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POPULAR IMAGERY AND THE AMERICAN INDIAN:  
A CENTENNIAL VIEW

ROBERT A. TRENNERT

AT the end of the nation's first one hundred years, most Americans believed that the place of the Indian in society had been decided. The centennial celebration produced many predictions on the Indian's fate. Spencer F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution stated that "it is quite reasonable to infer that, by the expiration of a second hundred-year period of the life of the American Republic, the Indian will have entirely ceased to present any distinctive characters, and will be merged into the general population." *Harper's Weekly* reported that "it is easy to foresee, ere another centennial volume is added to our national history, there will be nothing left of the noble red man but a case of flint arrow-heads, stone hatchets, and moth-eaten trappings at the Smithsonian."<sup>1</sup> While most agreed with the idea of the vanishing Indian, the nation possessed a variety of confusing reasons for predicting such a fate. These public images are important because they reflect official thinking on the status of the Indian and also because these opinions dictated the future course of Indian policy.

Recent historical works, concentrating on Indian contributions to the American way of life and the intrinsic value of his culture, have done much to influence the present favorable climate of public opinion. Unfortunately, such works were not available a century ago. The public in the centennial era formed its views from elements of popular culture. Most information came from

newspapers and magazines, popular literature, official government reports, religious tracts and sermons, and written histories. In addition, the Indian exhibit at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia provided millions of Americans with an additional glimpse of Indian life. It is from these sources that the climate of opinion can be determined.

The mass of public sentiment reflects the considerable differences in American ideas and values which produced something of a love-hate relationship with the Indian. Americans were fascinated with anything Indian. This can be seen in the fact that while the nation waged an active war against the native population, it included the same people in its centennial celebration. People loved the Indian, but not because he was noble or his way of life was worthy of imitation. They loved him because he was a curiosity—a savage living in close proximity yet coming from an entirely different world. At the same time, they despised the Native American because he was a barbarous obstacle to American progress and seemingly uninterested in assimilating and accepting the ways of a Christian nation. Few saw any contradiction in their views, and almost no one suggested that there might be any validity in Indian society.

The most popular stereotype of the Indian in the centennial year was one that had dominated Anglo-American thinking for centuries. This view saw the Native American as a bloodthirsty savage, a creature to be despised because he was the antipathy of everything good, decent, Christian, and American. Published material conforming to this picture enjoyed wide popularity, making it difficult for contrary ideas to surface. The centennial, of course, provided an excellent opportunity for writers to reflect on the past century. Consequently, centennial histories proliferated, and all of them conformed to the traditional stereotype. Authors felt obliged to point out to their avid readers that Indians had no real place in national history. Joel D. Steele, in his Barnes' centenary history, set the tone of such sentiment. Opening his book with the statement that "the Indian was a barbarian," he went on to elaborate: "He was crafty and cruel. His word was no protection. False and

cunning; he never hesitated to violate a treaty when his passions prompted him to hatred."<sup>2</sup> Other centennial histories took the same tack. They avoided any serious look at Indian culture and saw the native as simply a catalyst in the making of great Americans. Thus the "powerful horde of savages, who had assumed to dictate terms and throw down the gauntlet to the American nation," in the eyes of the whites, were justly defeated by such American heroes as Wayne, Harrison, and Jackson. These native "barriers to progress" could never defeat Americans in a fair fight; they succeeded only by cunning and treachery, awaiting to "assassinate a defenseless man, woman, or child," then hastily cutting off their scalps as false proof of their prowess.<sup>3</sup>

The centennial mania carried over to several enterprising writers who capitalized on public fascination to produce additional confirmations of Indian character. One of the most popular books of the period was Charles McKnight's *Our Western Border One Hundred Years Ago*, a grisly book filled with tales of Indian massacres and torture. Another writer chose the occasion to recount the details of the massacre of his ancestors in Northampton County, Pennsylvania over a hundred years ago.<sup>4</sup> An even more vivid picture of stereotyped savagery came with the always popular and exaggerated captivity narratives. Annie Coleson's somewhat sexually oriented story of her captivity by the Santee Sioux made the rounds in 1876. In prose and picture the Sioux were depicted to be so vile that no decent person could have any sympathy for them. When captured, said Annie, she "was immediately secured, stripped entirely naked, and subjected to the most horrible of personal outrages." The Indians were personifications of the devil, feeding babies to hungry wolf dogs, bashing children against trees, and roasting severed women's breasts and forcing surviving captives to eat them. Her narrative ended with advice for those feeling any remaining sympathy for the Indian: "Those who prate of the beauties of a state of nature, should live among the Indians and see savage life as I have seen it, I think they would become quite disgusted with it as I did." One of the few writers who saw any good coming from Indian captivity was Edwin Eastman, who discovered a healing

fluid called "Indian Blood Syrup" while a captive of the Comanches. Having been taught the secret of this cure-all, Eastman traveled the country in 1876 selling the syrup and taking orders for his book *Seven and Nine Years Among the Comanches and Apaches*,<sup>5</sup> which perpetuated the general stereotypes.

Other illustrations of the natural bloodthirsty character of the Indian were numerous and need no further elaboration. However, the Indian was considered a savage for a variety of additional reasons which also tended to reinforce the idea that he had no claims to a place in American society. The average American, for instance, expressed disgust over native life because he believed that the Indian male detested work and delegated it to his women. "Mrs. Squaw," wrote Alfred B. Meacham in a description of Indian customs, "had no rights that a brave was bound to respect. It was *her* business to carry wood, build lodges, saddle his horse, and lash the papoose in the basket, and do all other drudgery. It was *his* to wear the gayest blanket, the vermillion paint, and eagle-feathers, and ride the best horse, have a good time generally, and whip his squaws when drunk or angry."<sup>6</sup> Similar expressions of Indian laziness occurred frequently and were often linked with other undesirable characteristics, particularly vanity and filth. *Harper's Weekly* tied these images together when it published a picture entitled "An Indian Toilet" and then described an "Indian dandy" painting himself for war with the remark that "Paint serves a double purpose in an Indian toilet: while it adorns the face, it covers up the accumulated dirt, and saves the disagreeable necessity of washing. As a rule, Indians have an instinctive dislike of water, either as a beverage or for washing."<sup>7</sup>

The notion of Indian filth pervaded popular imagery, and the leading exponents of this line were western boosters who wrote first hand accounts of experiences among the Indians. Travel accounts, especially those dealing with the Southwest, enjoyed wide popularity. These works recounted the magnificent glories of the natural environment and indicated that the only drawback to the region was the unsightly Indian. Newspaper correspondent Hiram C. Hodge in his *Arizona as it is; or, the Coming Country*, saw some

merit in docile tribes; however, he generally described their life as being dominated by "immoral practices" which created "cesspools of filth, corruption, and degradation." Samuel Woodworth Cozens, whose memoirs of travel in Arizona were published in 1876, was fascinated with Indian life, but only as a contrast to the rest of the "Marvellous Country." He took great pains to point out how reprehensible these people were. In describing an Apache camp, he wrote that "I soon found myself among a lot of the dirtiest, filthiest, most degraded-looking set of creatures that I ever saw in the guise of humanity. . . . The women were particularly ugly, fat, and dirty; and I looked in vain for some of the 'beautiful squaws,' that had been pictured so graphically by Cooper and Lossing. . . . Not a gleam of intelligence nor a line of beauty was to be seen either in the face or form of those around me." Even Thomas C. Battey, a Quaker missionary to the Kiowa who wanted to correct some of the "sensational" literature flooding the country, could not refrain from discussing Indian habits of cooking. He described in graphic detail how meat was carried fifty miles "swinging and flopping upon the sides of a mule, until covered with dust, sweat, and hair; it needs no washing, or at least gets none, before being put into the camp-kettle."<sup>8</sup>

There was practically no "noble Indian" image in the public mind to contradict the flood of savage stereotypes. Many, however, believed that the Indian was capable of salvation. Americans often felt a pang of responsibility for Indian welfare and attributed the cause of Indian degradation to white influence. These humanitarians called themselves "friends of the Indian."<sup>9</sup> They influenced public opinion by producing a large amount of literature painting a more sympathetic picture of the native. Yet, despite sympathy and sincere concern for Indian welfare, their image essentially agreed with the anti-Indian view. It saw no value in Indian life or culture, believed the Indian to be a barbarian, and visualized no place for his way of life in American society. The major difference was a belief that the indigenous population could be uplifted and assimilated. Christianity and fair treatment, rather than extermination, provided the answer.

The leading exponents of sympathy for the Indians were religious leaders. The Reverend George Mason's prize poem, *Lo! The Poor Indian*, set the tone when it described the native as "squalid relics of the past," who were despoiled by white society. Despite such a wretched condition, Mason saw the Indian being saved by Christianity.<sup>10</sup> Other religious men described Indian life as worthless. The Reverend S. C. Bartlett, who wrote a history of the American Board missions, produced a long diatribe on how the missionary found the savage to be "quite a different person from the sentimental red man of the romance and the poem." Everything in his way of life was evil, especially religious ideas: "Their religious rites and worship were worthy of the hideous beings they worshipped." Yet the Indians were children of God and could survive if they listened to their white teachers. Much sentiment, in fact, pointed to the idea that once enlightened the Indian realized the advantages of casting off his own culture and was eager to do so. An article in the *Presbyterian Quarterly* asserted that the Indian demanded the white man's civilization. This idyllic individual seemed to recognize his own degradation and cried out "from the mountain tops and the valleys of the far West, 'send us the gospel.'" <sup>11</sup>

Official government statements also attempted to confirm that the Native American was capable of learning the white man's way. The widely circulated *Annual Report* of the Secretary of the Interior contained glowing accounts of how Indian agents were subduing Indian cultures, teaching farming, and instructing people in correct morality. This program, assured the secretary, produced a "growing taste" among Indian peoples for abandoning their own way of life. Indian Commissioner John Q. Smith confirmed Indian capabilities in his report to the nation but carefully pointed out that the native had a long way to go. He denied that any "inherent characteristic in the race disqualifies it for civilized life." However, according to Smith, the benevolent government was dealing with an "uncivilized and intelligent people" who were ignorant, superstitious, and suspicious. Furthermore, the commissioner predicted that the road from barbarism would be long and hard; he ended

with a pessimistic prediction: "The next twenty-five years are to determine the fate of a race. If they cannot be taught, and taught very soon, to accept the necessities of their situation and begin in earnest to provide for their own wants by labor in civilized pursuits, they are destined to speedy extinction."<sup>12</sup>

Many people agreed with Commissioner Smith's predictions, although not always for the same reason. By the end of President Grant's term in office it appeared to a sizeable group of Indian sympathizers that the native was being held from progress by the government. Corruption crushed the Indian desire for civilization and made him more deplorable than ever. Just before the centennial year opened, Professor O. C. Marsh undertook a widely publicized investigation of affairs at the Red Cloud Agency, pointing out how a people, trying to live as the government wanted, were being cheated and discouraged by agency officials. From this report and the subsequent federal investigation, it appeared that the government was working at cross purposes, trying to assimilate with one hand while making it impossible with the other.<sup>13</sup> *Harper's Weekly* and *The Nation* supported the same idea. A *Harper's* article on the "Indian problem" in September 1876 concluded on a pessimistic tone. After noting that the white man was indeed responsible for Indian problems, the magazine went on to stress that if national efforts to Christianize and civilize had been as zealous as the effort to take their land, the results might have been more productive. "It is, perhaps, inevitable," ended the article, "that the Indian races should disappear before the advance of the whites; but it is discreditable to Christianity and civilization that the settlement and development of the region occupied by the tribes should be accomplished only by the extermination of these races."<sup>14</sup>

The Indian exhibit at the Centennial Exposition confirmed most of the public images. Actually, when the United States Centennial Commission authorized the Smithsonian Institution and the Office of Indian Affairs to create an Indian exhibit, it was hoped that a better understanding between the two races would result.<sup>15</sup> Spencer F. Baird and John Wesley Powell of the Smithsonian

assumed general responsibility for the display. Both men expressed great sympathy for the Indian and worked hard to create a factual exhibit, "Illustrative of Indian Life, Character, and History." Expeditions were dispatched to remote areas of the Far West and Pacific Coast to bring in collections of Indian made items and artifacts. The Indian Office also directed its agents to secure specimens of Indian material "now or recently in use, including weapons, utensils, dwellings, dress, photographs, and etc."<sup>16</sup>

The language of this request demonstrated the government's prejudice against preserving and displaying the Indian past. Most agents wanted only to illustrate how much progress the Indian had made toward civilization. They saw no value in traditional arts and crafts. Agent Joseph C. Bridgman at Green Bay Agency reported back that "as the tribes of this agency almost to a family have long ago given up their wild & roaming life, taken up citizens dress & habits, nothing of interest in the way of articles illustrating 'Indian life or character' could be attained." Other agents said much the same. One man pointed out that his people were not an "ingenious, industrious, or a manufacturing tribe," and therefore had nothing of interest.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, the incoming material consisted only of things the agents considered of curiosity value.

Baird also wanted to have actual Indian participation in the centennial. Yet even here prejudicial attitudes can be detected despite his sincere desire to present a sympathetic picture of a culture being displaced by progress. Working closely with Powell, he drew up plans for bringing one hundred tribal representatives to Philadelphia where they would camp in Fairmount Park and display the traditional life to exposition visitors.<sup>18</sup> But when the two men set down the criteria for selecting Indian representation they made sure no participant would reflect poorly on the government. A thirteen-point checklist required tribal representatives to be more white than Indian. They had to be influential among their own people, speak English, have an American style family of two children and a dog, and be spotless in living style and habits.<sup>19</sup> As matters eventually turned out, the cost of supporting the Indian delegation proved so great that Congress could not be persuaded to

fund it, and Indian participation had to be scratched at the last moment. Therefore, the Centennial Indian Exhibit would not have any Indians.

Despite the lack of Indian participation, the exhibit remains important because it contributed greatly to public imagery. Some eight million visitors viewed the Exposition of 1876, and a majority of them saw the Indian exhibit. Although a major portion of the exhibit displayed artifacts and prehistoric paraphernalia,<sup>20</sup> an attempt was made to show contemporary Indian life. Mannequins and sets displayed Indian costumes and living habits. "There were . . . exhibited numerous life-size figures to show every variety of Indian costume and personal decoration," stated the *Smithsonian Annual Report* of 1876.<sup>21</sup> This method of presentation, however, seemed only to confirm popular images of the Indian. Despite Baird's attempt to present a factual representation, visitors were attracted primarily out of curiosity, and they thrilled to the horror of it all. The more barbaric it seemed, the better they liked it. Descriptions of the exhibit in guide books and newspapers, which spread to every portion of the nation, were uniform in their impression. William Dean Howells, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, reflected the trend in his reaction to the exhibit. "The red man," he wrote, "as he appears in effigy and in photograph in this collection, is a hideous demon, whose malign traits can hardly inspire any emotion softer than abhorrence."<sup>22</sup>

The exhibit allowed journalists to portray a grisly image that conformed to public attitudes. Nowhere was any value seen in the Indian's culture and achievements. His arts and crafts were "curios" and a "collection of relics." The mannequins drew special comment, with writers speculating on whom they represented. Probably the most fascinating figure was that of an Indian sachem, which some took to be the Sioux leader Red Cloud. Most descriptions of this figure "attired in all the tinsel and finery of a sachem," with a raised tomahawk in one hand and a string of scalps hanging from his belt, revealed the horror which most visitors felt. A "repulsive looking" character proclaimed one paper, while another described him as being "ready to pounce on some unsuspecting

victim."<sup>23</sup> Even the artist's rendition of the exhibit in Frank Leslie's *Register* of the exhibition showed people cowering underneath a barbaric-looking totem pole.<sup>24</sup>

John Thomas Dale, who wrote *What Ben Beverly Saw at the Great Exposition*, could hardly keep from deriding any one who might have sympathy for the American native:

There are also figures of celebrated Indian braves, with names indicating their bloodthirsty dispositions, and terrible fighting qualities. They are gayly caparisoned with all that can delight the Indian taste; paint without stint, war feathers, colored blankets, huge coils of beads, buckskin leggins, and fancy moccasins. Novelists with unsubdued fancies, may sit in their cozy back parlors, and write pretty little stories of the noble red man, . . . but let one of these red gentlemen, with his small, cruel, black eyes, his coarse unkempt locks, and the charms of his wide cheek bones, and large animal mouth, heightened by a skillful application of red and yellow ochres; I say, should this attractive creature meet our charming story writer on those same native wilds, I fancy the next novel, if by some miraculous interposition of Providence it should be permitted at all, would indicate a very sudden change of base on the Indian question.<sup>25</sup>

James D. McCabe, writing in much the same manner, felt obliged to add a word about the status of Indian women when he said that "the Squaws of the Californian braves stand patient—looking and ready to hew down trees or turn up an acre or two of wild land . . . while their lords and masters squat away in the huts, effecting a chemical change in tobacco."<sup>26</sup>

In summation, the Indian exhibit served to convince the public—if they needed convincing—that the Indian had no place in American society. In an exposition devoted to the theme of progress, Indian culture was visualized as a collection of interesting but outmoded and barbaric customs destined for speedy extinction. Indians were viewed as "relics," as if they no longer lived in America, and this greatly undermined their living dynamism as members of humanity. The display thus incorporated most of the white cultural

prejudices against the Indian. The identity of the Native American was not allowed to surface.

Indian stereotypes might have continued much as presented at the centennial had it not been for the dramatic news of July. Right in the middle of the national celebration, one of the country's best regiments with "hundreds of gallant soldiers" and its "brave and able leader, renowned in Indian warfare," was wiped out at the Little Big Horn. News of the Custer massacre brought an immediate national reaction and forced the entire country to reconsider its evaluation of the Indian. For the first time serious discussion was given to questions that should have been asked before. Most results were predictable, a few surprising, and none realistic.

The initial reaction of the nation upon receiving news of the massacre at the Little Big Horn was to confirm that the Indian was indeed a bloodthirsty savage. Even editors who would later be more sympathetic reacted first in conformity to national sentiment. Beginning with the first published account in the *Bismarck Tribune*, initial reactions were much the same. The Sioux were seen as typical Indians. Editors seized upon every grisly detail, expressing the "thrill of horror" that ran through the nation. Fascinating stories of Indian brutalities confirmed every suspicion. Headlines in *The Chicago Tribune* read: HORRIBLE: THE AMERICAN INDIAN EXALTS HIS REPUTATION FOR SATANIC FEROCITY. The *New York Herald* immediately ran a history of Indian wars entitled "The Red Man's Treachery," which described how the Indians "manifest their bloodthirsty instincts by the use of the scalping knife or the tomahawk on all who fell into their hands." The *San Francisco Chronicle* was even more vocal in calling for the swift extermination of the Sioux: "There will be no treating or temporizing with the red brutes, whose fiendish atrocities and mutilations of the dead on the field of the Little Big Horn stamp them as worse than wild beasts destitute of every humane and merciful instinct, proficient only in the lessons of cruelty and torture."<sup>27</sup>

Despite the long accounts of Indian savagery and many demands for swift retribution, Custer's defeat raised questions. How could

the inferior Indian defeat the pride of the American army? The *New York Herald* stated the question succinctly when it wrote that "it adds a pang of bitterness to the death of the gallant Custer and his heroic command that they fell at the hands of such a savage, in whom everything that is cruel and vicious is a matter of ostentation and pride."<sup>28</sup> This embarrassment forced the nation into a discussion of how the disaster might be rationalized. First, comments were directed toward Custer and his subordinates for the failure,<sup>29</sup> but attention quickly focused on the Indian. Indian character was seen as a major factor in the defeat. Barbarism remained a prime consideration. The Indian did not fight fair. The *Herald* flatly stated that the Indian defeats of white soldiers could only be due to "overwhelming superiority of numbers, to treachery, to ambush, or to surprise." Another writer stated that the Sioux were not a brave people, but "the most arrogant cowards in the world. They will never attack . . . except with the odds greatly in their favor."<sup>30</sup>

Rather than attribute the victory to Indians in general, many singled out Sitting Bull as the decisive factor. As a result, the Hunkpapa warrior received an incredible amount of national attention. Consequently, the basic dichotomy in American thinking quickly appeared. To some his victory had occurred because he was a noble man defending his lands, while others saw his victory stemming from the fact that he embodied all unfavorable Indian traits. *Harper's*, *The Nation*, and the *New York Times* portrayed him as representing a noble race cheated by the "bigotry of the all-conquering Englishman," rising up from oppression and striking back. The "wild Indian," personified by Sitting Bull, was magnificent in his hopeless quest for freedom and had used his untainted native qualities of "energy, activity, and courage" to defend his home. Cassius C. Cullen wrote a poem called *SITTING BULL, or War-Song of the Sioux Chief*, which saw him steadfastly resisting white invasion.<sup>31</sup> A different faction saw Sitting Bull's victory in exactly the opposite terms. Former Indian agent J. D. Keller wrote a personal sketch of the "Sioux Chief" for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* pointing out that the man had always

been notorious for his "blood thirstiness and brutality." The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported his long history of crime, and the *New York Herald* went to great lengths to show that this man, "The Napoleon of the Plains," was a barbarous warrior who loved to kill in the most fiendish manner.<sup>32</sup>

Not everyone conceded that the Sioux could beat an American soldier. Frequent suggestions appeared that whites actually had led the Sioux at the Little Big Horn. One paper reported that outlaws and renegades organized and armed the Sioux, and another stated that the renegades had given the Indians courage. Another common excuse was that the Indians were better armed. In contrast to now known facts, the Sioux warriors were pictured armed with Winchester and Henry rifles, although as one writer noted, "This can scarcely be called true bravery." "More than this," said another farfetched account, "they have learned the advantage of fortifications and entrenchments, and while hanging about our frontier posts have picked up no little military information, which has developed in bloody results at Little Big Horn."<sup>33</sup>

In another direction, the Custer massacre provided humanitarians with an opportunity to reconfirm their stereotypes of the Indian and stress that the native must be civilized. Ministers throughout the nation reminded their congregations that the Battle of the Little Big Horn pointed out all the wrongs of American policy. Pastor Henry A. Stimson of Minneapolis told his flock that while a majority of the nation now demanded extermination, Christians must renew their effort to save the heathen. However, the reason for saving him had nothing to do with Indian virtues—he had none. "These are our wards: three hundred thousand orphans of humanity; poor, ignorant, degraded creatures of God, stranded upon this vast American continent, while the tide of civilization and religion on other shores was sweeping far beyond them, now in the province of God given to us, his favored children, to nourish, to civilize, to save." Another minister in Chicago warned the American people to resist the temptation to exterminate the "savage" so that these people might eventually partake of the "blessings of God's fatherhood."<sup>34</sup>

The real issue between the humanitarians and the anti-Indian extremists as revived by the Sioux victory of 1876 was therefore not over the Indian himself. All agreed on the basic image. The question rested on what philosophy would control the future. The editor of *The Chicago Tribune* stated the matter succinctly from one point of view: "Shall it be at last an accepted fact that to pet them, clothe them, fuss over them at Washington receptions, is not the right method to cure inherent treachery, the cunning of the weak, uneducated minds, or base ingratitude, so constantly displayed." The *New York Times* answered for the humanitarians by defending President Grant's Indian Peace Policy and demanding that whites stop violating Indian rights and use a policy of justice.<sup>35</sup> This is where the body of national attention eventually focused; not really on the Indian but on those whose policy was to blame for the national disaster.

The dramatic arguments over Indian policy following the massacre consequently served to reinforce national opinion that the native population should not in any way be considered part of the American tradition. Imagery was totally negative and a frank expression of racial prejudice. With few exceptions, everything available to the public visualized only one fate for the Indians—the entire destruction of his way of life. One rare exception to the rule came in a letter to *The Nation* from Lewis H. Morgan who proposed an alternative solution. Morgan suggested that the plains tribes be allowed to retain some aspects of their traditional culture by being slowly converted to cattlemen rather than agriculturalists. Yet even here, in this lone suggestion of a different policy, the ethnocentrism came out. Morgan believed that the pastoral life would eventually assimilate these people into the mainstream of American society.<sup>36</sup>

Viewing popular imagery of the American Indian in the centennial year thus leads to several conclusions. The vast majority of the public—those who formed opinions primarily from what they read, heard, or saw displayed—were treated to a one-sided view of the Indian. Still, interest levels were extremely high and the nation avidly devoured all available materials. The Indian was fascinating

and the subject of great interest, but the stereotypes created by society prevented any real chance to see value in his culture or any reason to preserve it. It is also evident that such a large body of public opinion, agreeing on fundamentals, exercised a strong effect on the future course of Indian affairs. Public views convinced policy makers that their course of reservations and obliteration of the Indian life was necessary and justified. These images further demonstrate why, when the nation celebrated its centennial, the Indian participated only in the form of a curiosity. It has taken nearly another hundred years to begin correcting the stereotypes. Meanwhile, the Indian population has continued to suffer from views in vogue a century ago. In this respect, the popular opinions of 1876 show more about American society than they do about the Indian.

#### NOTES

1. S. F. Baird to Stephen G. Lyford, March 23, 1876, H. R. Exec. Doc. 148, 44th Cong., 1st sess., pp. 32-36; *Harper's Weekly* 20 (July 1876): 625.

2. [Joel D. Steele], *One Hundred Years of American Independence* (New York; 1876), p. 15.

Textbooks used by children in schools during this era were much the same. See Marcius Willson, *History of the United States*, . . . (New York, 1871), *passim*.

3. Richard Devins, *Our First Century: Being a Popular Descriptive Portraiture of the One Hundred Great and Memorable Events in the History of Our Country* (Springfield, Mass., 1876), p. 152; C. B. Taylor, *Centennial United States, Being an Illustrated Universal History of the United States of America* (New York, 1876), pp. 506-7; Steele, *One Hundred Years of Independence*, pp. 17-19.

4. Charles McKnight, *Our Western Border, its Life; Forays, Scouts, Combats, Massacres, Red Chiefs, Adventurers, Captivities, Pioneer Women, One Hundred Years Ago* (Philadelphia, 1875), *passim*; Jos. J. Mickley, *Brief Account of Murders by the Indians, and the Cause Thereof, in Northampton County, Penna.* (Philadelphia, Thomas Stuckley, 1875).

5. Annie Coleson, *Miss Annie Coleson's Own Narrative of her Captivity Among the Sioux Indians. An Interesting and Remarkable Account*

of the Terrible Suffering and Providential Escape of this Beautiful Young Lady (Philadelphia, 1875), pp. 22, 23, 33, 43; Edwin Eastman, *Captured and Branded by the Comanche Indians in the Year '60* (n.p. 1876).

6. Alfred B. Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath; or the Royal Chief in Chains* (Boston, 1875), p. 15; see also Steele, *One Hundred Years of Independence*, p. 15, which makes similar statements.

7. *Harper's Weekly* 20 (Aug. 12, 1876): 665, 668.

8. Hiram C. Hodge, *Arizona as it is; or, the Coming Country. Compiled from Notes of Travel During the Years 1874, 1875, and 1876* (Chicago, 1965), pp. 157, 172; Samuel Woodworth Cozzens, *The Marvellous Country, or Three Years in Arizona and New Mexico* (Boston, 1876), p. 110; Thomas C. Battey, *The Life and Adventures of a Quaker Among the Indians* (Boston, 1875), pp. iii, 322.

9. See Francis P. Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indian: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian," 1880-1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), for a more elaborate discussion of the humanitarians.

10. George Mason, *Lo! The Poor Indian*, read at Victoria, B.C., October 28, 1875 (Victoria, B.C., 1875). Part of the poem was directed at the degradation caused by the whites. One stanza reads:

Depleted, uncared for, destitute he roams,  
A homeless exile, 'mid his native homes!  
Or like a leper, doomed apart to dwell,  
Making his Indian camp in shameless hell!  
Sad is the picture! Sad the Indian's fate!

11. S. C. Bartlett, *Historical Sketch of the Missions of the American Board Among the North American Indians* (Boston, 1876), pp. 24-26, 38-40; J. Elliot Condict, "The Indian Question," *The Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review* (Jan. 1876), pp. 14-16. See also Lewis H. Morgan, "Houses of the Mound Builders," *North American Review* 123 (July 1876): 60-85.

12. *Annual Report, Secretary of the Interior, 1876* (Washington, 1876), p. iii; "Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 30, 1876," in *ibid.*, pp. 381, 384. See also the reports of various agents in the commissioner's report.

13. O. C. Marsh, "A Statement of Affairs at Red Cloud Agency, made to the President of the United States" (July 1875), in *Report of the Special Commission Appointed to Investigate the Affairs of the Red Cloud Agency, July 1875* (Washington, 1875).

14. *Harper's Weekly* 20 (Sept. 16, 1876): 766-67; *The Nation* 23 (July 13, 1876): 21.

15. *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institu-*

tion . . . for the year 1875 (Washington, 1876), p. 69; see also Robert A. Trennert, Jr., "A Grand Failure: The Centennial Indian Exhibition of 1876," *Prologue* 6 (Summer 1974): 118-29.

16. *Smithsonian Annual Report, 1875*, pp. 68-69; Otis T. Mason, *Ethnological Directions Relative to the Indian Tribes of the United States* (Washington, 1875); Indian Office Circular, April 3, 1875, and Spencer F. Baird to Edward P. Smith, May 14, 1875, Record Group (RG) 75, Office of Indian Affairs (OIA), Letters Received (LR), Centennial Exhibition (CE), National Archives (NA).

17. Joseph C. Bridgman, to Commissioner, Dec. 10, 1875, S. S. Dyar, to Commissioner, July 27, 1875, J. W. Fairchild, to Commissioner, July 11, 1875, Isaac T. Gibson, to Commissioner, Dec. 31, 1875, H. F. Bond, Jan. 26, 1876; RG 75, OIA, LR, CE, NA.

18. *Smithsonian Annual Report, 1875*, p. 69; Baird to Stephen G. Lyford, Mar. 23, 1876, H. R. Exec. Doc. 148, pp. 32-36; J. Q. Smith to Secretary of the Interior, Feb. 10, 1876, J. Q. Smith to R. H. Milroy, Mar. 6, 1876, RG 75, OIA, LR, CE, NA.

The Indian Office was very reluctant to display a culture that it considered worthless and agreed to let the Smithsonian handle Indian participation.

19. There are several lists of the tribes to be represented. See Powell to Baird, Mar. 4, 1876, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington; J. Q. Smith to Baird, Mar. 6, 1876, RG 75, OIA, LR, CE, NA; Baird to Lyford, March 23, 1876, H. R. Exec. Doc. 148, pp. 32-36.

20. H. Craig Miner, "The United States Government's Building at the Centennial Exhibition, 1874-1877," *Prologue* 4 (Winter 1972): 203-18. See also James D. Butler, "Prehistoric Wisconsin," *Report and Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* 7 (1873-76): 80-101, for a report on some of the artifacts sent to the exhibit; Trennert, "A Grand Failure," pp. 127-29.

21. *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution . . . for the year 1876* (Washington, 1877), p. 10. See also Baird to J. Q. Smith, June 12, 1876, RG 75, OIA, LR, CE, NA.

22. William Dean Howells, "A Sennight of the Centennial," *Atlantic Monthly* 38 (1876): 103.

23. *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), May 24, 1876; Miner, "US Government Building," p. 211.

24. Frank H. Norton, ed., *Frank Leslie's Historical Register of the United States Centennial Exposition, 1876* (New York, 1877), p. 100.

25. [John Thomas Dale], *What Ben Beverly Saw at the Great Exposition* (Chicago, 1876), pp. 114-15. See also *Guide to the Centennial Exposition*

tion (Philadelphia, 1876), p. 12; Edward H. Knight, *A Study of the Savage Weapons at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876* (Washington, 1880); *Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), May 23, 1876; *Public Ledger*, May 24, 1876.

26. James D. McCabe, *The Illustrated History of the Centennial Exhibition, . . .* (Philadelphia, 1876), pp. 555-56.

27. *Bismarck Tribune*, July 6, 1876; *The Chicago Tribune*, July 6, 1876; *New York Herald*; July 7, 1876; *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1876.

28. *New York Herald*, July 9, 1876.

29. For comments on Custer's role see Paul A. Hutton, "From Little Big Horn to Little Big Man: The Changing Image of a Western Hero in Popular Culture," *Western Historical Quarterly* 7 (Jan. 1976): 19-23; Stephen E. Ambrose, *Custer and Crazy Horse: The Parallel Lives of Two American Warriors* (New York, 1975), *passim*.

30. *New York Herald*, July 7, 1876; *Journal Miner* (Prescott, Arizona), Sept. 8, 1876.

31. *Harper's Weekly* 20 (July 29, 1876): 625-28; *The Nation* 13 (July 13, 1876): 21-22; *New York Times*, July 30, 1876; *Journal Miner*, Sept. 1, 1876.

32. *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, reprinted in *New York Times*, July 10, 1876; *San Francisco, The Chronicle*, July 9, 1876; *New York Herald*, July 9, 12, 1876.

33. *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 8, 11, 16, 1876; *Journal Miner*, Sept. 8, 1876; *New York Times*, July 10, 1876.

34. "Death of General Custer and the Indian Problem," sermon preached in Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, July 9 and 16, 1876, by Pastor Henry A. Stimson, and "The Indian War and the Custer Massacre," sermon by D. J. Burrell, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Chicago, July 9, 1876, reprinted in *The Chicago Tribune*, July 10, 1876.

35. *The Chicago Tribune*, July 7, 1876; *New York Times*, July 12, 1876. Many other newspapers in addition to the *Times* took up the humanitarian cause after the massacre and in fact urged strongly that the nation avoid the sentiment for extermination.

36. "The Hue-And-Cry Against The Indians," letter by Lewis H. Morgan, July 10, 1876, in *The Nation* 23 (July 20, 1876): 40-41.