates to listen to and hear today. Additionally, most of the archives, except for a brief visit to the Newberry Library in Chicago, were held in England, Scotland, or Ireland (where most of the settler colonial laborers to who moved to the US throughout the 18th and 19th century, whether as indentured servants, merchants, or landlords and aristocratic entrepreneurs, their archives are of course skewed because of their position. I deeply need to visit Minnesota and the archives surrounding Good Woman, since what is available online in the Frances Densmore Archive is very incomplete. However, I realize that because of the bias of the archives and the historical documentation preferred by Indian agents, it is possible that I may not find more information about her even if I do visit, which is extraordinarily frustrating.