

The background of the cover is a painting. In the foreground, a woman with dark hair, wearing a red coat and a dark shawl, sits on a horse. She is looking towards the right. In the background, a Native American figure is visible, partially obscured by shadows. The overall scene is dimly lit, with a focus on the woman's face and clothing.

THE
NATIONAL
UNCANNY

*Indian Ghosts and
American Subjects*

Renée L. Bergland

THE NATIONAL UNCANNY

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Dedicated to Kim



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THE NATIONAL UNCANNY



Indian Ghosts and American Subjects

☞ For more than three hundred years, American literature has been haunted by ghostly Indians. In the seventeenth century, Puritan writings described Native Americans as demonic manifestations of an internalized psychic struggle. Ever since, spectral Indians have continued to return to American letters. During the Enlightenment, European American writings invoked Indians as symbols of internal darkness and irrationality. Later, American citizens began to write histories and historical romances that were structured around representations of Indians as vanishing Americans and even as actual ghosts. Many of America's most prominent authors seized on the figure of the spectral Native as central to their attempts to develop a uniquely American national literature: during the first half of the nineteenth century, Charles Brockden Brown, Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Lydia Maria Child, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville all wrote works that relied upon the discourse of the Indian ghost. The various meanings and structures of the discourse of spectralization are complicated and ambiguous. This book begins, however, with a phenomenon that is clear and consistent: When European Americans speak of Native Americans, they always use the language of ghostliness. They call Indians demons, apparitions, shapes, specters, phantoms, or ghosts. They insist that Indians are able to appear and disappear suddenly and mysteriously, and also that they are ultimately doomed to vanish. Most often, they describe Indians as absent or dead.

Native American writers and orators have often resorted to the language of ghostliness themselves, in their negotiations with European colonialism and United States hegemony. One of the earliest examples comes from 1620, the first year that the English spent at Plymouth. During their first few months there, the English plundered a number of Native American graves. Finally, the sachem of Passonagesstit protested the violation of his mother's grave by making a speech in which he said that his mother's ghost had come to him as he slept, imploring him to fight "against this thievish people, who have newly intruded in our land." If

he fails to drive the English away, she had threatened, "I shall not rest quiet."¹

As it turned out, that ghost did not rest quiet. American writers invoked her again and again in the next two hundred years. The first publication of the sachem's speech was in William Hubbard's 1677 history, *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England*. Subsequently, Washington Irving quoted the speech at length in "Traits of Indian Character," which was published in *Analectic Magazine* in 1813, and in *The Sketchbook of Sir Geoffrey Crayon* a few years later. In turn, the Pequot writer William Apess incorporated Irving's piece into his appendix to *A Son of the Forest*, which was published in 1829. Neither Irving nor Apess significantly altered Hubbard's words, but there is no way of knowing how Hubbard's written, English text relates to the sachem's actual speech, which he probably made in his own language. Hubbard, Irving, and even Apess at once acknowledge and appropriate the sachem's words. In *The Poetics of Imperialism*, Eric Cheyfitz describes this as the process of colonial translation. The sachem's words, like his mother's bones, were "wholly alienated" from him.²

Because the sachem's speech was translated into a colonialist text and then repeatedly invoked for different purposes, it serves as a striking example of the divergent meanings that Indian ghosts may have in different contexts. The Native American sachem who originally made the speech intended it as an assertion of political resistance to European domination. Fifty years later a Puritan minister rewrote the speech in English, in order to demonize Indians and justify war against them. More than a century passed before Irving used the speech as part of a nationalist romance, which both valorized Native American people and eulogized them, declaring that their disappearance was inevitable. Finally, a Native American activist presented the text as part of his attempt to inform Americans that Native Americans had not disappeared from New England, and to demand better treatment for Native people, both in New England and in Georgia, where federal removal policies were beginning to be enacted. But since his ghostwriters were a Puritan minister and a nascent literary nationalist, the effectiveness of his protest was limited. In later writings, Apess would eschew the words of others and refuse to call on Native American specters.

As the history of the revisions of the sachem of Passonagesit's speech shows us, the figure of the Indian ghost is profoundly ambiguous. Although the ghosts register dissatisfaction with the European conquest of the Americas, the fact that they are ghosts testifies to the success of that conquest. Starting in the 1600s, countless North American Indians were dispossessed of their homes, fields, languages, tribal cultures, families, and even their lives. But when we focus on Indian ghosts, we risk forgetting

the fact that many survived. Most Native communities in the United States remained viable, and even New England Indians retained title to some of their lands, as they do today. By focusing almost exclusively on those who perished, early American writing enacted a literary Indian removal that reinforced and at times even helped to construct the political Indian Removal. American poems, fictional narratives, histories, philosophical and scientific essays, and public documents denied Indian survival as they mourned (or occasionally celebrated) Indian dispossession and extinction.

Motifs of dispossession recur again and again in early American descriptions of Native Americans. Indians are figures of melancholy and loss, homelessness and death. European Americans' elegies for their Native cohabitants are equally unrepresentative of the brutality of Indian Removal and the tenacity of Indian survival, but in spite (or perhaps because) of their untruth, they have surprising power. Europeans take possession of Native American lands, to be sure, but at the same time, Native Americans take supernatural possession of their dispossessioners. It is hard to know who counts as the victor in such a contest. Although Native Americans can be said to have taken possession of the American imagination, this means that they have vanished into the minds of those who have dispossessed them.

A number of critical studies have focused on the myth of the vanishing Indian. Brian Dippie's *The Vanishing American* provides a useful analysis of nineteenth-century tropes, while Walter Benn Michaels's *Our America* makes an important argument about the modernist's reliance on the trope of the vanishing American. Additionally, Klaus Lubbers offers an extensive catalogue of ethnic stereotypes of Native Americans in *Born for the Shade*. Lucy Maddox's *Removals* places the shadowy, vanishing figure of the Native American into a discursive context, and argues that Indians were removed from the literature of the early nineteenth century just as they were being physically removed from American territory.³ Building on Maddox, this book examines one specific discursive technique of Indian removal—describing them as insubstantial, disembodied, and finally spectral beings.

In the following pages, I will concentrate almost exclusively on the figure of the Indian ghost. For the most part, as I have said, Indian ghosts are deployed for nationalist purposes. I will, however, offer many examples of works that try to resist narratives of nationalization, and to use Native American ghosts as figures of such resistance. Quite a few of these counternationalist uses of the ghost metaphor have been authored by Native Americans. But the closer we look, the clearer it becomes that when Native Americans figured themselves as ghostly, they gained rhetorical power at the cost of relinquishing everything else. When Native

people called on their forebears as vengeful ghosts, they acknowledged that the battles had already been lost, that the voices that inspired them were among the dead. It makes sense that such Native appeals to the dead would be preserved and emphasized within American nationalist literature.

Triumphant narratives of American nationalism swallow narratives of resistance over and over again. This may mean that resistance is futile, but it does not necessarily mean that it is unimportant. What interests me is the fact that nationalist narratives continue to be hungry for resistant ones; that the very texts that inscribe United States nationalism require the presence of ghostly Natives, even though these presences question the overarching narrative that invokes them.

Why must America write itself as haunted?

Although spectral Indians appear with startling frequency in the literary works of the United States, no one has yet investigated the implications of this figuration. This book intends to provide a theoretical context for and a thorough study of literary representations of Native Americans as ghosts. I will argue that the interior logic of the modern nation requires that citizens be haunted, and that American nationalism is sustained by writings that conjure forth spectral Native Americans. In American letters, and in the American imagination, Native American ghosts function both as representations of national guilt and as triumphant agents of Americanization.

First and foremost, the ghosting of Indians is a technique of removal. By writing about Indians as ghosts, white writers effectively remove them from American lands, and place them, instead, within the American imagination. One result of the internalization of Indians is that the American individuals who “contain” Indians thereby constitute themselves as representative Americans, and even as representative Americas. Many scholars have written about Americans’ obsession with mapping their own mental landscapes as American. In *American Incarnation*, Myra Jehlen asserts that, “by assuming the American land (not the landscape but the land), the American man acquired an individualist substance.”⁴ She is arguing here that Americans think of themselves as Americas. This sort of internalization of national space is one of the central characteristics of nationalism. Etienne Balibar traces the idea back to the eighteenth-century political theorist Johan Fichte, who explained that, for a nation to establish itself, “‘the external frontiers of the state’ have to become the ‘internal frontiers’ of the citizen.” When the nation is internalized this way, Balibar argues, the individual becomes something new: an entity he describes as *homo nationalis*.⁵ As Indians are made to vanish into the

psychic spaces of America's citizens, the psychic space within each citizen is itself transformed into American territory, and each citizen comes to contain an America, to be *homo Americanus*.

The discursive removal of Indians from American physical territory and the Americanization of the imaginative territory into which Indians are removed are two good explanations for the ideological power of the figure of the Indian ghost. The image also draws ideological power from the sense of *fait accompli* (the Indians are already gone), and from reinforcing the intractable otherness of Indians (they are so other that they are otherworldly).

On the other hand, the ghosting of Indians presents us with a host of doubts about America and American ideology. The entire dynamic of ghosts and hauntings, as we understand it today, is a dynamic of unsuccessful repression. Ghosts are the things that we try to bury, but that refuse to stay buried. They are our fears and our horrors, disembodied, but made inescapable by their very bodilessness. Ghostly Indians present us with the possibility of vanishing ourselves, being swallowed up into another's discourse, another's imagination. When ghostly Indian figures haunt the white American imagination, they serve as constant reminders of the fragility of national identity (as Priscilla Wald argues in "Terms of Assimilation"). Further, ghosts are impossible to control or to evade. When Indians are understood as ghosts, they are also understood as powerful figures beyond American control.

Accordingly, the practice of representing Indians as ghosts works both to establish American nationhood and to call it into question. By discursively emptying physical territory of Indians and by removing those Indians into white imaginative spaces, spectralization claims the physical landscape as American territory and simultaneously transforms the interior landscape into American territory. The horrors of this discursive practice are clear: the Indians who are transformed into ghosts cannot be buried or evaded, and the specter of their forced disappearance haunts the American nation and the American imagination. But in spite of the national guilt and horror that Indian ghosts signify and inspire, American writing invokes them obsessively. In order to explain this, we must think carefully about the nature of ghosts, words, and nations.

The argument that I am making links ghosts with words (and hence with history and memory) and also with nationalism (and by analogy with race, class, and gender). Like ghosts, words are disembodied presences. Therefore, in some senses, talking about ghosts in literature is as hopeless (and perhaps also as important) as talking about *words* in literature, or *ideas* in literature. All stories are ghost stories, if only because each word,

each random collection of syllables, is intended to conjure forth an unreal reality, to embody and to animate a strange imaginary entity that is both there and not there, actual and not actual. Writers try to capture ghosts out of their own experience, snaring them in print so as to release them into readers' minds, or better yet, into the dark corners of readers' bedrooms. This is not exactly a metaphor. Instead, it is the language we use to talk about consciousness, memory, and imagination. We use the concept of the ghost so frequently in our descriptions of thought itself, that it is hard to know what a ghost might be, how a ghost might be different from an idea or a memory.

Although all types of language and thought are linked to the spectral, our contemporary understandings of ghostliness usually proceed from the assumption that ghosts are bad things. We often use the concept of the ghost to denote ideas or memories that frighten us. Ghosts are thought to arise from repression and guilt. However, this tacitly Freudian understanding of the ghost does not adequately explain our own uses of the figure of the ghost. Nor does it explain the ghosts of past eras. In the pages that follow, I will argue that ghosts are sometimes as much desired as they are feared.

Further, I will argue that ghosts are often public figures. Although we imagine ghosts as internal, mental entities, we also write and speak of them as entities that haunt many of us simultaneously. Like ideas, ghosts can be communicated. As we share fears and pleasures, so we share ghosts. These shared ghosts are often figures of history and power. In *Specters of Marx*, Jacques Derrida asserts that, "Haunting belongs to the structure of every hegemony."⁶ He is saying here that hegemonic power—the dominance of one group over another—is structured around ghosts.

Derrida is right. The hierarchies of power that structure our lives are themselves ghostly. Power is unreal, insubstantial, somehow imaginary. At the same time, of course, it is undeniably real. When we describe hegemonies as socially constructed, we mean that they are built on history, memory, fear, and desire. They are made from the same things that ghosts are made from. Because the politics of the national, the racial, the classed, and the gendered are the politics of memory and false memory, they are also, necessarily, the politics of spectrality.

Blithely postnational, we don't believe in nations anymore. Rather, most of us think of nations as Benedict Anderson has described them for us, as "imagined political communities."⁷ This doesn't change the fact that nations have power over us. At the close of the twentieth century, nations and nationalisms look as imaginary as, and even more powerful than, ghosts. In the first chapter of *Imagined Communities*, Anderson explains "ghostly national imaginings" in terms of the "modern darkness" that accompanied Enlightenment secularism.⁸ He argues that nationalism

was a secular faith that developed in response to Enlightenment denials of faith. But in many respects, denying the primacy of faith amounted to declaring the primacy of doubt. Though we usually think of the late eighteenth century as the apex of the Enlightenment, it may be equally appropriate to describe it as a very dark time. In *Nation and Narration*, Homi Bhabha emphasizes the darkness, explaining Anderson's "sense of 'nationness'" as constructed in opposition to "the *unheimlich* (or uncanny) terror of the space or race of the Other."⁹ I agree with Bhabha's contention that modern nations were constructed in opposition to the particular darkensses of a ghostly Other conceived within an imaginary geography of race, class, and gender.

Like nation, race, class, and gender can all be understood as ghostly entities. They may be imaginary, but they structure our lives nonetheless. Therefore, I want to argue here for the importance of the unreal. Rather than dismissing hegemonic power as "imagined," I want to explore the works of imagination that build and inform it. If hegemonic powers are, in fact, ghostly powers, then all of us must believe in ghosts, just as we believe in stories, in histories, or in memories.

In this model, ghosts are tied to language, and therefore they are tied to stories. They are also tied to political powers, and therefore they are tied to history. These things have been brought together before. In 1848, Karl Marx began *The Communist Manifesto* with the declaration, "A specter is haunting Europe."¹⁰ This European ghost, the specter of Communism, is clearly a political entity, a disembodied figure that represents political and economic power relations within a context of emergent nationalism. In the mid-nineteenth century, Europe *was* haunted by the specter of Communism, a ghost who probably appeared in the form of an oppressed worker. At the same time, America was haunted by the ghosts of African American slaves and Indians as well as disfranchised women and struggling workers. The people who were described and imagined as ghosts were those whose existence challenged developing structures of political and economic power. Ghostliness was closely related to oppression and to the hope of denying or repressing the memory of that oppression.

This model of ghosts as public, political entities may seem to conflict with prevailing assumptions that ghosts are private and internal. But any dichotomy between the political sphere and the mental sphere is a false one, because our understanding of the political has shifted just as our notion of the ghostly has. Modern consciousness internalizes the political just as it internalizes the spectral.

Consider, first, the internalization of ghosts. Before the Enlightenment changed our definitions, ghosts were seen as external phenomena. They may have denounced the guilty, but they were not simply manifestations

of guilt. They were not mental or perceptual beings at all. Rather, they existed outside our heads, independently. When rationalists denied the reality of ghosts, they denied their independence, their exteriority.

By the early nineteenth century, most people believed (as they do now) that ghosts were internal phenomena, creatures that haunted private, mental space rather than actually walking abroad through public, physical space. In *The Female Thermometer*, Terry Castle explains that during the eighteenth century, belief in ghosts changed, rather than disappeared. “Ghosts were not exorcized—only internalized and reinterpreted as hallucinatory thoughts.” Banishing ghosts from the world, into the mind, she argues, is not a simple rationalist victory. Instead, “by relocating the world of ghosts in the closed space of the imagination, one ended up by supernaturalizing the mind itself.”¹¹ Once they are all in our heads, it is difficult to distinguish between ghosts, demons, and dream figures. In fact, as Castle asserts, it becomes difficult to distinguish between perception and possession, hard to know if any perceived other is in fact other, or is merely a projection of the haunted self. The epistemological uncertainty that Castle evokes is characteristic of many of the works I will examine, and her work will help emphasize the point that haunted imaginations and haunted works of imagination are not merely haunted by metaphors. Within this discourse of haunted rationalism, the ghosts within the mind are more powerful and more significant than many of the beings that walk abroad. Ghosts may have become subjective experiences, but they have not stopped being historical or political, and they certainly have not become insignificant.

Ghosts and ghost belief have always been linked to law and justice. In *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, Keith Thomas explains that before the Enlightenment ghosts were almost always reported as appearing in order to “denounce some specific injustice,” or “to alter some particular relationship between living people.” The most common apparitions at this time, Thomas tells us, signified murder, the disturbance of gravesites, or the distribution of property against the wills of the deceased.¹²

Murder, disturbed graves, and unlawful distribution of property—these are not private issues. To this, I would add that pre-Enlightenment ghosts often protest unlawful transfers of political power. Think of Shakespeare’s ghosts in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, and *Julius Caesar*. They decry their own murders to be sure, but they also decry the usurpation of sovereignty—stolen kingdoms.

Of course, all of these issues of public justice give significant clues to the representation of Native people as ghosts. The history of European relations with Native Americans is a history of murders, looted graves, illegal land transfers, and disruptions of sovereignty. Among these, land ownership may be the source of the nation’s deepest guilt. Ownership itself

—that is to say property—is a concept that haunts the American national mythos, repressed and erased in the Declaration of Independence in a manner that both denies and emphasizes its centrality to the republic. In the Declaration, Jefferson alluded to Locke, who had written of the fundamental rights of life, liberty, and property. But he changed the words to the more palatable formulation that we all know so well: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This erasure of the troublesome concept of property speaks volumes about the vexed relation that the United States has to its own territory. It also gestures toward one of the most basic reasons that American nationalism must be predicated on haunted grounds: the land is haunted because it is stolen.

Keith Thomas argues that belief in ghosts diminished because people moved away from their parents' graves and from their parents' houses, and abandoned their parents' beliefs and traditions. Castle argues that ghosts were merely relocated, that is, internalized. I suggest that ghost belief changed, fundamentally. Family ghosts became less important, while communal ghosts grew more significant. "Enlightened" people began to speak less about the ghosts of their ancestors and more about the specters that haunted their imagined national communities. In Europe, the ghost of Communism. In America, ghosts of slaves and Native Americans.

This shift in the character of our communal ghosts points up the connection between ghosts and nations, or, more particularly, between nationalism and hauntedness. It also points toward a related connection between nationalism and consciousness. At the same time that people began to internalize spectral entities, they began to internalize political entities. The internalization of the political is usually explained in terms of the concept of subjectivity.

Subjectivity, in the modern philosophical sense, is a product of the Enlightenment. In an essay called "Subjection and Subjectivation," Etienne Balibar defines subjectivity as "the essence of humanity, of being (a) human, which should be present both in the universality of the species and in the singularity of the individual, both as a reality and as a norm or a possibility."¹³ According to Balibar, Immanuel Kant invented the subject in 1781 in the pages of *Critique of Pure Reason*. It is important that subjectivity can be located in a specific historical moment, and especially important that this moment is the second to last decade of the eighteenth century, at the height of the Enlightenment, between the American and the French revolutions. Balibar argues that the philosophical revolution started by the invention of subjectivity was intimately related to these political revolutions. When people began to define themselves as subjects, they embraced both their own individuality and their status as representatives of all humanity. At this specific historical moment, each subject internalized both the human collective and the transcendent laws that

govern the human collective. As subjects, individuals see themselves both as the ones who know the law, and also as the ones who are accountable to the law. Therefore, Balibar explains, each subject “performs his own subjection.” The great political freedom of the late eighteenth century is the freedom for each subject to rule over him or herself; that is to say, to internalize his or her own subjection. Balibar characterizes this as “a new degree of interiorization, or, if you like, repression.”¹⁴

Balibar bases much of his argument on works by Michel Foucault, who described the modern subject as both “subject to someone else by control and dependence and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge.” In *The Imaginary Puritan*, Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse point out that the “two meanings of the word subject” work together to place “rational man in a position of cultural authority.”¹⁵ Balibar’s emphasis on interiorization makes it clear that this cultural authority is, primarily, authority over the self. The enlightened subject, then, is a self that rules itself. Further, it is a self that must constantly deny its own submissive subjectivity in order to assert its authoritative subjectivity. In Balibar’s construct, subjectivity itself *requires* the denial or repression of subjection.

If modern subjectivity cannot be constructed without repression, then you cannot be fully conscious unless you are haunted. You cannot claim to be a citizen-subject without claiming to deny, repress, bury, and be haunted by the specter of your own subjection. That ghost is the proof that you have attained subjectivity, at least as the discourses of the eighteenth century define it.

Following Armstrong and Tennenhouse’s lead, we must locate the subjective moment spatially, as well as temporally. The geography of subjectivity that I am describing here is clearly connected to the geographies of Europe and America; it is, therefore, a colonialist geography. But since its temporal location is the American separation from Europe at the close of the Revolutionary War, modern subjectivity must be understood as an internalization of the colonial relation. As they establish self-rule, modern subjects colonize themselves, and they also repress the knowledge of their own subjection to internal colonization.

The repression of subjection lies at the heart of *The National Uncanny*. This idea is fundamentally Freudian, and although many of Sigmund Freud’s writings have played a part in its formation, I can best outline it by referring to two of his earlier works: *Totem and Taboo* (1913), and “The Uncanny” (1919). *Totem and Taboo* is subtitled “*Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics.*” In this book, Freud describes the “collective mind”¹⁶ of modern, civilized humanity as built on repressed Oedipal desires. There is no question that this model relies on racial and political hierarchies: offhandedly, but with

chilling clarity, Freud equates civilization with “the social system of the white peoples of Europe and America” (14). The book assumes that civilized white Americans and Europeans go through childhood phases that are analogous to the adulthoods of savage races. Neurotic—that is, mentally ill—white people, he explains, are those who have insufficiently repressed their links to their own childhood desires, and also, analogously, to the desires and actions of savages (132). (The main difference between savage adults and white neurotics, Freud tells us, is that “it may be safely assumed” [161] that savage adults actually enact their Oedipal desires.) *Totem and Taboo* implies that the mental health of white Americans and Europeans depends upon the successful repression of their intimate relation to other, less inhibited races, as much as on the repression of their own childhoods.

From repressions, Freud teaches us, come ghosts. In “The Uncanny,” Freud returns, as he so often does, to the link between childhood and savagery. In German, the word that Freud uses is *unheimlich*, which can also be translated as un-home-y, or, more gracefully, as unsettling. The sense of unsettledness in the word *unheimlich* is important, because it evokes the colonialist paradigm that opposes civilization to the dark and mysterious world of the irrational and savage. Quite literally, the uncanny is the unsettled, the not-yet-colonized, the unsuccessfully colonized, or the decolonized.

Freud defines the uncanny as a feeling of “dread and creeping horror,” and asserts that “an uncanny experience occurs either when infantile complexes which have been repressed are once more revived by some impression, or when primitive beliefs which have been surmounted seem to be confirmed” (249, 248). This is a dual model of haunting—we are haunted either by the revival of what we have repressed or by the (seeming) confirmation of what we have surmounted. The equal weight given to the repressed and the surmounted makes it clear that willful forgetting must be understood by metaphors of both burial and conquest. Civilized subjectivity, as Freud describes it, is predicated upon repressing childhood and surmounting primitivism. To avoid horror, civilized people must avoid being reminded of what has been buried, and, just as important, what has been conquered. But of course, they cannot. It is not even certain that Freud thinks they should.

By 1930, when he wrote *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud would verge on an anti-civilization stance, arguing that “civilization behaves toward sexuality as a people or stratum of its population does which has subjected another one to its exploitation” (57). Clearly, this is a model of the internalization of subjection and exploitation, and the discontented tenor of *Civilization and Its Discontents* suggests that internalizing exploitations might be problematic. Although it would be absurd to

cast Freud as a crusader for social justice here, it is also a mistake to cast him as a villainous supporter of the racist/imperialist status quo. His descriptions of white, middle-class American and European men's minds are insightful and accurate. He equates their sanity with their ability to maintain their places at the top of an internalized racial, gendered, geographic, and economic hierarchy. But he seems ambivalent at best about mental health, and much fonder of the neurotics, who cannot get over their discomfort with repressions or oppressions.

There is indeed something quite ominous about the implied prescription for both the neuroses and the ghosts that afflict civilized individuals—which would be to do a better job of repression and internal colonization. But in fact, the cure that Freud offers is precisely the opposite of the cure that his work seems to imply. For the mentally ill, he recommends the talking cure, rather than silence—memory, rather than the continuing effort to forget. For the haunted, he makes no prescriptions at all; to the contrary, the long, bizarre catalogue of the weird that he presents to his readers in “The Uncanny” betrays a willingness more to entertain ghosts and horrors than to exorcize them. Freud strikes me as playfully perverse in this respect. Though he describes sanity as successful repression, he encourages his patients to remember. Likewise, he invokes the spooky, the spectral, and the weird with a pleasure that goes far beyond tolerance. If one message comes across clearly in “The Uncanny,” it is that Freud really likes E. T. A. Hoffmann's story “The Sandman.” Likewise, *Totem and Taboo* leaves us with the overwhelming impression that Freud enjoys the primitive. Throughout, Freud's works show us the pleasures of contemplating the forbidden, the sick, and the scary.

I am reading Freud against the grain here, first by emphasizing his reliance on colonialist hierarchies of race and power, and second by emphasizing pleasure over pathology when I focus on Freud's enjoyment of the disruptions of these hierarchies. My first reading is far more conventional than my second; many scholars have implicated Freud in hierarchies of race, class, and gender, while relatively few have given more weight to pleasure than to pathology.

One scholar who does share my fascination with the compelling pleasures of hauntedness is Julia Kristeva. In *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva draws on the Freudian arguments that I have outlined here to develop the concept of abjection. She defines the abject as that which is expelled from the self, and yet not discarded, but buried deep within the self. It is “something rejected from which one does not part.”¹⁷ Kristeva's model of abjection is quite similar to Balibar's model of subjection. In both models, the self is built upon repressed and conquered selves. The repressed and the conquered—the abject and the subjected—are the foundations of modern subjectivity.

According to these definitions of subjectivity, it may seem that only bourgeois white men who live in Europe or America can be subjects. But that is not how it works. Although the subjectivity that I am describing here is certainly universalizing, it is not exactly exclusive. Instead, modern subjectivity compels everyone to internalize the same hierarchies. Thus, women think as men, people of color think as white people, workers think as owners, and everyone maps themselves as metropolitan. At the same time, all of us, including middle-class white men who live in European or American cities, contain (and are haunted by and afraid of) the female, the dark skinned, the alienated worker, and the geographically marginal.

In recent years, scholars from feminists to postcolonialists have examined the ambivalences attendant upon subjectivity in relation to these various groups.¹⁸ But, surprisingly, few of them really focus on the American subject. In fact, few address nationalized subjectivity in general. The being whom Balibar would style *homo nationalis* is mostly absent from their pages. Instead, most contemporary analyses of fractured subjectivity tend to give us *homo imperiens*—the imperial subject instead of the national subject. Of course, empires and nations are closely related, but there are important historical and geographical differences between imperialism and nationalism. Nationalism, as Anderson most notably tells us, is both an Enlightenment phenomenon and an American phenomenon.

American subjectivity is different from European. It is explicitly national rather than imperial. This is not to say that America is not imperialist, but rather to assert that ideas of nation are more central to Americans than those of empire. Of course, nations and empires are intimately related to each other through the discourse of colonialism. American nationalist subjectivity internalizes the colonial relation, but, since the nation was established by denying the validity of colonialism, American subjects repress this interiorized colonialism far more deeply than do Europeans. I think this is why contemporary scholars are so puzzled about how to use postcolonial approaches to study America. On the one hand, America is and always has been a colony of Europe; on the other, America is an imperial power. But both of these facts are somehow shameful in an American context, since American nationhood is built on the denial of colonialism.

The relation between the United States and the various Native American nations within the territory of the United States gives us one of the most concrete examples of this conflicted and internalized colonialism. In 1831, Supreme Court Justice John Marshall described tribal governments as “domestic dependent nations” in his decision in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*. Through no one seems to be certain of what this means,

Marshall's ambiguous definition is still upheld. One thing is certain: by calling Indian tribes domestic and dependent, Marshall's definition points to the fact that they are inside America—they are internalized nations. At the same time, by according them the status of nations, the definition grants them some kind of independence, some kind of sovereignty. Of course it's a dependent independence—whatever that may be. The paradoxical status of Native American "domestic dependent nations" points, I think, to a continuing attempt to repress the colonial structure of America, without giving it up. Native American people are legally defined as geographically interior rather than exterior. They are the colonized subjects who dwell within America's borders.

Since Americans like to think of their own minds as American territory, it makes sense that they would think of Native Americans as internal entities whose oppression must be repressed, but must not be given up. This dynamic makes American subjectivity unique and particularly interesting. In fact, critics from Leslie Fiedler to Carroll Smith-Rosenberg have argued that it makes Americans particularly insane. In *Love and Death in the American Novel* and *The Return of the Vanishing Americans*, Fiedler describes the place that Native Americans hold within the American psyche. Using a myth-critical approach he delineates an Indian archetype that is an archetype for madness. *Love and Death in the American Novel* asserts that "the final horrors are . . . intimate aspects of our own minds."¹⁹ At the close of *The Return of the Vanishing Americans*, Fiedler has located these horrors in the figure of the Native American, and called for each reader to embrace the "madness" of his or her secret and internal Indian "comrade." In the end, Fiedler tells us, "all of us seem men possessed."²⁰

While Fiedler describes Americans as men in love with their own madness (which takes the shape of an archetypal Native American), Carroll Smith-Rosenberg describes Americans who try to deny their madness by defining themselves in opposition to the madness of Native Americans. In the article "Subject Female," she describes Americans as "decentered and fragmented," "subjects without cohesion," who finally refuse "the illusion of coherent subjectivity."²¹ Smith-Rosenberg describes Native Americans as "negative others" whom white Americans use in the ultimately unsuccessful attempt to "solidify the American subject."²² For her, Native Americans work as figures of irrationality against whom Americans attempt to figure themselves as rational. Americans are insane, Smith-Rosenberg argues, and their only hope of fooling themselves into thinking that they are not is to hold up for themselves imaginary Indians who represent something even more insane.

Both Fiedler's language of possession and Smith-Rosenberg's language of incoherence appeal to me, and both seem to get it partly right. But I have significant differences with both as well. Fiedler believes in an Amer-

ican psyche, which he attempts to analyze by means of archetypal literary criticism. In this book, I want to avoid assuming that there is an American mind that can be psychoanalyzed. Instead, I use psychoanalytic and historical approaches to analyze the ways that individuals have tried to create an American mind, and, equally important, tried to make their own minds American. This strategy aligns more with Smith-Rosenberg's approach. Like Smith-Rosenberg, I use Balibar's model of national subjectivity as an important starting point for my analysis. I also agree that Native Americans work as "negative others" as she describes them. I differ from Smith-Rosenberg, however, in my final analysis. She sees the American subject as fractured and incoherent. I see the same subject as strong and durable, cemented together by contradictory but interlocking impulses. The tensions that Smith-Rosenberg accurately delineates within the American subject seem to me to be joined in a Foucauldian sort of synthesis. American madness, if you will, is the foundation upon which an almost unassailable sanity is constructed. This Foucauldian understanding of American madness and sanity is crucial to the ideas of *The National Uncanny*.

Perhaps the most important theoretical and methodological cornerstone for *The National Uncanny* is *Constituting Americans* by Priscilla Wald. My ideas have developed through engagement with Wald's. In *Constituting Americans*, Wald uses Balibar, and also Freud's essay on "The Uncanny" to analyze the cultural "anxiety surrounding the conceptualization of personhood" in America. She argues that "the uncanny structured writers' experiences of their authorship," and that in America "authorship . . . emerges consistently as a means of exploring the internalized frontiers that constituted them as Americans."²³ Wald also points out that race is central to the formation of American subjectivity, and, in the mid-nineteenth century, was also a determining factor in American citizenship. In such a context, the very thought of American Indians or African Americans might be experienced as the uncanny confirmation of the terrifying possibilities of powerlessness (or subjection) that American citizen-authors attempt to repress.

During the nineteenth century, Wald tells us, American national discourse insisted that Native Americans were extinct, that they did not exist, or that they existed as representatives of the past, rather than as contemporaries in a shared present. The same discourse denied Indians political existence. In 1831, in the same decision that framed all Native American people as members of "domestic dependent nations," the Supreme Court opined that the Cherokee People could not be heard in court because, legally, they had no American civil identity. Wald characterizes the Marshall court's decision, which was founded on, and also established legally, Indian lack of identity, as enacting a policy of "erasure."

The erasure of Native Americans was more than legal; it was cultural. One well-known example of such cultural erasure is Chief Logan's speech, which was reprinted and recited hundreds of times throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and which ended in the plaintive question, "Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."²⁴ The speech depicted an individual on the brink of total erasure, political, cultural, and familial. White Americans' belief that, like Logan, all the Indians had "disappeared," presented them with the specter of disappearance, the possibility of being erased, unmourned, and forgotten.²⁵

Wald's explication shows us why Native American people might be terrifying, or at least uncanny, figures. It offers one rationale for describing them as ghosts. This construct also moves toward explaining the link between ghosts and nationalisms. But while Wald focuses on anxieties of authorship, *The National Uncanny* will focus more insistently on the ambivalences of Americanness. Where Fiedler describes Americans as "men possessed," Smith-Rosenberg describes the American subject as "incoherent," and Wald describes American authors as estranged and anxious, I will describe an American subject that is obsessed.

To be obsessed, Freud tells us, is to be in the grip of an ambivalent impulse that arises equally from a wish and a counter-wish.²⁶ I believe that Americans are obsessed with Native Americans. What I mean is that everyone, Czech to Chickasaw, who tries to imagine himself or herself as an American subject, must internalize both the colonization of Native Americans and the American stance against colonialism. He or she must simultaneously acknowledge the American horror and celebrate the American triumph. The potencies of both the wish and counter-wish—here the desire to continue colonizing Native people and the desire to escape from colonialist regimes—create an obsessional mindset, in which American subjects continually return to the Native American figures who haunt them.

For the most part, *The National Uncanny* focuses on ghosts of Native Americans. Of course, ghostly Native Americans are allied to the ghostly African Americans, women, resident aliens, and poor people who haunted the nineteenth-century American national imagination along with them. In fact, by all accounts, America's uncanny national others in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries outnumbered her citizens. Raymond Williams argues that the term *civilization*, coined in 1772, is intended to describe a society in which "the central property and agency was reason."²⁷ On the other hand, barbarism or savagery, and the human beings who are understood to be barbaric or savage are understood to be irrational as well as uncivilized. Such an understanding refuses citizenship as well as civility to "savage" people, such as Native Americans.

More important to this argument, the link between the uncivilized and the irrational pushes all of America's noncitizens into ghostliness. Not only Native Americans, but also women, poor people, foreigners, and African Americans are cast as uncivil, irrational, and even spectral.

National ghosts threaten rationalist hegemony, and hence they threaten the nation. One of the best examples of the threat posed by these conjoined figures is Abigail and John Adams's well-known exchange about remembering "the Ladies." Their interchange is often cited as an example of John Adams's anxieties about the "discontented tribes" that threatened American nationhood. It also illustrates the way that such anxieties could be pleasurable as well as fearsome. John Adams wrote: "As to your extraordinary Code of Laws, I cannot but laugh. We have been told that our struggle has loosened the bands of government every where. That Children and Apprentices were disobedient—that schools and Colledges were grown turbulent—that Indians slighted their Guardians and Negroes grew insolent to their Masters. But your Letter was the first intimation that another Tribe more numerous and powerfull than all the rest were grown discontented."²⁸

John Adams's laugh rings hollow, while his anxiety mounts as his list lengthens. The young, the poor, the unlettered, Indians, Negroes, and ladies are threats to government. Only adult, propertied, learned, white men who are ruled by reason can be represented under John Adams's ordinary code of laws. He derides the "extraordinary" republic that Abigail Adams envisions as a dangerous fantasy, and denies her request to be remembered. But this is not the only significance of the letters. Along with the fear of being overthrown, John Adams expresses the pleasure of domination. His laugh may be anxious, but it is also flirtatious; eros is in play as well as anxiety. The tribes of discontented beings that haunt John Adams's letter to his wife may signify terror, but they signify defeated, controlled terror—which is closely allied to pleasure. John Adams's refusal to remember the ladies—his willful amnesia—and the conjoined fear and pleasure that he expresses when he writes about it fit very well within Freudian models of repression and obsession. This is the dynamic that pushes America's noncitizens into uncanniness.

The legislative and cultural domination of women by men depended on a rhetoric of irrationality and even supernaturalism. Troy Boone points out that "rationalist discourse appropriates metaphors of sexual difference in order to assign the 'proper' values to civilization by figuring them as powerful, orderly, and masculine—and to barbarism and supernatural belief by figuring them as weak, subversive, and feminine."²⁹ Although white women were accorded citizenship, their civil identities were precarious because of the legal conventions of coverture. Many

women experienced their civil erasure as spectralizing: At the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, the Declaration of Sentiments claimed that women were, “if married, . . . civilly dead.”³⁰

The exclusion of women from the realms of reason and citizenship was paralleled by the exclusion of the poor. Poll taxes effectively disfranchised the poor, while discourses that constructed women as subversive and irrational constructed poor people in the same way. One of the best examples of such a construction is *The Anarchiad*. In 1786 and 1787, the Connecticut Wits (including Timothy Dwight, David Humphreys, and John Trumbull) published a literary hoax built on an unwritten, fragmentary poem, which they said was called *The Anarchiad: A Poem on the Restoration of Chaos and Substantial Night*. The satire equated the discontented farm workers of Shay’s rebellion in Massachusetts with the forces of darkness and irrationality. If the workers won, the wits prophesied, chaos and substantial night would ensue.

American citizens also saw ghastly possibilities in America’s resident noncitizens. In “Alien-Nation,” Jared Gardner connects the “aliens” demonized by the Alien and Sedition Acts with the Indian figures that haunt the American imagination, writing that “To be an American is to be almost an Indian, almost a European, and in this dilemma lies the solution: collapsing Indian and alien together and clearing both from the land.”³¹ Gardner’s argument is closely related to Wald’s thesis about the uncanny aspects of citizenship. Aliens and Indians are repressed within American subjectivity because they represent the fearsome possibility of noncitizenship. When they return to consciousness, they are uncanny figures, made ghostly by their oppression and their repression.

Like Native Americans and women, the poor and the alien, African Americans were invisible entities that haunt the Constitution and the courts. The *Dred Scott* decision of 1857, which denied citizenship and even Constitutional personhood to Americans of African descent, worked as a judicial spectralization parallel to that of Indian Removal. African Americans also haunt American letters. Toni Morrison uses ghosts in her own fiction, and in the critical essay “Unspeakable Things Unspoken” she proposes that African Americans function as “ghosts in the machine,” of nineteenth-century American letters, describing them as “active, but unsummoned presences that can distort the workings of the machine and can also *make it work*.”³²

When America denied the civil existence of the disfranchised without denying their actual existence, it constructed them as simultaneously there and not there, and it confined them to a spectral role in American politics. They could not vote or bring lawsuits. They could not speak for themselves. In some basic senses, their presence was denied. However, these figures were never absent from nineteenth-century American

political discourse. To the contrary, they haunted the American polity. Although they were silenced, disfranchised Americans defined the political discourse of the antebellum period.³³

Phantasmic descriptions of African Americans, women, aliens, and the poor point out the strength of the ghost metaphor and its strong association with white American men's anxiety and guilt over their complicity in American hierarchies of race, class, and gender. However, there are some significant differences between Indian ghosts and other American ghosts. As David Roediger points out, Native Americans are often taken as "a model, rather than a negative reference point" in the development of white Americanness.³⁴ Being haunted by Indians usually signals the positive development of white consciousness, while being haunted by the others is often merely an acknowledgment of guilt. In *Beyond Ethnicity*, Werner Sollors explains this by arguing that Native Americans served as "substitute ancestor[s]" for white Americans. Therefore, Sollors asserts, their curses were as cherished as (and much more frequent than) their blessings. Indian curses, like Indian ghosts, "were part of a presumptuous reconstruction of American kinship."³⁵ Etienne Balibar describes such reconstructions of kinship as "fictive ethnicities," and he argues that fictive ethnicity is indispensable to nationhood.³⁶ When they constructed Indians as ghosts and joyfully acquiesced to their own hauntedness, white Americans replaced their ancestral specters with American specters. In so doing, they also constructed themselves as American. Because Native American ghosts could stand in for European ancestral ghosts, they could work to Americanize anyone who wished to become an American subject. In this, they differed from the ghosts of everyone else who was oppressed or disfranchised.

And so, I focus on Native American ghosts both because they are the most consistently spectralized Americans, and because they are a clear example of both the positive and the negative aspects of spectralization—the wish and the counterwish. For many Americans, both European and Native, Native American ghosts signify hope as well as fear. Although they threaten the American national project, they also nationalize the imagination. Guilt over the dispossession of Indians and fear of their departed spirits sometimes function as perverse sources of pleasure and pride for white Americans because they signify a successful appropriation of the American spirit. In Europe, people were haunted by their own ancestors. In America, they have the opportunity to be haunted by the ghosts of Indians.

But there is a more important reason for *The National Uncanny* to concentrate on Native American ghosts: because American national literature is obsessed with them. Indian ghosts are everywhere in the pages of American literature. In the chapters that follow, I will discuss spectral Indians in

works by writers as different as Cotton Mather and Stephen King. I will talk about the Native American uses of Indian ghosts by discussing works by Caleb Cheeshateaumuck, William Apess, and Leslie Marmon Silko. I will also be forced to ignore countless fascinating examples—I will not discuss Melville, for example, or Poe or Twain or Cather. I will not discuss Mary Austin or Ernest Hemingway or John Barth or Ken Kesey. There are hordes of Native American ghosts in American writing. I am concentrating on a few of scariest ones: the ones, incidentally, who rose from the grounds near Passonagessit. As we trace the trope of the spectral Native through the pages of American national literature, we are returned, again and again, to the first crimes of New England.

In planning the research for this project, I began with what I thought of as the most standard images and uses of Indian ghosts; the aesthetically inspiring, ghostly Indians presented by Washington Irving in *The Sketchbook of Sir Geoffrey Crayon*, the spectral and sometimes demonic Mingoos and Mohicans that stalk through the forests of *The Last of the Mohicans*, and the internalized Indian qualities that mark Hester Prynne as an American in *The Scarlet Letter*. I intended to analyze each of these works, and to offer the writings of Charles Brockden Brown, Lydia Maria Child, and William Apess as contemporary critiques or subversions of the standard practices of Indian spectralization.

But that would have been historically backwards. In each case, the subversive uses of Indian spectralization come first; the more familiar canonical texts were written, I will argue, as efforts to contain, control, or remove threats posed to the gender and race hierarchies that sustain the hegemonic American imagination. As I have mentioned, Washington Irving's *Sketchbook* calls on a ghost who was originally invoked by the sachem of Passonagessit. *The Sketchbook* needs that ghostly figure to help constitute itself as American national literature. And, in addition, it needs to present a coherent national vision in order to contain the threats posed by Charles Brockden Brown's novel *Edgar Huntly*. Similarly, *The Last of the Mohicans* must rewrite *Hobomok* while the career of Hawthorne must reframe that of Apess. And so, not surprisingly, my work aligns with the consensus model that Sacvan Bercovitch has most recently described in *The Rites of Assent*. In each of the three sections that follow, voices of dissent are swallowed up into the triumphant American aesthetic of consensus. Although the book ends with Leslie Marmon Silko's creative subversions of the figure of the Native American ghost, I am far from certain that her work will resist being incorporated into the hegemonic national imagination represented here by Stephen King's novel *Pet Semetary*.

Structurally, *The National Uncanny* reflects my concentration on the early nineteenth century. The first part, which is intended to provide

historical, theoretical, and literary context, describes a number of pre-nineteenth-century works in brief. The second part, on Child and Cooper, treats a few of their removal era frontier romances at length. Part 3, on Apess and Hawthorne, examines the writers' careers and traces the impact of the politics of Indian Removal and the literary spectralization of Native Americans on both writers' political and aesthetic choices over a few decades. Finally, the conclusion covers the hundred and fifty years since 1850.

Although the first part deals with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the conclusion looks forward toward the present, the focus of *The National Uncanny* is on the removal era: from *Hobomok* in 1824 to *The Scarlet Letter* in 1850. This period could be described as the Indian Removal period of American history, or as the American Renaissance period of American literary history. The two coincide: during this period American writers were obsessed with ghostly Native Americans more than ever, because both Indian Removal and literary nationalism were on their minds.

The first part of *The National Uncanny* examines the role of Indian ghosts in the formation of the nation. All of the chapters in this part argue that American discourse is founded on a discourse of spectralization. I present a range of literary texts that are generally considered to be foundational texts within the American literary tradition, as well as a number of texts that have been forgotten, and I argue that all of these texts highlight the consistency and the centrality of the language of Native American spectralization. Chapter 2 discusses the prenatal context for Indian ghosts by offering an examination of writings by Caleb Cheeshateamuck, Mary Rowlandson, and Cotton Mather. It also describes the forms and technologies of spectralization, from the jeremiad to the phantasmagoria, and from the captivity narrative to the national romance. Chapter 3 argues that the Constitution, Philip Freneau's "Indian Burying Ground," and Sarah Wentworth Morton's narrative poem *Ouabi* are centrally important American nationalist texts that share an obsession with Native American ghosts. Chapter 4 starts with Charles Brockden Brown's terrifying vision of a haunted American imagination in *Edgar Huntly*. It moves to the more comforting uses of Indian specters in Washington Irving's Indian sketches and in *The Champions of Freedom* by Samuel Woodworth, texts that use spectral Indians to reinscribe rational white male American hegemony.

The second part focuses on issues of gender, eros, and political power. Rather than presenting a broad range of examples, as the first chapters do, the chapters in part 2 place a few texts in dialogue, tracing out the patterns of subversion and containment that structure texts by two writers, Lydia Maria Child and James Fenimore Cooper, who used spectral

Native Americans for radically different purposes. Chapter 5 introduces Child's and Cooper's frontier romances, and establishes that both novelists present mixed-race alliances as spectralizing. Chapter 6 discusses Child's *Hobomok*, arguing that the novel uses Native American spectralization and miscegenistic desire to establish a woman, Mary Conant, as "An American." Since this was Child's own *nom de plume*, the chapter also argues that *Hobomok* constitutes a successful attempt to enter nationalist discourse. Chapter 7 treats *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* by James Fenimore Cooper, arguing that both novels try to repress the political and erotic possibilities conjured forth by *Hobomok*, and to thrust white women back into spectrality alongside Indian men.

The third part studies the role of Indian spectralization in the careers of William Apess and Nathaniel Hawthorne. By focusing on careers, rather than works, the approach in this part moves more toward an author-oriented psychoanalytic approach. However, the larger purpose of this discussion, I argue in Chapter 8, is to frame the comparison between the two writers as a contrast between a Native American author who has been spectralized out of American literary history and a European American writer who has been canonized. Chapter 9 is about William Apess, whose brilliant reversals of the discourse of spectralization, I argue, trouble and haunt American political discourse today, unknowingly invoked by political activists from Henry David Thoreau to Martin Luther King, Jr. Chapter 10, on the other hand, places Hawthorne's discourses of ambivalence and compromise in opposition to Apess's resistance, and argues that Hawthorne's works map an important and often successful strategy for containing subversion and reuniting the fractured American subject.

Finally, the conclusion brings us forward from 1850 to the present. It begins by interrogating the figure of the Indian ghost in works attributed to Chief Seattle and the Ghost Dancers, and closes with a brief discussion of the ghosts that haunt works by contemporary authors Leslie Marmon Silko and Stephen King. In the conclusion, I return to the central argument of *The National Uncanny*, telling the story of a triumphant American aesthetic that repeatedly transforms horror into glory, national dishonor into national pride.

The American subject, I will show, is obsessed with an originary sin against Native people that both engenders that subject and irrevocably stains it. Native American ghosts haunt American literature because the American nation is compelled to return again and again to an encounter that makes it both sorry and happy, a defiled grave upon which it must continually rebuild the American subject.

PART ONE



POSSESSION AND
DISPOSSESSION



Summoning the Invisible World

From the Jeremiad to the Phantasmagoria

☞ Seventeenth-century New Englanders often saw specters whom they knew to be allied with Satan. At times they saw Satan himself, while at other times they saw nothing and reasoned that Satan must be invisibly present. In his account of the Salem witch trials, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, Cotton Mather describes one such apparition, or nonapparition. George Burroughs, the clergyman who was convicted of witchcraft at Salem, was accused of “feats of Strength as could not be done without Diabolical Assistance.”¹ The example offered to the court was Burroughs’s lifting a gun with a barrel seven feet long, as easily as if it had been a pistol. Burroughs denied the charge, claiming that an Indian had helped him. As Mather reports, “none of the Spectators ever saw such *Indian*; but they supposed, the *Black Man*, (As the Witches call the Devil; and they generally say he resembles an *Indian*) might give him that assistance” (Mather’s emphases, 103). This is a confusing declaration. No one saw an Indian. Instead, they *supposed* a Black Man, who was actually the Devil, whom they had heard looked like an Indian. Having supposed this figure, they denied seeing him, in order to substantiate the charge that Burroughs had received diabolical assistance.

Indian, Black Man, Devil. Mather’s language, and the language of his contemporaries reveals the racial and colonialist context of the war for New England’s soil. Mather did not think of concealing this context. “The New Englanders,” he wrote, “are a people of God settled in those which were once the Devil’s Territories. . . . I believe that never were more Satanical Devices used for the Unsettling of any people under the sun, than what have been employed for the extirpation of this Vine, which God has here planted, Casting out the Heathen” (14). The English colonial project, as Mather understood it, was a holy endeavor. Christian settlers were soldiers in the war against Satan, who was in turn, determined to unsettle what God had settled. The doubleness of his language is clear: unsettlement is both the undoing of the colonial project of settlement and the uncanny “feeling of dread and creeping horror” (as Freud might describe it)

that arises when Satan's devices—Indians, diseases, lightning bolts, witches—threaten the settlement.

Mather's account of the settlement of New England compresses all of the strains of the jeremiad into a few sentences. The jeremiad was one of the most important literary forms in Puritan New England. Indeed, it continues to be an important American form. Samuel Danforth's sermon, *A Brief Recognition of New England's Errand into the Wilderness*, published in 1671, was the prototypical jeremiad, which linked the spiritual wilderness within each of his hearers or readers to the howling wildernesses of New England, and threatened that unless the internal wildernesses were tamed, the external wilderness would conquer the settlers. Soon after Danforth published his jeremiad, the genre took a strange turn, when Mary Rowlandson published a more literal and ambivalent account of her own errand into the wilderness, as a captive of the Nipmucs. Rowlandson's ambivalent authorial voice made her narrative a literary breakthrough, which cleared the way for a new literary genre, and for a new type of subjectivity. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse locate the origins of the modern novel in Rowlandson's narrative. Her book also offers an early example of haunted and ambivalent modern consciousness.²

Through the eighteenth century, authorial ambivalence increased, until a new literary genre, the novel, rose beside the jeremiad. This chapter will move from the ambivalences of captivity to the uncertainties of memory, which are projected in the first American novels: nationalist historical romances. The new genre, which could be styled the phantasmagorical romance, often recalled the spectral and uncertain world of the Puritans in the wilderness. There is startling continuity between the haunted ambivalence of Rowlandson's captivity narrative and that of American novels from *Edgar Huntly* to *Moby Dick*. Persistently, American writing projected a haunted and fractured American subjectivity before its readers. Obsessively, it invoked uncanny Native Americans as the figures who both authorize and unsettle the American subject.

Let us go back to the time before Rowlandson, and consider the Puritans' uncertain boundaries between the settlements and the wilderness, and the visible and the invisible. To start, we might remember the ghost who appeared to the sachem of Passonagessit in 1620 and begged him to fight against the English intruders. This was a fairly conventional European specter of the early seventeenth century: she troubled the sleep of her son because she was angry that her bones had been disturbed. In Europe, before the Reformation, this was what ghosts had always done. But the sachem's mother was somewhat unconventional as well, because she was Native American. In America in the seventeenth century, ghosts were changing. This is not to say that New Englanders no longer saw

ghosts; to the contrary, David Hall tells us that “The people of seventeenth-century New England lived in an enchanted universe. Theirs was a world of wonders.”³ They saw visions in the sky, and they heard voices speak from heaven. They were struck with pokers, with boots, with rocks. Pins and needles stuck themselves into their bodies. Some of them signed pacts with the Devil. But *ancestral* ghosts were increasingly rare. More often, the apparitions were unsettling figures of shadowy beasts, Indians, or old women. The wonders of the invisible world, as Cotton Mather termed them, were most often manifestations of the great, invisible battle for New England that waged between Satan and God.

New England was a place where an essentially spiritual drama was acted out both in the flesh and in the mind. The war was physical, and it was also metaphysical, both natural and supernatural. It took place on many levels of reality, all of which blurred and intersected with each other. The demons who attacked New England could act as invisible entities, as physical bodies, or as internalized ideas. The land was at once earth and the earthly manifestation of an invisible world. Human beings were at once incarnations of invisible beings and battlegrounds within which hordes of invisible beings fought. New Englanders were fighting to determine which other world—hell or heaven—New England would make manifest. Would New England be a hell on earth or a heaven?

Puritans theorized that the battle between heaven and hell was simultaneously waged on at least six levels: supernatural, mundane, and personal; past, present, and future. At the supernatural level, actual spiritual beings—saints and demons—fought each other directly. At the mundane level, physical beings fought as representatives of God and Satan. At the personal level, the Christian self fought against the diabolical self within each individual. This model grows even more complex if we attempt to place it in time, where the battle for New England was interpreted typologically as both reproducing the events of biblical history and predicting the events of the millennium.

As the century progressed, yet another level of reality was added to the Puritan model—the disembodied world of printed literature. Demons could be summoned or defeated by writers or speakers, especially those who published their words. Emory Elliott argues that the Salem tragedy resulted from the confusion caused by Puritans’ efforts to make their language act on so many levels at the same time: the confusion, he writes, “resulted from decades of cultivation of symbolic meaning, verbal inventions, and discursive descriptions.”⁴ Words were required to bring together metaphysical, physical, and mental realities, and also to unite the past, present, and future. On each plane, they were set against each other, in a Ramist tradition of oppositional logic. Thus, language

became ambiguous and troubling, and eventually the world of words became the most important battleground of all. In jeremiad after jeremiad, New England writers fought against Satan and the threats of unsettlement.

But for now, let us look at the fight at the mundane level. New England Puritans believed that God wanted them to conquer New England and to take full possession of it. In order to make room for their plantations, they believed, the Lord had sent diseases ahead of them, decimating Native populations in the decades before their arrival. Their task was to take up where God had left off, and to Christianize the territory completely, by either converting or conquering the Native inhabitants. There is no question that the Puritans preferred the former option. Religious conversion, after all, meant conquering Satan on two levels, both the mundane (since a Christian Indian would obey the church and the church-sponsored government), and the personal (since conversion meant that Satan was conquered within the soul of the Native himself or herself). On the other hand, the historical record shows that New England Puritans were almost unanimous in their belief that military victories were victories for God, if only on the mundane level. The Pequot War (1637), King Philip's War (1676 and 1677), and King William's War (1689 to 1697), were all cast as battles between the forces of God and the minions of Satan.

In this scheme, the bodies of male church members were seen as figures for Christ, while the bodies of both Indians and women were often figures for Satan. Ann Kibbey explains the link between Indians and women within Puritan cosmography by tracing out the concept of the "figure" as that which gives "material shape" to an otherwise invisible essence. According to Kibbey, the genocidal violence that New Englanders directed toward the Pequots was closely allied to the legislative force with which they attacked Anne Hutchinson and her followers. New England Puritans saw Native American men, women, and children as they saw English-born women, as redeemable souls who inhabited bodies that had been placed on earth to give bodily representation to the idea of damnation. Kibbey does not argue that Puritans saw all Indians and all women as damned; more complicatedly, they saw them as figures for the damned.⁵

Kibbey relies most on the writings of John Cotton to substantiate her argument. John Cotton's grandson, Cotton Mather, shared his views. "They are not Swarthy Indians, but they are Sooty Devils; that are let loose upon us," Cotton Mather exclaimed during the witch trials of 1692. "Ah, Poor New England!" (71). At first reading, he seems to be equating swarthy Indians and sooty devils, and to be renaming Native Americans as demons. But his intention is far more literal than that. New England in 1692 was *not* under attack from Indians. Instead, Mather believed that it was under attack from demons, who had laid siege to Salem.

Carol Karlsen points out in *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman* that the beings who threatened the New England theocracy were actually, for the most part, white women.

Why mention swarthy Indians at all then? It's a confusing exclamation, and it points to the extreme confusion that often resulted from these sorts of figural and typological imaginings. Cotton Mather himself was aware of this confusion. He blamed it on Satan, writing that, "the devil improves the Darkness of this Affair, to push us into a Blind Man's Buffet, and we are even ready to be sinfully, yea, hotly, and madly, mauling one another in the dark" (70). His language here roils with repressed sexuality and violence. It also moves toward the internalization of sexuality and violence that characterizes the national uncanny; the Puritans are mauling themselves. "Were it not for what is IN US," Mather wrote, "for my part I should not fear a thousand legions of devils" (21).

The battle between God and Satan raged most fiercely inside each Puritan. Sacvan Bercovitch's *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* describes the war within the Puritan individual as an "auto-machia" that enacted the central "dilemma of Puritan identity."⁶ As Bercovitch explains it, the auto-machia is a war that the self wages against itself, attempting to transcend selfhood and attain Christliness. The paradox inherent in the auto-machia is that when a person does triumph over himself or herself, the self emerges from the battle triumphant as well as defeated. Therefore, it is an unwinnable war, which ends only with death.

When Mather tried to picture what was in himself (and his congregation), he pictured legions of swarthy Indians, sooty devils, and unruly women, fighting against Christ. These were the shapes that Satan most often took in the physical New England world, and they were therefore also the shapes that Satan took within New England souls, at least as they explained themselves. Mather's evocations of swarthy Indians are not metaphoric, they are figural, as Ann Kibbey defines the *figura*: they are the shapes that literalize the demonic essence. Since they were figures for Satan and also figures for the natural world, Indians could never be eradicated from a New England Puritan's mind until that person died. Internal Indians could never be wholly defeated, since the battle against Satan could not be wholly won without dying.

This auto-machial mindset, in which the self waged an unending war against itself, was hard on everybody, but it was particularly hard on Christian Indians and women. Soon after Native American people encountered European colonialists, they came to understand themselves as the demonic figures that haunted these Europeans. In time, some Christian Indians would see themselves as ghostly—representatives of death, if not of the Devil himself. There was a certain logic to this construction, in light of the massive Native American death toll attendant upon the first

contacts. Perhaps as many as 90 percent of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas died from the disease, famine, and warfare that the conquerors brought; most Christian Indians really did come from families and tribes of dead people. But there is also some evidence that Europeans consciously taught Native Americans to describe themselves as ghosts.

The earliest surviving piece of alphabetic writing by a North American Indian is a Latin address called *Honoratissimi benefactores*, which was composed in 1663 by Massachusetts Indian Caleb Cheeshateamuck in honor of his teachers at Harvard. The piece praises the teachers by comparing them to Orpheus, and it implies that Native American people are barbaric and ghostly:

Historians tell of Orpheus, the musician and outstanding poet, that he received a lyre from Apollo, and that he was so excellent with it that he moved the forests, and rocks by his song. He made huge trees follow behind him, and indeed rendered tamer the most ferocious beasts. After he took up the lyre he descended into the nether world, lulled Pluto and Proserpina with his song, and led Eurydice, his wife, out of the underworld into the upper. The ancient philosophers say that this serves as a symbol to show how powerful are the force and virtue of education and refined literature in the transformation of barbarians.⁷

John Winthrop the Younger preserved Cheeshateamuck's address, forwarding it to London as an example of one of Harvard's educational successes. The text shows that Cheeshateamuck had been carefully instructed in Latin grammar and in classical mythology. It also demonstrates that he had been taught to consider himself (and all Native people) as barbarians, more closely allied to the trees, the rocks, and the beasts than to classical humanity. Further, Cheeshateamuck had been taught that America was quite similar to hell, and that unconverted Native Americans were, like Eurydice, denizens of the underworld awaiting an unlikely redemption.

Eurydice never made it out of the underworld. She followed faithfully behind Orpheus, but *he* lost his faith in *her* and looked back over his shoulder to make certain she was following. Without Orpheus's faith, Eurydice was doomed. When Cheeshateamuck compared himself to Eurydice, he acknowledged, at least implicitly, that he didn't have much chance of escaping the underworld. But if his chances were poor, he also implied, they were poor because European Christians could not believe in his faithfulness. "Education and refined literature" were unable, finally, to admit the Christian Indian.

Cheeshateamuck graduated from Harvard in 1663, but there was no pulpit or hearth awaiting him in Boston. A few months later, he was drowned in a shipwreck off the coast of Long Island, where he was traveling as a Christian missionary to the Indians. For most of the past

three hundred years, Cheeshateaumuck has been absent from the historical record. When he is mentioned, he is usually described, like most New England Native Americans, as a doomed man. The only writing he left behind him confirms this impression. Though he may have hoped to leave his own infernal Native American culture behind him, Cheeshateaumuck must have seen that the only possible escape from the American underworld was his own death. Of course, in the terms of the Puritan auto-machia, death was the only triumph available to any Christian. But in the case of a man who longed to get out of the underworld, it seems a hollow victory at best.

Although *Honoratissimi benefactores* reveals quite a bit about the education that Harvard offered to its Indian students in the seventeenth century, the piece does not tell us much about Caleb Cheeshateaumuck himself. As Wolfgang Hochbruck and Beatrix Dudensing-Reichel explain, there is some doubt about whether Cheeshateaumuck actually composed the piece or merely transcribed it while one of his teachers dictated it. The text is suspicious because it is ventriloqual: its author acts a mouthpiece for his teachers' ideologies. If he did compose the piece, Cheeshateaumuck had learned his lessons well. At any rate, Cheeshateaumuck wrote *Honoratissimi benefactores*, his only surviving composition, to honor his patrons rather than to express himself. By reading it carefully, we can tease out the ironies and ambivalences that must have shaped his life and early death. But we cannot find a self in *Honoratissimi benefactores*; it is an oration without an author.

This is not the case with Mary Rowlandson's narrative, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, which was published in 1682. Rowlandson's narrative is the opposite of Cheeshateaumuck's in many ways. Where he was a willing student, grateful to the Europeans who led him out of barbarism and into Harvard, Rowlandson was an unwilling captive, contemptuous of the Native Americans who dragged her into the wilderness. He wrote in Latin, and his handwritten manuscript was preserved in a private library; she wrote in the vernacular, and her work became one of America's most enduringly popular best sellers. He styled himself a creature of darkness, groping hesitantly and hopelessly for the light; she styled herself an exemplary Christian, maintaining her faith even in the darkest wilderness. And yet, these very oppositions make Rowlandson's work a mirror of Cheeshateaumuck's.

Like Cheeshateaumuck, Rowlandson was an American Eurydice. Her narrative tells the story of her removal further and further into a Satanic wilderness, and then it narrates her miraculous return from that underworld. Both Rowlandson and Cheeshateaumuck have Orpheus-like benefactors as well: The very network of theocrats who had patronized Cheeshateaumuck at Harvard negotiated Rowlandson's release. But the

parallels between Cheeshateaumuck and Rowlandson point out also the great differences. For Rowlandson, return is possible; indeed, it is necessary. Rowlandson must return and tell the story of her return as an exemplary narrative that will recement an unsettled society.

And so, Rowlandson's white family and her civilized society welcomed her back, and celebrated her triumph over the demonic Indians. Increase Mather, Cotton Mather's father, sponsored her narrative, which he framed as an exemplary, jeremiadical text. "None can imagine," he wrote in the preface, "what it is to be captivated, and enslaved to such atheistical, proud, wild, cruel, barbarous, brutish, (in one word) diabolical creatures as these, . . . but those who have tried it. . . . Come and hear what she has to say."⁸ Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse characterize Mather's decision to publish Rowlandson's narrative as rising out of his belief "that print vernacular was capable of reuniting what colonialism had torn asunder."⁹ Certainly, it does demonstrate faith in print vernacular. But at the same time, it also demonstrates faith in Rowlandson herself. He believes in her, and thus he enables her return from the wilderness.

When Mather demonstrates his faith in Rowlandson by endorsing her narrative, his actions illustrate the different places of Native Americans and women in his mind, and also in Puritan discourse as a whole. No one believed in Cheeshateaumuck. His own writing offers little evidence that he believed in himself. For him, the jeremiadical discourse of wilderness and sin could be escaped only by dying. There was no home for Cheeshateaumuck to return to. Because he was Native American, Puritan discourse could figure him only as an uncanny figure, always already unsettled and unsettling.

In many ways, Mary Rowlandson is equally uncanny. Although she does come home, Rowlandson returns as an ambivalent and alienated figure. She has been thoroughly unsettled by her captors, and, in turn, she has become an unsettling presence within the society to which she returns. Priscilla Wald tells us that, "the uncanny sends us home to the discovery that 'home' is not what or where we think it is, and that we, by extension, are not who or what we think we are."¹⁰

After she gets home, Rowlandson is haunted by memories of her captivity. She cannot sleep. "I can remember the time, when I used to sleep quietly without workings in my thoughts, whole nights together, but now it is other ways with me," she writes. "Oh! the wonderful power of God that mine eyes have seen, affording matter enough for my thoughts to run in, that when others are sleeping, mine are weeping."¹¹ Neal Salisbury proposes that "what haunted her in the stillness of the night, was her realization that her experience among Native Americans—and the native people themselves—could not be fully contained by her narrative,

by Puritan theology, even by the Bible.”¹² Certainly, this is part of the story. But Rowlandson’s alienation from the home that she returned to must have kept her awake as well. Rowlandson wept all night because the very bed that she slept in had been made strange to her.

While captive, she “remembered, how on the night before and after the Sabbath, when my Family was about me, and Relations and Neighbors with us, we could pray and sing, and then refresh our bodies with the creatures of God; and then have a comfortable Bed to ly down on: But instead of all this, I had only a little Swill for the Body, and then, like a Swine, must ly down on the ground” (91). Eating and sleeping like a swine, Rowlandson was changed into someone savage and brutal. She was hungry. Once, when she and an English child were given pieces of a boiled horse’s foot, she stole the food from his mouth. “Being very hungry,” she explains, “I had quickly eat up mine, but the Child could not bite it, it was so tough and sinewy, but lay sucking, gnawing, chewing, and slobbering of it in the mouth and hand, then I took it of the Child, and ate it myself, and savoury it was to my taste” (96). On top of being hungry, she was also uncomfortably housed; there was nowhere for her to sleep. When her mistress’s child died, a few days after her own daughter had died, Rowlandson said shortly “it died that night, and there was one benefit in it, that there was more room. . . . I confess, I could not much condole with her” (91). These moments reveal Rowlandson’s complete alienation both from other English captives and from her Native captors. She was equally alienated from the life she remembered, and from the person she had been in that distant life.

Indeed, Rowlandson’s captivity alienated her from life itself. While captive, Rowlandson slept on the ground, sometimes outdoors, sometimes in wigwams. Once, she slept beside the dead body of her own daughter. Her daughter’s death grieved her profoundly, and it also marked a great change in her.

I cannot but take notice, how at another time I could not bear to be in the room where any dead person was, but now the case is changed; I must and could ly down by my dead Babe, side by side all the night after. I have since thought of the wonderfull goodness of God to me, in preserving me in the use of my reason and senses, in that distressed time, that I did not use wicked and violent means to end my own miserable life. (75)

It isn’t merely that Rowlandson lost her fear of the dead when her daughter died; more important, she came to feel at home with the dead. She did not watch beside her daughter’s body, but instead, giving in to exhaustion and grief, she slept with it. In her narrative, she draws a lesson from the experience, and asserts the goodness of God. But that goodness consists

in preserving her from suicide long after her “miserable life” had lost its value to her and she had begun to identify with the dead.

Mitchell Breitwieser describes Rowlandson’s writing as “part of the work of mourning,” arguing that since one of Puritanism’s main purposes was to sublimate mourning, Rowlandson’s mourning brought her narrative toward self-contradiction, or what Breitwieser terms “a ruination of meaning.”¹³ Rowlandson’s grief battles with her faith throughout her book. This is a new battle, a battle not so much between Satan and God, but between sorrow and hope, between suffering and authority. In her writing, the two fight it out, making the book into something completely new: an ambivalent jeremiad. Despite the certainty that rings out from its title, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* is one of the first writings that inscribes an ambivalent American subject.

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg writes that, “Rowlandson’s subjectivity, fused with demonic Indians, continually divides, multiplies, and fragments.”¹⁴ But, in the context of her narrative, this very fragmentation works, somehow, to cement her society together again. In fact, it remakes Puritan society into something completely new. *Imaginary Puritans* asserts that “Rowlandson changed English identity by maintaining her own identity among the heathens,”¹⁵ and this is true, as far as it goes. Rowlandson’s uncanny return to her culture certainly did move her English readers toward modern consciousness, consciousness that represses and requires its own abjection and subjection. But it is particularly important, I think, that the haunted modern consciousness that Rowlandson displayed for her readers was an American consciousness, and also that it was constructed upon the haunted grounds of Native America. Rowlandson is an alien and uncanny figure because of her intimacy with Native American people. Through that intimacy, Rowlandson is transformed into a modern author, and, more important, she provides a new model for American subjectivity, a subjectivity that at once represses and requires, identifies with and despises the uncanny figure of the Native American.

Mary Rowlandson’s ambivalent jeremiad is an important book because its drama of settlement and unsettlement, Christian faith and demonic alienation, triumph and grief, is the first to project a haunted and ambivalent American subjectivity before its readers. For centuries after Rowlandson, American nationalist literature would continue to draw on her ambivalent version of the jeremiad as it invoked ghostly Indians and constructed haunted American subjects.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, nationalist writing would also begin to draw on the rationalist conventions of the phantasmagoria. In 1836, Emerson began *Nature* by declaring, “Our age is retrospective,” and inveighing against his contemporaries’ propensity to write history, to “build the sepulchres of the fathers,” and “to grope among the dry bones

of the past, or put the living generation to masquerade out of its faded wardrobe.”¹⁶ His morbid imagery evokes the haunted historical romances that his peers were busily producing. Michael Davitt Bell asserts that, beginning in the 1820s, “there was a widespread interest in the New England past, and in the American past generally, on the part of American writers. Between . . . 1820 and . . . 1850 somewhere between 25 and 30 American romances were based, wholly or in part, on the history of seventeenth-century New England.”¹⁷

The rhetoric of ghostliness informs and suffuses the entire genre of historical romance. The ghosts that haunt historical romances are related to the uncanny figures who unsettle the Puritan jeremiad, but they are also related to the specters that were projected more and more often throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, by means of the technology of the phantasmagoria. The phantasmagoria is built on the ideologies of the Enlightenment rather than upon those of Calvinism, though at times its function is remarkably similar to that of the jeremiad.

By the last decades of the eighteenth century, American rationalism defined American nationalism. Paradoxically, Benedict Anderson explains the need for nationalism itself in terms of the Enlightenment’s *darkness*, the doubts that shadowed rationalism. He writes that “the century of Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism, brought with it its own modern darkness.”¹⁸ The realm of reason was defined and surrounded by a shadowy and troubling territory. Terry Castle goes so far as to assert that “latent irrationalism haunt[s], so to speak, [the] rationalist conception of mind.”¹⁹

Castle’s analysis of Enlightenment irrationality is based on the spectacle of the phantasmagoria. In order to explicate the “modern darkness” that shadows the American Enlightenment, I want to follow Castle’s example, and move for a moment to postrevolutionary France where, in 1798, in a crypt in Paris, Etienne-Gaspard Robertson performed the first phantasmagoria. Phantasmagorias were public performances by magicians who projected spectral apparitions before their audiences, revealed the mechanics by which the phantoms were created, and attempted to explode the fallacies of ghost belief, even as they scared their audiences silly. They used mirrors and magic lanterns to project images onto clouds of smoke, creating terrifying spectacles. We get the phrase “smoke and mirrors” from the phantasmagoria. As clouds of smoke wafted through the auditorium, the images projected onto the smoke moved mysteriously through space. Audience members sometimes jumped from their seats to try to fight off the clouds of ghosts.

In spite of the terrifying nature of their shows, the phantasmagorists presented themselves as rationalists. They frightened and titillated their audiences in order, paradoxically, to prove that ghosts did not exist.

Thus, the smoke and mirrors of the phantasmagoria gave concrete reality to the central paradox of Enlightenment rationalism. By denying the reality of phantoms, even as they constructed phantasmic images that had intense imaginative and emotional power, phantasmagorias also denied the reality of emotional or imaginative experiences, making them seem as untrustworthy (but at the same time as terrifyingly powerful) as the spectral images that caused them.

By the 1830s, phantasmagorias were everywhere; there was one running in Crombie's Hotel in Salem, and another in the Boston Museum; numerous books gave detailed instructions for building magic lanterns and performing phantasmagorias at home.²⁰ For the most part, they were regarded as sensational public entertainments—the early-nineteenth-century equivalent of horror movies. But tinges of their French Republican past did creep in to make the shows strangely political. According to Castle, Robertson's phantasmagoria featured the “bloody ‘revolutionary’ specters of Rousseau, Voltaire, Robespierre and Marat.”²¹ There were also links to the American Republic: one of the most notorious images in Paul Phillipstal's phantasmagoria was the head of Benjamin Franklin, melting into a skull.

Sir David Brewster's *Letters on Natural Magic*, published in 1832, claimed that its central purpose was to expose the means of creating supernatural effects used by “the Prince, the priest and the sage,” who were “leagued in a dark conspiracy to deceive and enslave their species.” Brewster's book gives evidence to the somewhat contradictory radical politics of the phantasmagoria itself. Like earlier phantasmagorists, Brewster thought that old-world political power was maintained by superstition and illusion. By denying the superstition and explaining how the illusion was produced, phantasmagorists attempted to challenge “the Prince, the priest and the sage.”²² Yet phantasmagorias were more elaborate and more horrifying than any spectral illusions that had preceded them. They transformed phantoms from private to communal hallucinations, and they gave ghosts new, mechanically generated substance. They discouraged revolutionary thought insofar as they discouraged audience members from relying upon their own private judgment and they reinforced the nationalist imagination and the rule of law.

Writing and ghost seeing are intimately related. In 1798, a few months after Robertson presented the first phantasmagoria, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge published the *Lyrical Ballads*, which would mark the start of romanticism in Anglo-American letters. Romantic poetry, like the phantasmagoria, would explore the newly mysterious world of rationalist subjectivity. American historical romances also draw on the phantasmagorical elements of the romantic tradition, and on the conventions of history. In fact, for early-nineteenth-century Americans,

the historical imagination was as phantasmagorical as the poetic imagination. In 1831, John Quincy Adams explained his fascination with Cicero's letters: "It is like an evocation of shades to read them. I see him approach me like the image of the Fantasmagoria—he seems opening his lips to speak to me and passes off, but his words as if they had fallen upon my ears are left deeply stamped upon my memory."²³ Since history itself was thought of as ghostly, and since the "romance" of the early nineteenth century was, by definition, marvellous as opposed to ordinary, it followed that American historical romances would be filled with ghosts. Ghosts lend a glimmer of romance to history. Donald Pease argues that ghosts of the romance also do the cultural work of uniting postrevolutionary Americans with their prerevolutionary forebears, thereby helping to construct a stable and well-ordered society on the shifting foundations of a revolutionary one. When ghosts haunt national consciousness, they help to establish a common national consciousness. The construction of "collective memory," as Pease calls it, depends upon a haunted historical imagination.

As the American romance came into its own, American writers would, more and more insistently, describe themselves as ghost seekers. Most notably, as Pease points out in *Visionary Compacts*, Nathaniel Hawthorne would return to the ghost figure again and again in his discussions of literary composition and historical consciousness.²⁴ In his first years of writing, Hawthorne depicted himself as a haunted figure, and located himself within a haunted chamber that was itself constructed within a haunted landscape. He also described writing, and even reading, as forms of haunting. In "The Devil in Manuscript," published in 1835, he wrote:

How many recollections throng upon me as I turn over these leaves! This scene came straight into my fancy as I walked along a hilly road, on a starlight October evening; in the pure and bracing air I became all soul, and felt as if I could climb the sky and run a race along the Milky Way. Here is another tale, in which I wrapt myself during a dark and dreary night-ride in the month of March, till the rattling of the wheels and the voices of my companions seemed like faint sounds of a dream, and my visions a bright reality. That scribbled page describes shadows which I summoned to my bedside at midnight; they would not depart when I bade them; the grey dawn came, and found me wide awake and feverish, the victim of my own enchantments.²⁵

Hawthorne here makes explicit an association that was shared by most of his contemporaries. Writing is linked to ghost seeing and tinged with autoeroticism. The imagination itself stages mental phantasmagorias, and the writer is a conjurer of phantasmagoric happenings. Later, Hawthorne would describe Blithedale as "a theatre . . . where the creatures of my brain may play their phantasmagorical antics."²⁶

Hawthorne's invocation of the phantasmagoria in his preface to *The Blithedale Romance*, his first overt treatment of a contemporary political reform movement, is quite telling. In part, it functions as a denial of political intentions, a declaration of the primacy of aesthetic and/or psychological concerns. Yet the genealogy of the phantasmagoria itself points up the significance of race, gender, and class hierarchies to the nationalist politics of the phantasmagorical literary imagination. In the following pages I will argue that phantasmagorical plots were central to American letters from 1787 to 1850. As they conjured forth the phantoms repressed by their national culture, American writers engaged directly with hierarchies of race, class, and gender. Literary ghosts challenged the foundations of nationalism and revealed the anxieties that accompanied citizenship. They also recalled the earliest descriptions of spectral and demonic Native Americans, those of the Puritan jeremiads.

CHAPTER THREE



The Haunted American Enlightenment

Lines Occasioned by a visit to an old Indian Burying Ground

In spite of all the learn'd have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture, that we give the dead,
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
The Indian, when from life releas'd,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imag'd birds, and painted bowl,
And ven'son, for a jouney drest,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that wants no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
And arrows, with a head of bone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the finer essence gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit—
Yet, mark the swelling turf, and say
They do not lie, but here they sit.

Here, still, a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted half by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(and which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest play'd.

There oft' a restless Indian queen
 (Pale Marian, with her braided hair)
 And many a barb'rous form is seen
 To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, oe'r moist'ning dews;
 In vestments for the chace array'd,
 The hunter still the deer pursues,
 The hunter, and the deer—a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see
 The painted chief, and pointed spear,
 And reason's self shall bow the knee
 To shadows and delusions here.

PHILIP FRENEAU 1787

☞ In public discourse, the birth of the American nation and the death of the Native American were as closely related as light and shadow. The 1787 edition of Matthew Carey's magazine, *The American Museum*, testifies to the link between the rising glory of the nation and the sinking prospects of the Indians. That year, the magazine printed the full text of the Constitution. It also published Philip Freneau's poem, "Lines Occasioned by a visit to an old Indian Burying Ground," later known as "The Indian Burying Ground."

The American Museum was the first monthly magazine to be published in America. It was also published in a bound annual volume. In its initial year, 1787, *The American Museum* promoted the federal Constitution and the death of the Indian with equal vigor. In the cause of Federalism, Carey published Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and selections from the Federalist Papers. Meanwhile, reporting the inevitable death or disappearance of the race of Native Americans, the magazine featured "Letters relative to the Indian depredations in Georgia," and articles that explained "Indians [*sic*] Indifference about Dying," deplored "The Cruelty of Savages," and described an "Encounter of a white man with two Indians." In the "Encounter," the single white man kills both of his foes. The article ends with the gruesome, dehumanizing detail that the skins of the defeated Indian men were "now in preparation for drum heads."¹

The poems published in *The American Museum* in 1787 also linked Federalism with the dawning Enlightenment and Indians with death and darkness. Federalist poetry included John Trumbull's "M'Fingal," an

“Address of the Genius of Columbia to the Members of the Continental Congress,” “Prospect of America,” and Timothy Dwight’s song “Columbia,” which hymned, “Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise, / The queen of the world and the child of the skies.”² Lyrics on Indian themes emphasized death. They included “The Death Song of a Cherokee Indian,” “The Dying Indian,” and, most important, Freneau’s “The Indian Burying Ground.”³ As the republic dawned, Native Americans faded into the darkness.

It is particularly noteworthy that Freneau’s archetypal poem, “The Indian Burying Ground,” and the federal Constitution were both first published in the 1787 volume of *The American Museum*. This coincidence of publication gives an indication of both documents’ importance to the construction of American nationhood, particularly since, as Benedict Anderson argues, nationalism itself derived in great measure from the pamphlets, broadsheets, newspapers, and magazines that unified their readers into an “imagined political community.”⁴

Both “The Indian Burying Ground” and the Constitution construct America as an imagined community. Both documents also work to construct a common national imaginary. If, as Robert Ferguson asserts, the Constitution of 1787 “embodies the central aspirations of the Enlightenment,” then “The Indian Burying Ground” embodies the doubts that threaten Enlightenment rationalism.⁵ Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the poem disembodies the dark human beings in contrast to whom American citizens imagine themselves enlightened.

But the Constitution can also be said to disembody America’s noncitizens. As Ferguson puts it, “Quietly but emphatically, the Constitution eliminates whole categories from the rubric of ‘we, the people.’”⁶ The African American slaves who are included are dismembered into three-fifths Americans. Native Americans are mentioned in Article 1 in order to specify that they will not be counted (and also that only Congress will have the power to regulate commerce with them). Free African Americans and women of all races go unmentioned. In the context of this constitutional exclusion, it is no coincidence that the “shadows and delusions” that threaten the rule of reason in “The Indian Burying Ground” are the specters of dark-skinned Americans, nor that the central specter is a Native woman. As it conjures up spectral Natives, “The Indian Burying Ground” also brings forth the doubts and regrets that haunt the American project.

Freneau’s poem, which is arguably his best-known work, and probably the most enduring verse published in *The American Museum*, conjoins the rhetoric of the American Enlightenment with that of Indian death. In the first line, Freneau rejects clerical learning, preferring to base his opinions on his own observations. The poet assumes a natural

philosopher's detached view of interred Native American bodies as artifacts, objects for contemplation or investigation. Further, he assumes that Indian Removal has already been completed, and that there are no survivors. Then he indulges in a poetic flight of fancy, in which he conjures forth Indian ghosts. As he does so, he constructs the literary figure of the Indian ghost that will haunt and trouble American letters for centuries. In the last verse, the poet proves unable to cast out the phantoms he has conjured forth. Shadows triumph over reason:

And long shall timorous fancy see
 The painted chief, and pointed spear,
 And reason's self shall bow the knee
 To shadows and delusions here.

When Freneau's enlightened detachment crumbles, the entire poem recasts itself in a different, far more ominous light. The endless "Activity, that knows no rest" of the Indian soul comes to seem ghastly and grim. The warning, "No fraud upon the dead commit" acquires threatening force. The chidings delivered by "barbarous form[s]" to "the man that lingers there" begin to seem like the curses of vengeful phantoms.

But the poem is not merely horrific. It is also passionate and pleasurable. Freneau's restless Indian queen, "Pale Marian" (in later versions of the poem he changed her name to "Shebah"), is a good example of the Indian ghost as a projection of erotic desire. She is conjured forth by a white American man, a poet or a shepherd, who admires the "far-projecting shade" of an aged elm. Although his fantasies are pleasant, they are somewhat shameful. It is not appropriate to hang around in the shade indulging in Indian reveries for long. As the poem has it, "many a barb'rous form is seen to chide the man that lingers there."

Freneau's phantasmic representation of an Indian queen is transgressive in part because it is a sexual fantasy, but also, more important, simply because it is a fantasy. In the early years of the federal republic, the fantastic was illicit. Imagination itself was inconsistent with reason and order, and the literary imagination in particular was out of place in the realm of law. Trumbull, the author of "M'Fingal," and one of the Connecticut Wits who jointly authored *The Anarchiad*, relinquished literature for the law in 1789. Ferguson comments that, "A growing threat to law and order from radical democracy required action instead of poetry," and quotes Trumbull as asserting that, "The character of a partizan and political writer was inconsistent with the station of a judge and destructive of the confidence of suitors in the impartiality of judiciary decisions."⁷ But Trumbull did not forswear writing altogether when he turned his pen to judicial decisions. His was a renunciation of passion for

her sister's suicide—which was featured as a subplot of that novel, defined Sarah Wentworth Morton's public persona far more than her own literary output did. Finally, Susanna Rowson, who wrote *Charlotte Temple*, the best-selling novel of the late eighteenth century, was unable to copyright her work in America because she had first published it in England. She publicly renounced writing in the preface to *Reuben and Rachel*, published in 1798, and she established a girls' school in order to support herself.

Male writers of the early republic are equally unremembered, though their exclusion from the national discourse may be partly attributed to the effeminizing character of the imagination. Freneau is biographized as “a study in literary failure.”¹⁰ William Hill Brown, the man who probably wrote the self-styled “First American Novel,” *The Power of Sympathy* (mistakenly attributed to Morton), died in obscurity, and was not put forward as the author of the book for more than a century. Meanwhile, Trumbull and Hugh Henry Brackenridge defected from poetry to law, and Timothy Dwight, like Susanna Rowson, chose education, taking the presidency of Yale College. Charles Brockden Brown gave up writing “gloomy novels,” and then died at age thirty nine.

Because of their inability to suppress the phantasmic imagination and focus on the business of earning a living, early federal writers were doomed figures, outside the boundaries of republican reason. American poets and imaginative writers may have agreed with their less imaginative contemporaries that slaves, Indians, women, aliens, and the poor haunted the nation. But, as Freneau's poem demonstrates, men and women of letters were drawn to these ghostly figures. Perhaps because of their own identifications with the phantasmic outcasts from citizenship, those who chose to write in the face of reason and the law continued to bring forth Indian ghosts.

It is almost a critical commonplace to refer to the forty-odd years that stretch between the American Revolution and the first publications of William Cullen Bryant and Washington Irving as a wasteland littered by the carcasses of failed works of the imagination. Few literary historians can resist metaphors of wilderness or desert as they delineate these familiar narratives of artistic failure. Describing early American letters as a “wilderness” harks back to the jeremiadical tradition I described in chapter 1, and even further back to William Bradford's first descriptions of America as a “hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men.”¹¹ As I have argued, the wilderness itself is an uncanny, unsettled, and unsettling place. Extending the logic of the metaphor, the American writers of the desolate early national period seem to have had at least as much in common with Rowlandson's brutal and uncanny Native specifiers as they do with Bradford's “wild beasts and wild men.” Sometimes

these writers are figured as literary pioneers, but since they are constructed as doomed figures, destined for early graves and unremembered efforts, they are more often linked with Indians. In this respect, the writers of the late eighteenth century, male and female, recall Mary Rowlandson, herself an uncanny and unsettled figure. They are more like Rowlandson, for example, than they are like Hawthorne, who imagined himself not as a ghost or an Indian, but instead as someone haunted by ghosts and Indians.

In the spectral and lonely wilderness of early federal letters, Sarah Wentworth Morton stands out. She was one of the few writers of the period who refused to abandon her career. She was also among the first to explore the identification of writers with ghostlike Indians, the erotic potential of Native Americans in European American letters, and the complex links between federal America and Native America. In addition, she was the first to make a concerted effort to contain the terrors that Freneau's Indian ghosts represented.

Sarah Wentworth Morton's poem *Ouabi, or the Virtues of Nature* (1790) transforms the incestuous triangle that thrust Morton into the public eye to a sentimental sojourn among America's noble savages. The parallels to the Apthorp-Morton story are not exact; in the poem, two men love the same woman, while in the scandal, one man was involved with a pair of sisters. The poem features a lover's triangle that consists of an Illinois Indian woman, Azakia, her husband, Ouabi, and her lover, the European outcast, Celario. Both Celario and Azakia repeatedly contemplate suicide because of their unlawful love. Celario even attempts suicide in battle, but he is rescued by the all-forgiving Ouabi, who eventually divorces Azakia so that she and Celario can marry. Finally, Ouabi dies.

The atmosphere throughout the poem is dark and frightening:

Pale horror stalks, and swift destruction reigns,
Carnage and death pollute the ruin'd glade,
'Till nature's wear'd arm a respite gains,
When night pacific spreads her sable shade¹²

However, the last verses of the poem strive to transform its Native horrors into protonationalist glories. *Ouabi* ends at the chief's graveside. He is buried "erect," and Morton's note echoes Freneau's "The Indian Burying Ground" directly: "The posture in which they bury their dead is either sitting or standing upright, believing that when they rise, they must inhabit heaven in the same posture in which they are buried" (49). But if Freneau's Indian graves conjure forth phantoms who challenge the rationalist roots of the American Enlightenment, Morton's Indian grave becomes a shrine to American patriotism. While Freneau's "The Indian

Burying Ground” begins with the voice of the Enlightenment, and ends with rationalism kneeling to “shadows and delusions,” Morton starts with horror, and ends her poem in the “realms of day” that enable the re-envisioning of Ouabi’s shade as a shining example of “NATIVE VIRTUE” (50). Ouabi’s ghost is finally accorded the respect due to a prefiguration of the American patriot, a being that Werner Sollors might describe as a “substitute ancestor” for all white Americans.¹³

Ouabi also provides an example of what Sollors describes as “the conjunction of vanishing Indian and marriage based on romantic love.”¹⁴ The first time that Ouabi is described, he is an apparition that rises before the eyes of his wife. Celario has declared his love for her, and Azakia responds by invoking her husband’s spectral presence, declaring:

See a graceful form arise!
 Now it fills my ravish’d eyes,
 Brighter than the morning star,
 ’Tis Ouabi famed in war:
 Close before my bosom spread,
 O’er thy presence casts a shade,
 Full on him these eyes recline,
 And his person shuts out thine. (13)

Gradually, as Azakia falls in love with Celario, her husband’s ghost fades from her vision. However, when she fears that Ouabi has been killed, she begins a widow’s vigil, waiting for his ghost to appear and summon her to join him in death. Ouabi’s ghost comes. Azakia announces his appearance, and Celario remonstrates with her, the voice of European rationalism and disregard of ghosts:

AZAKIA

Last night the beaming warrior came,
 Enveloped in surrounding flame,
 Stretch’d his heroic arms to me,
 and rais’d this loit’ring heart from thee;
 If once again he greets my sight,
 And calls me to the realms of light,
 This killing draught will waft me o’er
 The terrors of the win’try shore,
 To wander midst the blissful train,
 And meet the fearless chief again.

CELARIO

How can the dead approach thy sight!
 Who guides them thro’ the shades of night!
 Would that bright soul its bliss resign,
 To give a lasting stab to mine!

How could the wretch, who caus'd thy pain
 Know when the glorious chief was slain? (34–35)

Celario convinces Azakia to disbelieve her dreams, and to wait for hard evidence of Ouabi's death. He sets out to find the chief, rescues him in the midst of a valiant death-song performed during torture, and brings him back to Azakia. Then, in short order, Ouabi divorces Azakia, blesses her marriage to Celario, remarries, and dies, asking Celario to take his place as chief of the Illinois. Finally, the poem closes with a last invocation of Ouabi's "shade," and with the transformation of his grave to a symbol of American revolutionary virtue:

While to the spot made holy by his shade,
 His faithful tribe with annual care return
 And, as the solemn obsequies are paid,
 In pious love and humble rev'rence mourn.

Each lonely Illinois, who wanders by,
 Will with the hero's fame his way beguile,
 In fond devotion bend the suppliant eye,
 And add one pillar to the sacred pile.

There shall he rest! And if in realms of day,
 The GOOD, the BRAVE, diffuse a light divine,
 Redoubled splendor gild the brighten'd ray,
 Which bids Ouabi's NATIVE VIRTUES shine

Let not the critic with disdainful eye,
 In the weak verse condemn the novel plan;
 But own that VIRTUE beams in ev'ry sky,
 Tho wayward frailty is the lot of man.

Dear as ourselves to hold each faithful friend,
 To Tread the path, which INNATE LIGHT inspires,
 To guard our country's rites, her soil defend,
 Is all that NATURE, all that HEAV'N requires. (50–51)

Taking up the familiar metaphors of the Enlightenment, Morton shifts her focus from "a spot made holy by [an Indian's] shade" to the "realms of day." In daylight, Ouabi's ghost teaches readers "to guard our country's rites, her soil defend." The tale of interracial love and war dissolves into a supremely rational, patriotic morality play. Thus, Morton's private difficulties are projected into a national, racial drama, and a Native American ghost transforms private horror to national virtue.

In *Ouabi*, as in "The Indian Burying Ground," race defines the American condition. In this respect, the poems supply an important context for the American constitutional debate that extended from 1787 to 1790, from the publication of Freneau's horrifying vision to that of Morton's

glorious revision. The phantoms that both poems conjure forth are the very figures that the Constitution represses. Ghosts, dark-skinned people, savages, aliens, poets, and women blur together in the nation's shadows. Among these figures, ghostly Indians are most central to the formation of American national identity as it is described by Freneau and Morton. By means of the metaphors of ghostliness, Native Americans, as a race, are absorbed into the white American mind as an aspect of American consciousness. Both "The Indian Burying Ground" and *Ouabi* present the preordained deaths, the graves, and the ghosts of Native Americans as manifestations of the central anxieties and pleasures of American nationalism.



“*The Diseased State of the Public Mind*”

Brown, Irving, and Woodworth

☞ In the first pages of *Edgar Huntly* (1799), the narrator exclaims, “What light has burst upon my ignorance of myself and of mankind!”¹ It is notable that Huntly speaks of his illuminated ignorance rather than any newfound self-knowledge or understanding. It is also important that Huntly acknowledges both particular and universal ignorances; he is equally in the dark about self and mankind. The novel that follows describes a journey into the “modern darkness” that haunts, both privately and publicly, the rationalist conception of mind.

Although Charles Brockden Brown wrote and published *Edgar Huntly* in 1799, he set the novel in 1787, the year the Constitution and “The Indian Burying Ground” were written and published. Brown announced in his preface that his purpose was “to exhibit a series of adventures growing out of the condition of our country” (3). The country’s condition reflects its constitution. Throughout the novel, Brown repeatedly links the national Constitution, the human constitution, and his narrator’s private constitution, taking up the contemporary notion that white American men embody their nation and simultaneously are possessed by it.

As Norman Grabo puts it, the novel characterizes 1787 as a “somnambulistic year.”² Further, it can be said to characterize the American constitution itself as somnambulistic. “No one knows what powers are latent in his constitution” (159), Huntly exclaims, as he recalls the mad fury that drives him to kill a panther and devour it raw in a dark cave. Later, when he falls into a dead faint that averts his reunion with his friends, he declares, “Such is the capricious constitution of the human mind!” (188). The political significance of describing constitutions as mysterious, even capricious entities full of unknown latent powers cannot be ignored. Neither can the private significance. Here, as throughout the novel, private subject and national subject are, as Carroll Smith-Rosenberg might say, fused and confused.³

In order to depict the somnambulistic, mysteriously constituted American condition, Brown explained in his preface that he would replace the “puerile superstition and exploded manners; Gothic castles and chimeras” common to European novels with “the incidents of Indian hostility, and the perils of the western wilderness” (3). The novel’s Americanness depends upon Indian wars and a perilous frontier. In this respect, the novel accurately reflects the nation. Although the “tawny and terrific” savages of *Edgar Huntly* represent mental and cultural constructs, they also represent historical figures, real Native American people who were engaged in violent conflict with the United States (183).

The age of Indian Removal is often demarcated as the period between 1820 and 1850. However, the United States was actively engaged in Indian Removal and Indian war almost continuously from its inception. The Pequot War in 1637 set a pattern of genocidal violence from which the United States never deviated. During George Washington’s presidency, war with western Native Americans was pursued relentlessly. According to Bill Christopherson, Indian wars and treaties “accounted for five-sixths of all Federal expenses between the years 1790 and 1796.”⁴ By this economic measure, the main purpose of the federal government in these years was to define the relationship of the United States to Native Americans. Citizens of the republic laid claim to their citizenship by joining in the public financing of, or active military duty in, an almost ceaseless war against the Indians.

The wars were bloody and real; people died and homes burned. But they were fought (as most wars are) for the sake of abstractions. Like the earlier wars between the Puritans and the Indians, the war that the United States waged against Native Americans often conflated reality and abstraction. The goal, both physical and metaphysical, was to secure America’s borders, to define the national territory and hence the nation. United States citizens struck out into the unknown western wilderness, hoping to map it, document it, write titles for it, and grant themselves possession of it. It was a violently physical war. Citizen-soldiers laid their own bodies on the line, and they grew intimately familiar with the corpses of conquered Native Americans. But it was also metaphysical. In the European American mind, as in *Edgar Huntly*, only Indian corpses had concrete reality; before they were dead, Native Americans were representatives of the great unknown.

Ghosts haunt the frontiers between the visible and the invisible worlds, partaking of both, belonging to neither. In some sense then, ghosts can be understood as frontier beings. Taking issue with Frederick Jackson Turner, who thought of a frontier as a “clearly discernible line between ‘us’ and ‘them,’” Arnold Krupat defines frontier as a “shifting space in which two *cultures* encounter one another.” Krupat’s definition

is based on James Clifton’s formulation that “a frontier is a social setting,” not fixed or mappable, but, rather, “a culturally defined place where peoples with different culturally expressed identities meet and deal with each other.”⁵ The lore and language of ghostliness are particularly appropriate for describing the encounters that take place within the mysteriously shifting grounds of American cultural frontiers.

The dominant discourses of American nationalism at the close of the eighteenth century presumed that Indian Removal was inevitable and completely effective, and that the borders around the United States were impenetrable barriers that would eventually exclude all people of darkness. Analogously, merchants, farmers, and lawyers assumed that novels and poems could be effectively banished from the national discourse of laws, political tracts, and constitutions, and that impenetrable borders could be erected around the realm of reason. These are the assumptions of willful blindness, repression, intentional amnesia, and sleepwalking. Charles Brockden Brown challenged this repressive nationalist rationalism by writing a novel peopled with somnambulists and spectral Indians who prove harder and harder to distinguish from each other, in a region that proves harder and harder to define.

The plots and characters in *Edgar Huntly* mirror and double each other again and again, each story line and character offering ever more distorted reflections of its others. At the least, the novel is a house of mirrors. Since the novel projects fearsome and ghostly images before its audience, it may even be described as a phantasmagoria. *Edgar Huntly* presents a somnambulistic writer who describes an errand into a hallucinatory wilderness peopled by shadowy Indian warriors who are both the writer’s enemies and his doubles, and from whom his friends and family cannot distinguish him. When he uses spectral Indians to attack rationalist, republican Americanism, Brown questions the supremacy of reason. When he uses an epistolary novel and an unreliable narrator to tell his story, he also questions the use of the written word as a vehicle for rationalist authority. Like the apparitional images of a phantasmagoria, the novel’s specters work to interrogate rationalist subjectivity. Finally, *Edgar Huntly* forces the reader to question the sanity and presumed reasonableness of the narrator, the novel, and the American nation itself.

Insanity and nationhood are perennial themes in Brown. None of his novels enters as deeply into the realm of mental illness, public, private, and projected onto the landscape, as *Edgar Huntly*. As the novel progresses, the very act of writing is implicated in the insanity that it documents. The subtitle of *Edgar Huntly*, “*or Memoirs of a Sleepwalker*,” gives the reader the first clue that the novel will be narrated by an unreliable (or even mentally ill) figure. Huntly begins the book by expressing agonizing doubts over his own sanity: “Am I sure that even now my

perturbations are sufficiently stilled for an employment like this? . . . That emotions will not be re-awakened by my narrative, incompatible with order and coherence?” (5). But Huntly is a child of the Enlightenment, and he believes, as romantics and rationalists also believe, that one must be a little bit insane to write. “In proportion as I gain power over words,” he explains, “shall I lose dominion over sentiments; in proportion as my tale is deliberate and slow, the incidents and motives which it is designed to exhibit will be imperfectly revived and obscurely portrayed” (5–6).

This internal dialogue dramatizes the author’s preoccupation with the impossibility of being an imaginative writer in republican America. In the course of the story, the protagonist, Edgar Huntly, the Indian-fighter who is also the writer of the long letter that constitutes the novel, finds himself increasingly identified with the phantomlike Indians that threaten his own well-ordered community. Edgar is implicated in and suspected of every act of violence that takes place, and his written words are subject to so many changes, concealments, misinterpretations, and unintended exposures that they are finally equally implicated and even more suspect. His attack on the Indians turns to an attack on himself. As the madness escalates, the entire narrative begins to call itself into question. Readers are left wondering whether the novel’s villains—a host of nameless Indians and a demented Irishman—exist outside of Huntly’s letters, or whether Huntly is the sole author of every phantomlike being that he describes.

His friends and neighbors mistake him for a corpse, an Indian, and finally, a ghost. First, Clithero recoils from him “as from a spectre” (31). Next, a good woman gazes at him “as if a spectre had started into view” (196). As he nears home, he describes himself as an “apparition” about to “present itself” before his family (227). His mentor, Sarsefeld, shrinks from him, he writes, “as if I were an apparition or an impostor” (232). Huntly is haunted to be sure, but he also haunts his fellows.

In *Love and Death in the American Novel*, Leslie Fiedler applies the terms of Freudian psychoanalysis to *Edgar Huntly*, compares Brown’s American Gothic to the European version, and argues that the transposition deeply changes the genre. Fiedler writes that, “The European Gothic identified blackness with the superego and was therefore revolutionary in its implications; the American Gothic (at least as it followed the example of Brown) identified evil with the id and was therefore conservative at its deepest level of implication.”⁶ When cliffs are substituted for castle towers, and caves for dungeons, the threats and dangers of the natural world replace the threats and dangers of ancient aristocratic power structures. When Indians and panthers take the place of villainous Italian nobles and Catholic priests, the natural and wild predators of the New World replace the predatory hierarchies of the Old. In Europe, Gothic novels were fundamentally radical stories about modern people fighting ancient

regimes. As Fiedler would have it, the great departure of Brown’s American Gothic from the European is that while European Gothic novels worked to show the destruction of traditional power structures, the American version worked to show the formation of new power structures in the wilderness. In America, Fiedler argues, Brown reimagines the Gothic protagonist as one who struggles to establish order in the chaotic and savage world of his own soul.

Fiedler’s introduction of psychoanalytic criticism is appropriate for a novel whose central concern is haunted subjectivity. Smith-Rosenberg also takes a psychoanalytic or at least psychohistorical approach to *Edgar Huntly* in “Subject Female,” arguing that “quite self-consciously,” *Edgar Huntly* explores “a novel late eighteenth-century construction—the American subject.” But Smith-Rosenberg rejects Fiedler’s premise that *Edgar Huntly* is a proponent of Enlightenment rationalism and the new American order. To the contrary, she argues that “*Edgar Huntly*’s refusal of rational and cohesive subjectivity suggests that the European American is always a divided self.”⁷ I would go further; the novel suggests that the European American subject is founded on its own haunted ambivalence.

In “Alien Nation,” Jared Gardner objects to psychoanalytic readings of *Edgar Huntly*, in which “the landscape is internal, the shadows and doubles are projections of the divided self of the narrator, and the Indians are figures for the ‘dark’ (uncivilized, savage) nature with which Edgar must do violent battle to claim his civilized self.” Instead, Gardner argues that “the question of identity in *Edgar Huntly* is importantly national rather than (generally) human or (particularly) individual.”⁸ Gardner is right to emphasize the importance of national politics to the plot of *Edgar Huntly*, but it is equally important to realize that the novel collapses the national and the personal, and that its central theme is the collapse of both. To some extent, this reflects the spirit of the times. In 1786, Benjamin Rush asserted that every young man must “be taught that he does not belong to himself, but that he is public property.” His life “belong[s] to his country.” Similarly, John Adams declared that the Republic required “a positive Passion for the public good, the public interest. . . . Superior to all private Passions.”⁹ Brown examines the consequences of fostering such public passions in a nation whose foundational ethos eschews passion for reason.

In *Edgar Huntly*, Native Americans are ghostly figures of the irrational. Christopherson points out that they are “phantoms of the mind first; phantoms of the culture second; and only third, Leni Lenapes living in late-eighteenth-century Pennsylvania.”¹⁰ Queen Mab, the leader of Edgar’s Indian enemies, is presented in all three guises. She is meant to be a real Indian: Edgar Huntly describes her as a woman who “originally

belonged to the tribe of Delawares or Lennilennapee" (197). She is also, indisputably, a cultural phantom; Huntly whimsically names her "Queen Mab" in order to liken her to the "fairies' midwife," queen of dreams and nightmares, who is described in *Romeo and Juliet*.¹¹ The implication is that her measure of her own significance and political rights is delusional, but also that she is somehow correct about her importance—at least in the realm of delusions.

In the hallucinatory world of *Edgar Huntly*, dreams and nightmares are far more constant than reason. Huntly's own constitution, which he believes to be rational and enlightened, is actually capricious and haunted by irrationality. Queen Mab's constitution, on the other hand, is solid and unchanging, "a constitution that seemed to defy the ravages of time and the influence of the elements" (200). She is inhuman; linked with fairies on the one hand, and on the other, with the rocky cliffs and fastnesses of the land itself. Like the land, she defies the elements.

With the almost inevitable logic of a bad dream, Huntly explains that the phantom queen, leader of his enemies, is "wonderfully prepossessed" in his favor, because he is the only white resident of Norwalk who has taken the pains to learn her native language, and to "discourse with her on the few ideas which she possessed" (200). Notably, the discussion of her emotions and her thoughts is framed in terms of "possession." Since Huntly figures her as the queen of dreams, and since he is a sleepwalker, the language of possession grows multivalent. When he takes up tomahawk and fusil, Huntly can be said to be possessed by Queen Mab, or at least by some Indian spirit. At the same time, the root of the conflict is contested possession of the land itself. Insofar as Queen Mab represents the land, she is Huntly's mother, and that which he longs to possess. As she represents her tribe, she is his enemy, and a threat to his title to the land. The iconography of the period often depicted America as a fecund and mysterious Indian woman, who both beckoned and threatened white settlers. Queen Mab is like this icon, but she is also the queen of dreams. In this respect, she is the one who possesses Huntly, the supremely rational, enlightened, and educated young man whose faulty reason and untrustworthy (somnambulistic) constitution leads him into an orgy of killing, which he cannot end even when he is "satiated and gorged with slaughter" (190).

Queen Mab is invisible throughout the text. Nonetheless she is credited with directing the attacks of the "terrific" Indians who do appear. She may also direct the sleepwalker Huntly. Much of the violence takes place in her cottage, and on her land. Huntly and the girl whom he has rescued take refuge there. Then the Indians approach, and overcome by the "desperate impulse of passion," Huntly hides himself in Queen Mab's oven. He contemplates "the consequence of shrouding myself in

this cavity,” reflecting, “How strange is the destiny that governs mankind!” (181). The oven is womb and grave at the same time. When he emerges from the oven, he has taken on the guileful strategies of an Indian warrior. A bullet grazes his cheek, blood dyes his face red, and Huntly is impossible to distinguish from his Indian enemies. Like a revolutionary soldier or an Indian warrior, he feints, rolls, and slides across the land, and defeats his enemies by trickery.

After the showdown at Mab’s hut, Huntly’s friends mistake him for dead, and leave him pillowed upon “the breast of him whom I had shot in this part of the body” (189). Coated in blood, Huntly rises, and goes for water. At the spring, he glimpses a movement that he instantly identifies as an Indian: “my startled fancy figured to itself nothing but a human adversary,” he explains (191). The Native adversary is a figure of his fancy, as much imagined as real. As the man comes closer, his form and movements mark him as bestial and savage. “He moved on all fours. . . . His disfigured limbs, pendants from his ears and nose, and his shorn locks, were indubitable indications of a savage” (191).

The encounter exposes the fallacies at the heart of the nightmare logic of conquest. Huntly begins by proclaiming his own innocence and his peaceful nature. “My abhorrence of bloodshed was not abated,” he says, “But I had not foreseen this occurrence. . . . The mark was near, nothing obstructed or delayed; I incurred no danger and the event was certain.” An Indian presents himself as a “mark” or a target. There is no danger to Huntly, and he will surely be able to kill his victim. Presented with this opportunity, Huntly asks, “Why should he be suffered to live? . . . Fate has reserved for him a bloody and violent death. For how long a time soever it may be deferred, it is thus that his career will inevitably terminate.” The man’s death, after all, is inevitable. Once Huntly has reminded himself of this, he cocks his gun, and the Indian catches sight of him. At this juncture, Huntly writes, “I saw that forbearance was no longer in my power; but my heart sunk while I complied with what may surely be termed an indispensable necessity” (191–92). In the space of a moment, the Native American man has been transformed from a figure of fancy to a bestial savage, then a target, then a being fated for a bloody death, and finally someone whose murder “may surely be termed an indispensable necessity.”

But Huntly is a reluctant murderer. After his first shot, he writes, “Horror, and compassion, and remorse were mingled into one sentiment and took possession of my heart” (192). Possessed by strange, regretful passion, he shoots again, and finishes the job with his bayonet. Then he comments, “The task of cruel lenity was at length finished. I dropped the weapon and threw myself on the ground; overpowered by the horrors of the scene. Such are the deeds which perverse nature compels thousands of

rational beings to perform and to witness!" (193). Edgar is not unique. Since nature itself is perverse, "thousands of rational beings" find themselves compelled by "cruel lenity" to perform and to witness acts of horrifying brutality. These are the perils of the western wilderness, writ small. Rational and brutal, cruel and kind, perverse and natural, savage and civilized, red and white—Edgar Huntly encompasses the dire ambivalence of the American constitution.

As he began his career, Washington Irving struggled against the hallucinatory artistic vision of Charles Brockden Brown. Brown's haunted landscapes and his inchoate narratives painted a gloomy picture of an American subject that was dangerously close to madness. Irving hoped to contain the madness, to unify the American subject, and to construct a national literature. "In the early chronicles of these dark and melancholy times," he wrote, "we meet with many indications of the diseased state of the public mind."¹² He refers to the long, Rowlandsonian tradition of ambivalent jeremiads, but he seems also to be writing about more recent compositions such as *Edgar Huntly*. The diseased and unsettled state of the public mind is, after all, Brown's central theme. In order to cure the American disease, Irving was compelled to return to the ghostly figure of the Native American. His essay "Philip of Pokanoket," published in *Analectic Magazine* in 1813, focuses specifically on the Wampanoag leader King Philip (or Metacom) and more generally on the role of Native Americans in American literature. But Irving's comments can be applied directly to *Edgar Huntly*. His words about King Philip's War also describe Queen Mab's war. In fact, Irving seems to invoke Brown's vision explicitly. Like Brown's, his Indians are figures that "stalk, like gigantic shadows in the dim twilight of tradition,"¹³ while his description of Philip seems lifted from the pages of Brown's novel:

Philip became a theme of universal apprehension. The mystery in which he was enveloped exaggerated his real terrors. He was an evil that walked in darkness; whose coming none could foresee, and against which none knew when to be on the alert. The whole country abounded with rumours and alarms. Philip seemed almost possessed of ubiquity, for, in whatever part of the widely extended frontier an irruption from the forest took place, Philip was said to be its leader. Many superstitions were circulated concerning him. He was said to deal in necromancy and to be attended by an old Indian witch or prophetess, whom he consulted and who assisted him with her charms and incantations.¹⁴

Irving's sketch of Philip is usually paired with his "Traits of Indian Character," which was also published first in *Analectic Magazine*. The second essay, as I have discussed elsewhere, conjured forth its own Indian

ghost, in the shape of the sachem of Passonagessit’s mother. The two sketches, both of which depicted spectral Indians who were justifiably angry but nonetheless threatening, were later published side by side in *The Sketchbook of Sir Geoffrey Crayon*. Like many contemporary essays and speeches, the sketches call for Americans to take advantage of Native American sources and themes to differentiate Anglo-American writing from English.

Curiously, however, Irving ignored his own advice. Beyond these two, both of which call on American writers to write about Indians, there are no other Native American sketches or tales in *The Sketchbook*. In fact, Irving would not treat Native American themes again until he published *A Tour on the Prairie* in 1835. In light of these omissions, it seems that when Irving writes of ghostly or demonic Indians in *The Sketchbook*, his purpose is more to lay their ghosts to rest than to invoke them himself.

Although Irving hopes to quiet the horrors of Brown’s American Gothic, the new American romanticism that he proposes also relies on presenting Native Americans as ghosts, and it also assumes the inevitability of Indian disappearance.

They will vanish like a vapour from the face of the earth; their very history will be lost in forgetfulness; and “the places that now know them will know them no more forever.” Or if, perchance, some dubious memorial of them should survive, it may be in the romantic dreams of the poet, to people in imagination his glades and groves, like the fauns and satyrs and sylvan deities of antiquity.¹⁵

The real Indians are forgotten; the tawny and terrific phantoms of *Edgar Huntly* may give way to the classically inflected, romantic dreams of Irving’s “Traits of Indian Character,” but either way, the Native Americans disappear into the minds of white American men.

In *The Sketchbook* itself, Irving’s technique is one of displacement. When Rip Van Winkle ventures into the wilderness, for example, he seems to expect that he will encounter an Indian, or perhaps an Indian ghost. Instead, Rip finds the bumptious specters of Hudson and his crew, who have taken the place of the Indian spirits the reader has been led to expect. Later, when Rip returns after his long and dreamless sleep, he finds that President George has replaced King George on the tavern sign, though their faces remain eerily the same. The displacement of Native Americans with early settlers in Irving’s work parallels the replacement of Hanover by Washington. It is central to the drama, and, at the same time, it is silently passed over. This is how repression works. Native Americans are not forgotten in Irving’s texts, but they are civilized and controlled, clothed in the odd garments of Dutchmen, and made into tame and un-frightening figures.

In the writings that follow *The Sketchbook*, Native American phantoms continue to appear and reappear, while each apparition reinforces the notion that Indians must inevitably vanish. Sometimes the spectral Indians reveal the horrors of American nationalism as they do in *Edgar Huntly*. Sometimes they reveal the unique aesthetic possibilities of America, as they do in Irving's *The Sketchbook*. Often, ghostly Indians are simultaneously horrific and aestheticized.

Of all the Indian ghosts I have come across, I am fondest of the Mysterious Chief who haunts Samuel Woodworth's 1818 novel *The Champions of Freedom, or, The Mysterious Chief*. This Native American ghost functions as the mouthpiece of American nationalism, and simultaneously as a young man's conscience. Although he seems to be a Miami warrior, at the climax of the story Woodworth enacts a displacement that was surely inspired by Irving and reveals, startlingly, that the chief is actually George Washington himself, appearing as a spectral Indian.

The Mysterious Chief appears at every dramatic turn of the story to advise his young protégé, George Washington Willoughby, an army captain fighting on the Canadian border in the War of 1812. The chief advocates the moral duties of patriotism, and prophesies that if Willoughby follows his advice, he will defeat a host of enemies single-handedly. But since the novel is based on a factual history of the Canadian front, there are few opportunities for glory. As the war closes, Willoughby asks his ghostly mentor about the unfulfilled prophecy. The chief explains that although his military record is only average, the promise has been fulfilled: "You have at length become all I can wish—you have adhered to my precepts and defeated a host of internal foes that were more dangerous to your peace than the British were to your country."¹⁶

This interchange points to many of the most important aspects of Indian spectralization. First, Indian ghosts show that the most important American battlefields are within the heads of white American men, while the most dangerous enemies are "internal foes." Next, the Indian ghost acts as a revisionist historian, turning America's historical indignities into spiritual or mental glories. Finally, it will turn out that the Indian ghost is none other than the father of his country. The Mysterious Chief's explanation of Willoughby's unnoticed triumph over evil is not the novel's climax. The last scene is written as a script:

George. What then am I to think of you?

M.C. Think of me as an ALLEGORY—and let it be recorded in your journal, that it is the duty of every parent to believe that his children are *speciallly* destined by Heaven for a life of *peculiar usefulness*—in order that he may be thereby induced to prepare them for such a life. I repeat—that, as the instrument of heaven I

achieved every victory which graces your Journal; because (let it be recorded) whenever Americans would succeed, either in peace or in war, their counsels must be actuated and their heroes inspired by the *Spirit of Washington*.¹⁷

The Indian ghost turns out to be George Washington, the father of his country. His last words reflect on his role as spiritual father of every American, and counsel every father to prepare every child for a life of *peculiar usefulness*, as he has prepared George Washington Willoughby. The transformation of the Indian ghost into the spirit of the first president works to remove Indians completely from the text—they were never really there at all. But also, more important, it establishes Indian ghosts as fathers of their country, thereby constituting young Americans as the children and spiritual heirs of the Native Americans. The slippage between the Indian chief and the Great White Father makes young George Washington Willoughby into the legitimate heir of Indian lands, and revises history in order to remove the stains of injustice from the American legacy.

Edgar Huntly, *The Sketchbook*, and *The Champions of Freedom* employ Native phantoms for vastly different ends. In Brown’s work, the specters undermine the American Constitution and question national sanity. In Irving’s writing, similar specters cast a classic glow over the American landscape, and establish the gentle pleasures of American romanticism. For Woodworth, the supernatural capacities of the Mysterious Chief enable George Washington to act as father to a new generation of American boys. But no matter how they use the figure, all three writers seem to find Native American phantoms an inevitable corollary to American nationalism.

Brown, Irving, Woodworth, and their peers based their constructions of Indian ghosts on the poetry of Freneau and Morton, on the silences of the Constitution and on the bloody and almost unceasing Indian wars of the period. In different ways, these writers were attempting to write nationalist fiction and to draw on American history and nationhood in their work. Their Indian ghosts were certainly shaped by the recent historical past; by the Revolution, the Constitution, and the Indian wars and treaties of the late eighteenth century. Just as important, their Indian ghosts shaped the nation and the national literature, constructing America as a haunted community rather than a simple imagined one.

The following pages will examine the haunted writings of Child, Cooper, Apess, and Hawthorne, and their uncanny importance to the politics and policies of nineteenth-century American Indian Removal. Because these nation-building works of imagination rest on the haunted foundations of the Gothic, they are necessarily inhabited by ghosts. Because white America displaces, dispossesses, and even attempts to destroy

Indian America, the texts must construct America as a nation haunted by Indian ghosts. Colonel Pyncheon comes to mind, building his seven-gabled house over Maule's "unquiet grave," while he bases his dreams of glory on an Indian deed. Hawthorne writes that, "His home would include the home of the dead and buried wizard, and would thus afford the ghost of the latter a kind of privilege to haunt its new apartments."¹⁸ In another context, setting out to build a haunted house would be absurd. However, in America, where every white American home displaces an Indian one (if not a wizard's), it may be inevitable.

PART TWO



EROTIC POLITICS



Contesting the Frontier Romance

Child and Cooper

☞ Mary Rowlandson was a frightening and compelling figure for early American readers. She represented both the unsettling powers of the savage wilderness and the strength of civilized Christian domesticity. She was able to contain and give voice to these battling forces because she was a woman who had lived among the Indians. Rowlandson's narrative, which was one of the best selling of all American books, inspired many other writers. She herself, as a returned captive, also continued to haunt American narratives. Soon, she was joined by a great many other women (and a few men) whose stories of their sojourns among the Indians captivated the American imagination. Among these, Jane McCrea, who was killed, and Eunice Williams and Mary Jemison, both of whom chose not to return, were some of the most compelling.

These women were fascinating because they were women, and because their gender gave them a uniquely ambivalent place within the social and legislative hierarchies of the American nation. Their existence, and their stories, troubled national consciousness, even as it helped to form that consciousness. Rowlandson and Jemison both published books about their experiences, and their own stories (framed by the white men who sponsored them) were not only available to, but also avidly consumed by, American readers. In addition, the stories of all of these women inspired the writers of early-nineteenth-century historical romances. In particular, early-nineteenth-century novels seemed to return again and again to Williams and Jemison, who married Indians, and to McCrea, who was violated and killed by them.

In the following chapters I will discuss frontier romances by Lydia Maria Child¹ and James Fenimore Cooper that engage with the erotic politics of nationalism by presenting two very different perspectives on sex between white women and Indian men. Child's work, I will argue, uses the metaphors and plots of Indian spectralization and romantic love to assert female subjectivity and to claim the body and the political community for white American women. Her story about Mary Conant is

strikingly similar to Mary Jemison's story, with the difference that, after her marriage, Mary Conant finally returns. Cooper's works respond to Child's, turning her conventions around in order to reassert white male supremacy, and to push white women back into the subterranean realm of irrational passion and ghostliness that Child had struggled against. *The Last of the Mohicans*, I will argue, recalls the Jane McCrea story, while *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is parallel to Eunice Williams's.

Both Child and Cooper are American nationalists, and both accept Indian disappearance as an inevitability. But Child presents a Native American man as a locus of female desire and uses him as a means for claiming women's political rights and asserting female embodiment. Cooper, on the other hand, draws his readers into the fantastic world of American manliness, projecting Native American men and white women side by side as powerless objects of European American male desire.

In the first chapter of *Hobomok* (1824), witchcraft, eros, and a moonlit forest bring together the spectral figures of a white woman and an Indian. Mary Conant draws a magic circle in the woods, and repeats an incantation three times, asking that,

Whoever's to claim a husband's power,
Come to me in the moonlight hour.
.....
Whoe'er my bridegroom is to be,
Step in the circle after me.²

At the end of the third repetition, Hobomok, a young Wampanoag Indian, "spring[s] forward into the centre" (13) of her circle. Mary Conant is shocked and frightened by Hobomok's appearance, and at first she thinks he is a ghost. She utters an "involuntary shriek of terror," and then she waits until "the tones of his voice ha[ve] convinced her that he [is] real flesh and blood" (13). Later, when Conant tells her friend Sally Oldham about Hobomok's appearance, Oldham asks, "But was it he, real flesh and blood?" (20). Conant answers, "It was he himself; though I thought at first it must be his ghost!" (20). For both women, Hobomok's corporeality is the first question. It is easier to understand him as a ghost than as a man.

Mary Conant is herself a ghostly figure. Her encounter with Hobomok is observed by the young Puritan narrator of the chapter, who first mistakes Mary for a ghost, and then, like Mary, mistakes Hobomok for one. In the beginning, Mary Conant and Hobomok are united by the fact that they are both perceived as ghostly beings.

At the start of *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), only the Indians are ghostly. When Alice Munro catches her first glimpse of Magua, she cries

out, "Are such spectres frequent in the woods?"³ Like Hobomok, Magua enters the novel as a ghostly figure. Like Mary Conant, Alice Munro feels that only the "tones of the human voice" (491) can reassure her. Where Hobomok speaks, Magua is silent. At the beginning of *Hobomok*, it is clear that the Indian is actually human, although he may be perceived as demonic or spectral. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, the Indian's humanity is less certain.

The women are presented quite differently as well. Child's language emphasizes Conant's ghostly qualities and denies her corporeality: she is a "blooming fairy," with a "little aerial foot," and a "sylph-like figure," "one of those fair visions which fancy gives to slumber" (8, 9, 16, 59). Cooper, on the other hand, introduces Alice and Cora Munro with detailed physical descriptions. Alice has a "dazzling complexion, fair golden hair, and bright blue eyes" (488). Cora has "tresses" that are "shining and black, like the plumage of the raven. Her complexion was not brown, but rather it appeared charged with the colour of the rich blood, that seemed ready to burst its bounds" (488–89). Cora also has "a row of teeth that would have shamed the purest ivory" (489), and both Alice and Cora have bodies "moulded with the same exquisite proportions" (488).

Although *The Last of the Mohicans* begins by describing Alice and Cora Munro's bodies, it ends by erasing them. At the end of the book, Cora is actually dead, and described as the ghostly bride of an Indian, "transplanted . . . to a place where she would find congenial spirits, and be forever happy" (870). Alice is invisible, borne away within a litter, "whence low and stifled sobs alone announced [her] presence" (875). *Hobomok*, on the other hand, allows Mary Conant to transcend her spectrality and leave behind her angelic purity. She marries Hobomok and gives birth to a son. Later, she divorces him, keeping custody of her child and retaining her own wealth. Her own possession of her body is affirmed when she goes on to marry again.

In all the works under consideration here, *Hobomok* (1825), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1827), and *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* (1829), Indian spectralization is the literary corollary to Indian Removal, removing Indians from American culture as they are removed from American territory. The spectralization of white women, on the other hand, works very differently within these books. In *Hobomok*, Lydia Maria Child constructs an uncannily powerful authorial voice for herself, and allows her character, Mary Conant, to be successful in her struggle against her culture's attempt to ghost her. Cooper also finds a powerful voice in his novels, but rather than the ambivalent and haunting voice of an uncanny woman, his is the sexual and violent voice of white male "wish fulfillment," as D. H. Lawrence describes it.⁴ In Cooper's novels, women are

silenced, either like Indians, by being buried, or by being returned to a completely enclosing domestic space. Cora Munro acquiesces to her death and her spectralization as nobly as any savage, while her sister Alice weeps invisibly. In *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, Ruth/Narra-mattah does not merely acquiesce to spectralization; her spirit “struggle[s] heavily to escape from its earthly prison.”⁵

Because *Hobomok* constructs the paradigm of miscegenistic spectrality to which both of Cooper’s novels respond, *Hobomok* is the central text in this section. As Carolyn Karcher puts it, “Cooper raises the specter of a love affair between a white woman and an Indian only to dispel it. . . . But the ghost of *Hobomok* was not so easily laid.”⁶ Karcher sees *The Last of the Mohicans* as “an answer” to *Hobomok*’s “challenge,” while Nina Baym argues that the purpose of *The Last of the Mohicans* is “to disparage Child’s novel as a juvenile and potentially harmful fantasy.”⁷ Along with Cooper, all of the authors of frontier romances that follow *Hobomok* respond to Child’s imaginative vision.

Child herself wrote *Hobomok* in response to John Gorham Palfrey’s essay in *The North American Review* that called for such books. In her preface, the narrator declares that “P——’s remarks concerning our early history have half tempted me to write a New England novel” (4). Child modeled her work after the *Waverly* novels of Sir Walter Scott, and also James Fenimore Cooper’s novels of revolutionary and postrevolutionary history, *The Spy* (1821), *The Pioneers* (1823), and *The Pilot* (1823). After referring to Palfrey, the preface to *Hobomok* goes on to mention these works, saying that “American ground is occupied” by Cooper’s novels, while “Scott wanders over every land with the same proud, elastic tread” (4). It is notable that Child chooses the metaphor of occupied ground to assert her relation to Cooper, since the occupying of American ground is one of the central concerns of the frontier romance, and since Child’s work emphasizes the indeterminate and uncertain nature of ownership and occupation in the American borderland.

Cooper’s *Leatherstocking Tales* are generally regarded as representative frontier romances. However, *Hobomok* introduces many of the elements that characterize the later books in the series. The first *Leatherstocking* book, *The Pioneers* (1820), is certainly not a quintessential example of a frontier romance. There is no young Indian man in *The Pioneers* (Indian John is feeble, alcoholic, and a convert to Anglo-Christian beliefs and practices). There is no miscegenation plot (though the question of “Oliver’s” race lends suspense to the story). Even the forests of the novel are atypical of the wildernesses of later frontier romances; the land has been surveyed and deeded, and it is occupied by white Americans, along with a single, Christianized Indian. Further, the territory of the novel is owned and governed by one white American patriarch.

Hobomok, which follows *The Pioneers*, is the first to introduce many of the elements that are associated with frontier romances. *Hobomok* features a young Indian man as the title character. It is the first American novel to portray the miscegenistic union of a white woman and an Indian man. Most important, the novel presents the American frontier as an essentially mysterious place, uncharted and unstable. When the frontier is imagined as an unstable region where meanings shift as cultures encounter each other, the discourse of ghostliness becomes a useful tool for describing the mysterious encounters that take place within it. *Hobomok* is the first novel to present a handsome and vital Indian man as a ghostly figure, and to tell the story of a white woman who joins him in the realms of ghostliness.

Hobomok is central to American literature. The frontier romances that follow *Hobomok* treat miscegenation, and also adopt the language of spectralization that it introduces. But in many cases their echoes of *Hobomok* are also attempts to alter its message; to rebury the ghostly erotic possibilities that Child has brought forth. Although Child and Cooper both present marriage between a white woman and an Indian brave as ghostly exile from the American nation, Child views this exile as figurative, and reversible; Mary Conant comes back from the “oblivion” of Hobomok’s wigwam to a substantial house in Salem (136). In *The Last of the Mohicans*, on the other hand, Cooper will allow his miscegenistic marriage to be consummated only in the actual burial of his characters. *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* returns once more to the miscegenation plot. It allows the transgressive marriage to take place, but then regret and conflicting loyalties drive both husband and wife to their graves.

If miscegenation was one American cultural obsession in the early decades of the nineteenth century, national history was another. The haunted texts that I am examining are not explicitly about early-nineteenth-century America. Instead, all of them are presented as histories, or at least as historical romances. *Hobomok* is set in Salem, Massachusetts, in the 1630s. *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is located in the Connecticut Valley, and takes place during the decades leading up to King Philip’s War in 1676. *The Last of the Mohicans* is “A Tale of 1757,” set in the Adirondacks.

Historical writing was quite common in the early part of the nineteenth century, as was the language of ghostliness. But the texts that part 2, “Erotic Politics,” considers wield the metaphor of ghostliness in a few very particular ways. Specifically, they call forth the ghosts of Indian men and white women. Each narrative struggles to repress and control the dangers that these conjoined figures represent to the patriarchal and racially hierarchical culture of the young American nation. At the same time, the works try to construct a past for America, and they also cater to

America's fascination with the Indians that it seeks to remove from its present. In their focus upon "the Indian question," the works refer to one of the most controversial political issues of their time. In addition, the use of Native American figures, as well as the marriages between Indians and Europeans, make the stories uniquely American, as opposed to European. The most fascinating and frightening Americans in these stories are women who are joined to Indians. In nineteenth-century America, neither history nor nation can be imagined without calling forth the specters of race and sex.



The Phantom Lovers of Hobomok

☞ In 1824, Lydia Maria Child was a twenty-two-year-old “invisible” woman, unmarried and unpublished. She wrote *Hobomok*, her first novel, while sitting at her brother’s desk. She published it under the pen name “An American.” In writing and publishing *Hobomok*, Child was attempting to emerge from the shroud of ghostly invisibility that cloaked early-nineteenth-century American women and to take her place on the national stage.

Within *Hobomok* itself, the struggle against ghostliness is central. Child constructs her plot so that each of the three main characters, Mary Conant, Hobomok, and Charles Brown, is mistaken for a ghost, and challenged to assert her or his own reality. She also addresses the cultural spectralization of white women and of Indian men by joining them in marriage. Child’s depiction of a marriage between a white woman and an Indian man shows, graphically, that white women’s alienation from the American polity unites them with those who are excluded from the nation because of racial difference. White women and dark men dwell together in an American netherworld.

As Mary Kelley describes it, the denial of public voices to early-nineteenth-century American women kept them “culturally invisible.”¹ The metaphor of cultural invisibility has also been used to describe African Americans and Native Americans in the early nineteenth century, the time of slavery and Indian Removal. For example, Toni Morrison explores the invisibility of African Americans in *Playing in the Dark*, while Barry O’Connell uses the language of invisibility to describe early-nineteenth-century Native Americans in *On Our Own Ground*.

Later in her career, Child herself would become an abolitionist and an advocate for African American rights. In 1862, she would use a ghostly metaphor to describe the oppression of African Americans: “Alas! behind our president’s chair, behind the seats of Congress, in the pulpits with our preachers, on the platform with our Fourth-of-July orators, stood the ghost of the slave, saying by his mute presence, more emphatically than words could utter it, “Oh ye *Hypocrites!*”² But in her first

novel, Child concerned herself with describing the forces that worked to turn Native Americans and white women into phantoms that haunted the young American nation.

Child's description of a Native American man as a ghostly figure connects her to a tradition of Indian spectralization that I have discussed in the works of many of her predecessors: Freneau, Morton, Brown, Irving, Woodworth, and Eastburn and Sands, the authors of *Yamoyden*. But Child's treatment of spectralization differs from the earlier ones. She objects to the implications of casting living people as ghosts. By forcing all of her characters into ghostliness, white as well as Indian, male as well as female, Child demonstrates the inherent violence of literary spectralization. Her work shows the universally negative impact of spectralization, though her primary purpose in the novel is to bring white women out of spectrality. Perhaps, in 1824, Child believed that the Indians were a lost cause; both *Hobomok*, the novel, and Hobomok, the character, acquiesce to the removal and eventual disappearance of Native Americans as if inevitable.³ At the end of the novel, Hobomok voluntarily departs for the land of the dead so that Mary Conant may emerge from ghostliness and take her place as a founder of the new American nation.⁴

As I mentioned in chapter 4, Child wrote that *Hobomok* was directly inspired by John Gorham Palfrey's review of *Yamoyden*, a narrative poem about King Philip's War by James Wallis Eastburn and Robert Sands. *Yamoyden* locates its Indians within a poetic American past, a "phantom-peopled realm" that it compares to the "classic realms of splendors past." Within that realm, Indians are necessarily phantoms. The poem declares that its goal is to conjure forth the ghosts of Indians:

evoke the plumed chieftains brave,
And bid their martial hosts arise again,
Where Narragansett's tides roll by their grave⁵

The reviewer, Palfrey, commended this poetic use of the ghostly Indian past and called on other writers to produce narratives based on New England's history. He wrote,

We are glad that somebody has at last found out the unequalled fitness of our early history for a work of fiction. For ourselves, we know not the country or age which has such capacities in this view as N. England in its early day; nor do we suppose it is easy to imagine any element of the sublime, the wonderful, the picturesque and the pathetic, which is not to be found here by him who shall hold the witch-hazel wand that can trace it.⁶

Grasping that "witch-hazel wand," Child responded to Palfrey's challenge. Later, she related that

One Sunday noon, I took up the *N. American Review*, and read Mr. Palfrey's review of *Yamoyden*, in which he eloquently describes the adaptation of early N. England history to the purposes of fiction. I know not what impelled me; I had never dreamed of such a thing as turning author; but I siezed [*sic*] a pen, and before the bell rang for afternoon meeting, I had written the first chapter, exactly as it now stands.⁷

As Child, Palfrey, and Eastburn and Sands construct it, writing an American historical novel in the early nineteenth century is a magical project. *Yamoyden* is set in a "phantom-peopled realm," while both Palfrey's call for historical fictions and Child's description of her response to it allude to the supernatural.

Another important source for *Hobomok* is Sarah Wentworth Morton's narrative poem *Ouabi*. Although there is not as clear a record of *Ouabi*'s influence on *Hobomok* as there is for *Yamoyden*'s, there are striking similarities between the plots of Morton's poem and Child's novel. In both, a young woman marries a ghostly Indian, but gives her heart to a white man. In both, the Indian relinquishes his wife, divorces her in spite of her own qualms of conscience, and nobly vanishes. The Native American context of each work frees the authors to present female erotic desire, to allow women to choose their own partners, and to condone divorce. Further, the Native American setting of each work makes it representatively American, thereby casting women with erotic prerogatives as models of American freedom. Notably, both works rely upon supernatural powers to revise and transform American history, and both present ghostly Native Americans as fathers of America.

In the first chapter of *Hobomok*, Child adopts the voice of a young Puritan man who is both attracted to and terrified by Mary Conant. He goes into the forest to pray, because his spirit is struggling against Mary Conant's physical attractiveness, which he terms her "childish witchery." As he kneels, a slender figure flits before him into the woods. Everything that he has "heard of visitants from other worlds [falls] coldly on [his] heart," and he is filled with paralyzing fear. However, when "the rays of the full moon [rest] on her face," the narrator realizes that the apparition is not a ghost, but is Mary Conant in the flesh.⁸

He overcomes his fear and surprise enough to follow her deeper into the forest, to Endicott's Hollow, where she attempts to conjure forth a husband for herself. Her spell has unexpected consequences, summoning her Wampanoag Indian friend, Hobomok, rather than the Episcopalian lover she expects. Mary's own erotic longings have prompted her pagan ritual, just as the narrator's prompted his moonlit prayer. While the narrator fights to quell his feelings, Mary turns to witchcraft. Her expression of her illicit desires calls forth a spectral Indian, a figure who inspires her with fear and horror just as her own figure fills the narrator with horror.

Then, “a third person ma[kes] his appearance” in the moonlit forest. The narrator is not certain of his identity, describing him as an “appearance in whom I thought I recognized young Brown” (14). Like Conant’s and Hobomok’s sudden appearances, Charles Brown’s first “appearance” is mysterious and sudden, even apparitional. Throughout the novel, Brown will repeatedly be thrust into spectrality along with Mary Conant and Hobomok. His own horror and frustration at being spectralized and his struggles to emerge from ghostliness will constitute one of the most fascinating and unique subplots of the novel.

Mary Conant will marry both men later in the novel, but in the beginning, they and she are united by the fact that they are perceived as ghostly beings. At the start of *Hobomok*, all of the characters have tenuous grasps upon their own corporeality, and even upon their own identities. They are easy to mistake for ghosts. By the end of the novel, Mary Conant will have fashioned an American reality in which her body and her will are central. Her European husband will resign himself to living at her American hearthside, though he muses that his “existence [is] . . . as sad as those dull clouds” (143). Her Indian husband, Hobomok, will leave their American son behind him, and vanish irrevocably.

In constructing her woman-centered version of American nationhood, Child drew on, and radically revised, early Puritan histories such as John Winthrop’s *Journal*, William Hubbard’s *General History of New England*, and Nathaniel Morton’s *New England’s Memorial*.⁹ Child also incorporated more recent events, specifically, the Salem witchcraft trials, and the stories of Eunice Williams and Mary Jemison, two white women who were notorious for their marriages to Indian men. Mary Conant’s marriage is also parallel to one historical witchcraft case: Richard Slotkin writes that “In 1653, a woman was hanged for borrowing ‘gods’ of the Indians, which she worshipped, and for taking the Indian devil-god Hobamock for a husband.”¹⁰

In addition, Carol Karlsen recounts that the accusers of the Salem witches practiced a magic ritual much like Mary Conant’s:

The outbreak began in the final weeks of 1691, when several girls and young women in Salem Village began to experiment with magic. Apprehensive about their futures, they clustered around an improvised crystal ball, trying to find out, among other things, “what trade their sweet harts should be of.” The image they saw was more frightful than they had imagined—“a spectre in likeness of a Coffin.” Before long, a few of them . . . began to have fits and exhibit other manifestations of possession.¹¹

Like Mary Conant, the historical figures were motivated by their worries about courtship and marriage. As Carolyn Karcher puts it, the purpose of Mary Conant’s magic “is to ascertain whether Brown will become

her husband despite her father's interdiction—that is, whether matriarchal nature will prevail over patriarchal culture, primitive sexuality over civilized repression, and female witchcraft over male Puritan ideology.”¹²

Witchcraft in this context is sexual rather than spiritual. The Puritan narrator uses “childish witchery” to describe Mary Conant's attractiveness rather than her midnight ritual (12). “Witchery” is also used to describe Conant's first attraction to Charles Brown, and “Hobomok's connexion with her [is] considered the effect of witchcraft on his part.” In each of these cases, “witchcraft” is more sexual than demonic (78, 135). Child's Hobomok is an Indian, but he is nothing like a seventeenth-century devil-god. To the contrary, Conant's marriage to him is primarily a physical covenant rather than a spiritual one.

If Mary is something of a witch, her mother, Mrs. Conant, is the opposite: a good wife. Mrs. Conant exemplifies Puritan womanhood, and she also makes the metaphor of spectralization literal. Her life throughout the book is actually an extremely protracted death, a long and exhausting process of purification from the bodily. Mrs. Conant's frail physical health signals her goodness. Mary succinctly expresses the link between physical frailty and spiritual perfection when she tells Charles that “the sicker she is, the more she seemeth like an angel” (48). Her mother's “mournful smile” is also holy: “one of those smiles in which the glowing light of the ethereal inhabitant seemed gleaming through its pale and broken tenement” (75).

Mrs. Conant's long-awaited death is introduced by an epigraph from Percival:

Her eye still beams unwonted fires,
with a woman's love and a saint's desires. (107)

The conjunction of “a woman's love and a saint's desires” is key to Child's representation of Mrs. Conant. She may love her husband, but that love is decidedly not erotic. Her desires are saintly rather than earthly. The “unwonted” fire in her eyes is kindled by the prospect of death rather than by life. Although “unwonted” means unusual, it sounds suspiciously like “unwanted.” Child makes it quite clear that fire, like desire, is an unwanted quality in a wife. Rather than flaring in public, the damped-down fires that burn within good wives consume their bodies. Mrs. Conant is literally and figuratively dying of consumption.

In *Hobomok*, good wives are ghostly creatures, and eventually they leave behind the living death of their self-denying wifeness, and attain actual death. Mrs. Conant plays the role of every wife, and her death is no different from that scripted for all obedient wives. Child makes this clear by plotting her story so that Mrs. Conant shares her apotheosis

with another self-sacrificing Puritan wife, Arabella Johnson. Much of their dual death scene is written in a strange plural: “they both retired to the same apartment, and laid themselves down on the beds from which they were never more to rise. Their feeble hold on life daily grew more precarious, till at length nothing could tempt their anxious husbands from the pillow” (108). After both women have died, Child drives home the point that their fate is common to all dutiful wives. “There, in that miserable room, lay the descendants of two noble houses. Both alike victims to what has always been the source of women’s greatest misery—love—deep and unwearied love” (111).

It is no surprise that Mary Conant evades the conventional marriage plot after witnessing the shared death of the two obedient wives. It is also unsurprising that, as Karcher points out, contemporary critics of *Hobomok* singled out Mrs. Conant and Mrs. Johnson’s strange dual death scene as one of the few redeeming moments in the novel.¹³ The same critics were shocked and horrified by Mary Conant’s refusal to share her mother’s exemplary fate, and by Child’s description of an alternative choice.

Because Child’s female protagonist makes choices, she is very different from her predecessors in American literature. As someone who lives in a wigwam, outside of the settlements, she reminds us of Mary Rowlandson and the other historical female captives. But she is not a captive—she’s a volunteer. Conant’s transgressive marriage to Hobomok differs from the well-known historical marriages of white women and Indians as much as her “childish witchery” differs from historical witchcraft cases. Eunice Williams and Mary Jemison, the best-known white women with Indian husbands, were both captives who were married after years of captivity.¹⁴ In 1824, when *Hobomok* was published, its “best-selling nonfictional competitor” was James Everett Seaver’s *A Narrative of the Life of Mary Jemison*.¹⁵ During that year, *A Narrative* sold at least one hundred thousand copies,¹⁶ while *Hobomok* sold fewer than five hundred.¹⁷

Curiously, the two works use quite similar formulations to describe their white heroines’ feeling about their Indian husbands. In Seaver’s book, Jemison says, “The idea of spending my days with him at first seemed perfectly irreconcilable to my feelings: but his generosity, tenderness and friendship towards me, soon gained my affection; and strange as it may seem, I loved him!”¹⁸ In *Hobomok*, Mary Conant says, “I have no doubt you think I must be miserable; but I speak truly when I say that every day I live with that kind, noble-hearted creature, the better I love him” (137).

Although *A Narrative of the Life of Mary Jemison* and *Hobomok* describe interracial marriage in similar terms, public reaction to them was very different. Jemison’s story, which begins with a graphic account of

her capture and the killing and scalping of her family, was not only extremely popular, but also considered suitable reading for children, “well calculated to excite their attention, inform their understanding, and improve them.”¹⁹ Mary Conant’s story is fictional rather than factual, but the more important difference is that Conant’s marriage is not forced.²⁰ The *North American Review* condemned Child’s portrayal of consensual miscegenation as “not only unnatural, but also revolting . . . to every feeling of delicacy in man or woman.”²¹ A second review concurred: “There can be . . . but one opinion respecting this story; it is in very bad taste, to say the least.”²²

Neither a passive victim of Puritan society like her mother, nor an unwilling captive of hostile Indians like her nonfictional counterparts, Mary Conant is instead an active and willing transgressor of the marriage conventions of both seventeenth-century and nineteenth-century New England. Conant’s behavior is an act of desperation as well as defiance. In the first chapter of *Hobomok*, her anonymous Puritan lover denies her body and perceives her as a ghost. In the next chapters she watches her ghostlike mother’s sad progression toward the ultimate sacrifice that the role of exemplary wife demands. Soon after her mother’s death, Mary has a vision of a phantom ship, and then learns that Charles Brown has been lost in a shipwreck. If she were to remain in her father’s house, Mary Conant would consign herself to a fate much like her mother’s, and waste away toward death. Her decision to marry Hobomok, therefore, is an attempt to evade death, and to claim her own fate.

At the same time, marriage to Hobomok is a form of social suicide. By marrying an Indian, she makes herself an outcast from the Puritan community. Her ostracism is so absolute that she is virtually dead. Indeed, in many ways, her decision to join the other world of the Indians distances her from her own world more than mere death would have.

Child makes the link between marriage and death explicit by having Conant propose to Hobomok while standing on her mother’s grave. He has found her lying there, “her head on the cold sod.” “It’s a cold night for Mary to be on the graves,” he says. She responds by telling him that “I shall soon be in my own grave,” and then proposes: “I will be your wife, Hobomok, if you love me” (120, 121). The marriage is a form of self-burial, a renunciation of life as she knows it. She chooses to marry Hobomok rather than to die, but Mary Conant’s marriage spectralizes her anyway. She is an outcast, a sexually transgressive specter like Hester Prynne, whom Hawthorne described as “apart from mortal interests, yet close beside them, like a ghost that, . . . should it succeed in manifesting its forbidden sympathy, awaken[s] only terror and horrible repugnance.”²³

There is nothing joyful about Mary Conant’s decision to marry Hobomok. Child describes her mental state as “chaos,” “a dim twilight, which

had at first made all objects shadowy and which was rapidly darkening into misery." Her thoughts are "a broken and confused mass," "in which a sense of sudden bereavement, deep and bitter reproaches against her father, and a blind belief in fatality were alone conspicuous" (121). Bereavement, reproach, fatality. Bereavement: she mourns her mother and her lover. Reproach: she blames her father for both losses. Fatality: she believes that she is powerless against him, and powerless in the face of her own inevitable doom.

But "fatality" has two different meanings. It can simply be death, or it can be any inevitable destiny. Rather than being buried in an earthen grave beside her mother, or in the psychic tomb of her father's house, Mary Conant chooses to bury herself in the wilderness, to marry a savage. By this choice she rejects her father and her father's society, and, more pointedly, his Christian beliefs. When she decides that her own fate has already been determined by her decidedly un-Christian ritual in Endicott's Hollow, she is choosing to believe in the anti-Christian, antipatriarchal "fates" of lore and legend rather than the "fatality" that her father's Christianity has brought upon those she loves.

It is a choice between dooms. As early-nineteenth-century readers would understand it, she chooses between death and a "fate worse than death." The journey from her father's house to Hobomok's wigwam is very much like a journey into the underworld: "The whole scene was singularly melancholy. Nothing but the face of the Indian wore an expression of gladness. Mary, so pale and motionless, might have seemed like a being from another world, had not her wild, frenzied look revealed too much of human wretchedness" (123).

In this description, Mary is portrayed as almost "a being from another world," *almost* a ghost. The only thing that distinguishes her from a specter is her "human wretchedness." Her marriage makes her father more wretched than her death would have. When he is told of the marriage, he responds, "I could more readily have covered her face with clods, than bear this, but the Lord's will be done." A few moments later he reiterates: "I had made up my mind to her watery grave, . . . but to have her lie in the bosom of a savage and mingle her prayers with a heathen, who knoweth not God, is hard for a father's heart to endure" (133).

After her marriage, Mr. Conant sees Mary as a ghostly figure, and he uses the language of ghostliness in his letters to her. His first letter "conjured her not to consider a marriage lawful, which had been performed in a moment of derangement," while the second offers "oblivion of all the past" (135, 136). Conjury and oblivion; the language that describes Mary Conant's marriage to Hobomok evokes the supernatural and refers to Mary Conant's ghostly fate. That fate is more repugnant than death;

her own father would have preferred to bury her like her mother or to consign her to a watery grave like her white lover's.

The concept of a "fate worse than death" is endemic to the literature of the period. It is a gendered fate: women are vulnerable to it, but men are not. It is also a race-specific fate: only white women are threatened with the "fate worse than death." At first reading, most references to the "fate worse than death" seem to be euphemistic references to rape, specifically the rape of white women by non-white men. However, in *Hobomok*, the fate worse than death is more complicated than rape; it is actually interracial marriage. It is clear that white men deem such marriages worse than death, but it is not as clear that white women see them the same way. Although Mary Conant is spectralized by her marriage to Hobomok, she is eventually able to reemerge from spectrality and to create her own, woman-centered America.

Child's notion that spectralization is a process that may be struggled against, and even overcome, is one of the most revolutionary ideas in her wholly revolutionary novel. Surprisingly, her clearest depiction of the process of spectralization is plotted around Charles Brown, the white male protagonist. When Conant recites the incantation that summons her future husband(s), Hobomok springs into her magic circle and she takes him for a ghost. Shortly afterward, Charles Brown appears. Carolyn Karcher writes that he "seems almost to have emerged from the Indian's boughs."²⁴ At this point, the text does not describe him—Brown is simply another shadowy figure in the dark forest.

The next time Charles Brown enters the book, in the sixth chapter, he is again an "appearance" in a moonlit forest, though this time at least the "light of evening" is permitted to rest "full on his handsome features." Brown's association with dark forests is emphasized by his name, which reminds us of Charles Brockden Brown, creator of the shadowy wilderness of *Edgar Huntly*. The character Charles Brown links himself to the woods when he compares falling in love with Mary to being lost in "Spenser's shady grove," and then recites a few lines from *The Faerie Queen* that describe a dark wood (48, 49). Of course, reciting *The Faerie Queen* marks Charles as a literate Royalist, but the lines that he chooses are oddly inappropriate for love speech; they describe "the wandring wood, . . . Errours den,"²⁵ a labyrinthine enchanted forest that traps Spenser's Redcrosse Knight, and forces him into battle with Errour, that "Most lothsom, filthie, foule" monster.²⁶ The identification of the Episcopalian Charles Brown with the Redcrosse Knight is certainly fitting, and it is tempting to read the American wilderness as the shady grove that draws him into an unwanted embrace with the "beastly bodie" of the errant Mary Conant.²⁷ Even a restrained reading of the allusion reinforces Brown's location within a dark wood, similar to that

place from whence Orpheus, Aeneas, and Dante began their journeys into the land of the dead.²⁸ Like those stories, the story of Charles Brown begins in a dark forest. Thereafter, Brown travels to the land of the dead, where he remains for three years. Before leaving, he muses about going to “that bourne from whence no traveller returns,” and Mary Conant describes him as one who is “soon to be like a bright and departed vision” (73, 79). The omen of a phantom ship precedes the announcement of his death. When he reemerges, he is treated as a ghost.

Throughout the text, Charles Brown functions as a mirror figure for many of the characters. Like his beloved Mary Conant, he is virtually bodiless. His “handsome features” consist of a “bright, dark eye,” a “fine, manly voice,” and a “lofty forehead, stamped with the proud, deep impress of intellect” (48, 49, 71, 78). Further, Conant recalls her first meeting with him as a “fairy dream,” in which “she had first seen Charles Brown and mingled with him in the graceful evolutions of the dance, while her young heart strove to be proof against the intoxicating witchery of light and motion” (78). From the start, the relationship between Conant and Brown is tinged with witchcraft; their initial “mingling” evokes spiritual (even spectral) union rather than bodily union.

If the descriptions of Charles disembody him in a manner that makes him a mirror figure for Mary Conant, the plot of the novel also makes him a mirror of her father. Like Roger Conant, Charles Brown “aspire[s] to the hand of a wealthy and noble lady” (Mary Conant, named for her mother, Lady Mary), whose father forbids the match. Brown’s defiance of Mr. Conant directly parallels Mr. Conant’s earlier defiance of his own wife’s father. Because of the conflict, Brown, like Mary’s father before him, meets “with much to depress his native buoyancy of heart” (8). In addition, Brown’s religious convictions are the cause of his being banished from the American community. This banishment evokes Mary Conant’s outcast status, but it more directly echoes Mr. Conant and all the Puritans’ exile from England on account of their own religious convictions. Michael Bell labels this type of reversal “the great contradiction . . . the lamentable fact that the Puritans fled persecution in England in order to establish it firmly in America.”²⁹ Ironically, Charles Brown is punished for being a *conformist* among rigid nonconformists.

But the most striking of Charles Brown’s reversals is his reversal of the colonialist plot. Rather than returning to America, the young lawyer writes to his fiancée explaining that, “Before this reacheth you, I shall be on my way to the East Indies, where wealth promiseth to pour forth many treasures. For your sake will I toil for the glittering duste, and many hardships would I endure so I might throwe it at your feet” (104–5). His attempt at colonization is a signal failure: rather than exploiting the people and resources of the Indies for his own gain, he is

shipwrecked on the coast of Africa, and held prisoner by Africans. While he is thus enslaved, his white acquaintances believe him to be dead, and his very existence is denied. With this reversal, Charles Brown becomes a mirror figure for the African American slaves who were central to Child's understanding of American culture in the early nineteenth century, though they were absent from her portrayal of seventeenth-century New England.

Thus, Brown mirrors not only an Indian but also a woman, a rebel against patriarchal authority, a group of religious dissenters, and an African American slave. Insofar as he is identified with each, he is spectralized. As the text denies Mary Conant's body, it denies Charles Brown's body. The two are joined by witchcraft. Like Roger Conant who defied the father of his beloved, Brown defies Conant. Like Conant and the Puritans, Brown is banished from the realm because of his religious convictions. Reversing the fate of an African American slave, Brown is held captive in Africa, and believed to be dead. Emerging from ghostliness, Brown takes Hobomok's place as the husband of Mary Conant, while Hobomok takes Brown's place as a ghost.

In Charles Brown, all of the various experiences of socially constructed spectralization are united. At first this compression of spectral themes into one character seems merely coincidental or strange. However, if we take the other characters in the novel as kaleidoscopic refractions of Charles Brown's singular identity, the phenomenon goes beyond strange and approaches the uncanny. Freud defined the uncanny as a feeling of "dread and creeping horror," and explained that "an uncanny experience occurs either when infantile complexes which have been repressed are once more revived by some impression, or when primitive beliefs which have been surmounted seem to be confirmed."³⁰ If we read Charles Brown as a representative white American man, and place him, for a moment, at the center of the narrative (a center from which he is pointedly excluded), then all of the spectralized figures who are identified with him come into focus as his own repressed fears. We can understand this representative white American man as someone who both identifies with and fears women and women's bodies and someone who fears and rebels against fathers, even as he attempts to construct himself as a father, and to quell rebellion. Further, we can understand the white American man as deeply frightened by his own feelings of identification with "primitive," nonwhite Americans; African American slaves raise the possibility of slavery, while Indians figure dispossession and disempowerment. Disfranchised and disembodied women, outmoded and overturned patriarchs, enslaved African Americans, and dispossessed Native Americans—all are examples of powerlessness that haunt the white American man, reminding him that his own power might be abrogated in any number of ways, for any number of reasons.

Hobomok enacts all of these abrogations of power. The text visits all of the spectral fates discussed above upon Charles Brown. At times it seems as if the novelist has it in for Brown; as if she takes a certain vengeful glee in his discomfiture. Not only marginalized, Brown is also banished, silenced, shipwrecked, captured, enslaved, supplanted, presumed dead, and treated as a ghost.

When Brown returns to America, three years after he had been reported dead, Hobomok is the first to meet him. Hobomok mistakes him for a ghost. The encounter between Brown and Hobomok is the most lengthy discussion of ghostliness in the novel, and therefore I quote it at length:

Charles Brown stood by his side! The countenance of the savage assumed at once the terrible, ashen hue of Indian paleness. . . . he hastily retreated into a thicket, casting back a fearful glance on what he supposed to be the ghost of his rival. Brown attempted to follow, but the farther he advanced, the farther the Indian retreated, his face growing paler and paler, and his knees trembling against each other in excessive terror.

"Hobomok," said the intruder, "I am a man like yourself. I suppose three years ago you heard I was dead, but it has pleased the Lord to spare me in captivity until this time. . . . You used to be my good friend, Hobomok, and many a piece of service have you done for me. I beseech you, feel of my hand that you may know I am flesh and blood even as yourself."

After repeated assurances, the Indian timidly approached—and the certainty that Brown was indeed alive, was more dreadful to him than all the ghosts that could have been summoned from another world. (138)

In this interchange with Hobomok, Brown is a phantom, a figment of Hobomok's imagination, an internalized other. The struggle between Hobomok and the "ghost of his rival" is a "struggle in the mind of that dark man" (138, 139). Child's description of Hobomok's mental struggle brings to mind W. E. B. DuBois's description of double consciousness: "an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body."³¹ The balance of power in such a haunting is curiously hard to determine. Hobomok is first haunted and then made to vanish by the ghost of his English rival. Brown, on the other hand, is denied agency as well as substantive reality. He is nothing more than a ghost in the "mind of that dark man."

Brown does not necessarily want to marry his rival's wife. "I will return from whence I came, and bear my sorrows as I may," he tells Hobomok. "Let Mary never know that I am alive. Love her, and be happy." Instead, Hobomok chooses to "disappear," leaving Brown to take his place as Conant's husband. Brown chases Hobomok through the forest, hoping to catch him and "restor[e] the happiness he had so nobly sacrificed," and when he realizes that Hobomok has eluded him, and that he must

marry Mary, he muses to himself that “Existence must now be as sad as those dull clouds” (140, 142, 143, 144).

This may be the most surprising reversal in *Hobomok*. The Indian protagonist, the title character, is given the authority to decide the terms of the white male protagonist’s existence, and to decide his own fate as well. The novel’s outcome, the family circle, and even the America that the novel finally constructs are all the results of Hobomok’s choices, and of Hobomok’s imaginative vision. Appropriately, the book ends with the implication that Hobomok is an important founder of the American nation, one of its first nurturers, and also one of its progenitors. “His faithful services to the ‘Yengees’ are still remembered with gratitude,” the peroration declares, “though the tender slip which he protected has since become a mighty tree, and the nations of the earth seek refuge beneath its branches” (150).

Hobomok fosters the “mighty” nation by voluntarily becoming a ghost. His last request and his only hope is “that when I die, I may go to the Englishman’s God, where I may hunt beaver with little Hobomok, and count my beavers for Mary” (140). When he decides to allow Charles Brown to reemerge from ghostliness, he also decides to “disappear,” to remove westward, to “forever [pass] away from New England” (141). In short, Hobomok spectralizes himself. It isn’t much of a choice, but it is significant that Child frames it as a choice rather than as an inevitability. The novel is named after Hobomok. His body, his voice, and his perspective are present in the text. Most intriguingly, the denouement suggests that although Indians may be spectral beings in white, nineteenth-century America, European settlers are fearsome specters for Native Americans. However, in spite of the implications of this suggestion, and in spite of Hobomok’s surprisingly substantial presence in the text, Hobomok finally vanishes, leaving Mary Conant to become the mother of the new American nation.

When Mary Conant marries Hobomok, she flouts social restrictions against miscegenation, and when she divorces him to marry an even more desirable man, she violates social restrictions against divorce and remarriage as well as the literary restrictions of the marriage plot. Both her interracial marriage and her *second* marriage threaten the patriarchal, racially hierarchical worlds of seventeenth- and nineteenth-century America, and the combination of the two derails and subverts the conventions of the novel. It is hardly surprising that such transgressions against social and literary mores are cloaked in spectral metaphors. As a tool for encoding anti-patriarchal desire, spectralization cuts both ways: Shrouded by the language of ghostliness, the threat of sexual alliances between white women and dark-skinned men seems unreal, unthreatening. If those conjoined bodies are constructed as ghosts, their union seems powerless to affect the

white men it excludes. The catch is that ghosts are beyond anyone's control. Ghostly lovers and their ghostly desires are free from all restraints.³²

Although Hobomok and Charles Brown are described as Conant's phantom lovers, her marriages with them are certainly carnal unions: Hobomok is the flesh and blood father of Charles Hobomok Conant, Mary's son. The marriages fulfill Mary's erotic desires as well as her intellectual and spiritual desires, and they also redefine the entire community. The three circles of her spell come to mind: she travels between the Puritan circle and the Indian circle, finally redrawing her own third circle, populated by a representative Puritan—her father, Roger Conant; a representative Indian—her son, little Hobomok; and a representative of Europe—her husband, Charles Brown. These seemingly hostile beings are drawn together by their love for Mary Conant; her domestic circle is the American circle, and it centers itself around Mary Conant, who, like her creator, has successfully constructed herself as "An American."

The America of *Hobomok* differs from the actual America of the nineteenth century not only in its female-centeredness, but also in its tolerance; Child writes that, "disputes on matters of opinion would sometimes arise; but . . . they were always brought to an amicable termination," and further, "Partly from consciousness of blame, and partly from a mixed feeling of compassion and affection, the little Hobomok was always a peculiar favorite" (149–50). But in order to create this ideal America, even Hobomok's name must be removed. Mary and Hobomok's son, the young Hobomok, is assimilated into Mary Conant's white America, educated at Harvard, and finally sent to England to complete his studies. Child writes that "His father was seldom spoken of, and by degrees his Indian appellation was silently omitted" (150).

While "Hobomok," the son's name, is erased, Hobomok, the father, actually vanishes. He gives up his wife and his son, removes himself from his home, and goes "far beyond the back-bone of the Great Spirit" to be "buried among strangers." "With a bursting heart," we are told, he "murmured his farewell and blessing, and forever passed away from New England." Removal and assimilation are finally indistinguishable; in both cases, "Hobomok" disappears (150).³³ The novel *Hobomok* ultimately acquiesces to Indian Removal and to the trope of the vanishing Indian, and consigns its title character to ghostliness.

The American narratives that follow *Hobomok* seize upon its constructions of Indians as ghostly, and they strive to disembody white women as well, to reconstruct them as angels (such as Cora Munro) or as ghosts (such as Narra-mattah). Yet even while those later stories attempt to spectralize Indian men and white women in order to disembody, silence, or dispossess them, they also struggle against being possessed and overcome by the ghosts of *Hobomok*.



Cooper's Gaze

Of all of Cooper's novels, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1827) and *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* (1829) are the most clearly influenced by *Hobomok*. Like *Hobomok*, both are plotted around miscegenation and pervaded by spectrality. Since Cooper's Indians are the best-known representations of Native Americans of the era, and since his depiction of Native American figures and miscegenistic relationships develops significantly in the later novel, I will discuss both novels in this chapter.

Both *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* are populated by spectral, unearthly, vanishing Indians. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Magua, Chingachgook, Uncas, and Tamenund are all explicitly described as specters, while the plot repeatedly iterates the disappearance of Indians who glide specterlike into the forest, or plunge toward complete annihilation. *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is even more explicitly concerned with spectrality than *The Last of the Mohicans*. Its treatment of spectralization also makes it more closely parallel to *Hobomok* than to *The Last of the Mohicans*; the Indians and the white settlers both perceive each other as spectral.

Miscegenation is also central to both novels. Although the miscegenistic relationships in *The Last of the Mohicans* are not consummated, the desires that circulate between Magua, Cora, and Uncas drive the plot. The miscegenation plot of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is even more similar to *Hobomok*. Like Mary Conant, Ruth Heathcote marries the handsome young Indian who has been part of her family circle and the two of them have a child together. However, Ruth Heathcote's fate finally resembles Cora Munro's as much as Mary Conant's; when her husband Conanchet is murdered, the "shock" of his death "derange[s] some of that fearful machinery which links the soul to the body,"¹ and Ruth Heathcote dies. Like *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* ends at the graveside of a European American woman and her Native American lover.

A number of critics have written about either miscegenation or spectrality in Cooper, but none have commented on the fact that the two are curiously linked—Cooper's miscegenation novels are also his most ghost-

filled. Leslie Fiedler first called attention to the “secret theme” of miscegenation in *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, while Jane Tompkins has argued that the subject of *The Last of the Mohicans* is “cultural miscegenation,” and Shirley Samuels has extended the concept of miscegenation to include “a miscegenation of animal and human, natural and cultural.”² Ghostliness is another central theme: Wayne Franklin not only asserts that *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* has a “spectral theme,” but he also argues that “we should regard the spectral atmosphere of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* . . . as . . . derived from *The Last of the Mohicans*.”³

One explanation for the link between spectrality and miscegenation in the works of Cooper follows the Freudian logic of “The Uncanny.” Along these lines, I will argue that Cooper struggles to repress the possibility of interracial love, and that the harder he tries to repress it, the more frequently and forcefully it returns, each manifestation more strange and frightening than the last. Yet although the uncanny will prove helpful in the following analysis, it will also be useful to return to its nineteenth-century ancestor, the reverie.

In “Spectral Politics,” Terry Castle points out the strong associations between reverie, ghost-seeing, and masturbation. She writes that, “The rationalist attack on the effeminizing habit of reverie had buried connections, of course, with the medical attack on masturbation waged in the same period. . . . Like masturbation, reverie was a self-indulgent, repetitive activity resulting in a debilitating psychic ‘discharge’: the discharge of hallucination.”⁴ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick makes a similar argument in “Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl,” in which she connects Marianne Dashwood’s “sensibility,” to the medical literature of masturbation.⁵ Both Castle and Sedgwick also argue that there is a strong association between acts of masturbation and acts of writing. Like masturbation, writing is an intense exercise in imaginative visualization, which, at the end of the eighteenth century or the beginning of the nineteenth, might have been described in terms of ghost seeing. Both sexual fantasies and ghostly hallucinations were seen as dangerous by-products of the habit of reverie, and since both were understood as disordered or diseased acts of imagination, the prime difference was that between pleasure and fear. In Cooper, these distinctions blur. Both Native American men and white women are projected as phantasmic objects of horror and delight.

If ghosts can be construed as pleasurable phenomena, then transforming the living bodies of dark people into phantoms can function not only as an unhappy confession of guilt against them, but also as one of the aesthetic (and sometimes erotic) pleasures of nationalism. Cooper’s novels abound with these pleasures. When D. H. Lawrence characterizes them

as “wish-fulfillments,” his description evokes the intense (yet ambiguous) pleasures of masturbatory reverie.⁶

Cooper projects white women and dark men before his readers with a technique that is phantasmagorical, violent, and highly eroticized. At times, his writing verges on the pornographic. Certainly, it can be described as cinematic—or, avoiding anachronism, as projecting vivid imaginative visualizations. By directing the reader's gaze toward the exposed bodies of white women and Indian men, Cooper enrolls the reader in an onanistic regime of self-pleasure that requires the subjugation of the fantastic other. From this perspective, Cooper's preface to *The Last of the Mohicans* takes on new significance. He introduces his work by limiting its audience to experienced and sophisticated male readers, advising:

all young ladies, whose ideas are usually limited by the four walls of a comfortable drawing room; all single gentlemen, of a certain age, who are under the influence of the winds; and all clergymen, if they have the volumes in hand, with intent to read them, to abandon the design. He gives this advice to young ladies, because, after they have read the book, they will surely pronounce it shocking; to the bachelors, as it might disturb their sleep; and to the reverend clergy, because they might be better employed.⁷

Cooper warns young women that they will be shocked, young men that they will be exhausted, and clergymen that they will be ill-employed. How better to introduce the masturbatory novel that will become the most well-thumbed, well-loved boys' book in American literary history?

In *The Last of the Mohicans*, the spectral Chingachgook embodies the redness and blackness (as well as the “intermingling”) that threaten white American manhood. Cooper's first description of him states that, “His body, which was nearly naked, presented a terrific emblem of death, drawn in intermingled colors of white and black” (500). The next time he “appears,” he is described as “looking like a spectre in its paint” (517), and later he is portrayed as “a spectral looking figure [who] stalked from out the darkness” and an “appalling object” (530). Finally, Hawkeye explains that Chingachgook “understands the windings and turnings of human nature, and is silent, and strikes his enemies when they least expect him” (534). Chingachgook is a spectral figure, a “terrific emblem of death” who embodies America's worst nightmares, and, at the same time, insofar as he promises his own removal, embodies America's cherished fantasies.

Cooper applies the “spectre” epithet also to Magua and Tamenund when they enter the text, and describes Uncas's spectral fate in detail at his funeral. However, most of the allusions to spectrality in *The Last of the*

Mohicans are more general. Heyward envisions a group of Iroquois children as ghostly beings who “seemed more like dark, glancing spectres, or some other unearthly beings, than creatures fashioned with the ordinary and vulgar materials of flesh and blood” (737), while he perceives their village as a “place, which resembled some unhallowed and supernatural arena, in which malicious demons had assembled to act their bloody and lawless rites. The forms in the background, looked like unearthly beings, gliding before the eye, and cleaving the air with frantic and unmeaning gestures” (745). Further, when Hawkeye and Heyward pursue Magua, Cora, and Uncas through the cave where the Iroquois women and children have taken refuge during the battle, Cooper writes that, “The place, by its dim and uncertain light appeared like the shades of the infernal regions, across which unhappy ghosts and savage demons were flitting in multitudes” (860). Most Indians in *The Last of the Mohicans*, like the Huron villagers, are presented as spectral “forms in the background.” Those unindividuated shades may be seen as either “unhappy ghosts” or “savage demons,” but they are not explained in any other terms.

In addition to these manifestations of spectrality, *The Last of the Mohicans* repeatedly, even obsessively, returns to the familiar trope of the vanishing Indian. Strangely, the Indians who vanish almost always do so by gliding purposefully into the woods or by “plunging” unwillingly into abysses. As Lora Romero points out, “The frequency with which Cooper’s Indians plunge to their death from great heights is positively astounding.”⁸ These spectacular falls are the most graphic and sudden Indian disappearances in the book. During the skirmish at Glenn’s Falls alone, one Indian falls “with a sullen plunge, into that deep and yawning abyss” (548), a second is whirled over the falls, while a third falls “sullenly and disappointed down the irrecoverable precipice” (551), and a fourth dangles “between heaven and earth” (555), until he loses his grip, falls into the water, “and every vestige of the unhappy Huron was lost forever” (556). The last Indian to vanish precipitously from the novel is Magua himself, who both falls and glides to his doom: “his dark person was seen cutting the air with its head downwards, for a fleeting instant, until it glided past the fringe of shrubbery which clung to the mountain, in its rapid flight to destruction” (864).

Conversely, Cooper’s Indians make startling, sudden appearances almost as often as they are made to disappear. These sudden appearances are frequently described in terms of “gliding.” Magua makes his first “sudden and startling” appearance when he “glide[s] by” Alice (488). The use of the verb “glide” foretells his final, “gliding” disappearance (864), and emphasizes the connection between Indian appearance and disappearance. Gliding appearances, like plunging disappearances, imply that Indians can practically materialize and dematerialize at will within

the forest landscape. Both their sudden materializations and their dematerializations emphasize the Indians' insubstantiality. Chingachgook and Uncas share Magua's ability to materialize suddenly, just as they share his fatality to vanish from the landscape and from the text. Uncas's first appearance in the novel is almost apparitional; Hawkeye and Chingachgook are deep in conversation, when "at the next instant, a youthful warrior passed between them, with a noiseless step" (505). Chingachgook shares his son's ability to materialize from the landscape; Magua "plunges" away from Heyward's attempt to capture him, and "at the next instant, the form of Chingachgook appeared from the bushes, looking like a spectre in its paint, and glided across the path in swift pursuit" (517). Magua's, Uncas's, and Chingachgook's sudden appearances recall Hobomok's sudden appearance in the forest of *Hobomok*, and they work similarly to make the Indians seem like mere appearances, apparitions rather than substantial beings.

To put it in Cooper's terms, both appearing and disappearing are "red gifts," innate, biologically determined qualities. When Indians are in control, they show their Indianness by appearing suddenly, gliding "from the bushes" (517), or by disappearing into the landscape, gliding. When they lose their power to glide, Indians disappear by making "irrecoverable" plunges (551). Romero argues that these precipitous plunges reveal that Indians are essentially out of balance, and biologically doomed to extinction. In addition, their disappearances into the landscape as well as their sudden materializations from the landscape make the Indians seem like spirits of the forest rather than real people. Even their skill at appearing emphasizes that Indians are insubstantial, apparitional beings. Whether they glide or plunge, Cooper's Indians are, by nature, people who vanish. The reiteration of images of vanishing Indians, and the repetitive patterning of their disappearances work to blur the individuality of the Indians who vanish, and to emphasize the inevitability of their collective disappearance.

In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Indians are ultimately either demonic like Magua, or ghostly like Uncas, while white women are ultimately angelic like Alice, or ghostly like Cora. The plot spectralizes or angelizes its women characters just as it spectralizes or demonizes its Indian characters. At the close of the book, Magua plunges, Lucifer-like, to his doom, and the Delawares sing of Uncas as a ghost in "the blessed hunting grounds" (869). Alice, "spotless and angel-like" (728), is carried back to the settlements, while Cora is figured as Uncas's ghostly bride.

Cora's spectral, miscegenistic fate is elaborately foreshadowed. The novel's epigraph points to it:

Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun.⁹

Cora is shadowed, a child of miscegenation. As her Scottish father “proudly” explains, “the mother of Cora” “was the daughter of a gentleman of those isles, by a lady, whose misfortune it was, if you will . . . to be descended, remotely, from that unfortunate class, who are so basely enslaved to administer to the wants of a luxurious people! Ay, sir, that is a curse entailed on Scotland by her unnatural union with a foreign and trading people” (653). Although the intention of this indirect explanation of Cora’s Creole heritage is to protect her from insult, Cora’s father cannot stop himself from exclaiming about “the curse” that is “entailed” upon one who enters into an “unnatural union.” On the surface, he means to comment on Scotland’s civic union with England, but through his circuitous construction, it is almost impossible to avoid misreading his exclamation as a reference to the curse entailed upon Cora by her mixed-race ancestry.

Cora also thinks of herself as blighted or cursed. When Alice thanks Duncan Heyward for his help on the journey to Fort William Henry, he asks, “what says our graver sister?” Cora responds with “an expression of anguish,” and she declares, “That I cannot see the sunny side of the picture of life . . . is the penalty of experience, and, perhaps, the misfortune of my nature” (642–43). Setting aside the question of whether Heyward is a help or a hindrance, the scene is notable because of the aptness of his description of her as the “graver sister” and also because of her declaration that because of “the misfortune” of her nature (as well as her experience), which is to say her mixed-race background, she is shadowy rather than sunny.

When Cora disavows her sister’s “sunny” nature, she allies herself with the doomed Indians rather than the conquering Europeans. In this context, Heyward’s description of her as the “graver sister” has a sinister double meaning, foretelling the “grave of Cora,” and its “melancholy and appropriate shade” (873). Cooper makes the link between Cora and the Indians even more explicit when Cora pleads with Tamenund, “‘Like thee and thine, venerable chief,’” she says, “suffering her head to droop until her cheeks were nearly concealed in the maze of dark, glossy tresses, that fell in disorder upon her shoulders, ‘the curse of my ancestors has fallen heavily on their child’” (825). Tamenund responds to her speech by castigating white men for the pride that makes them refuse to marry women “whose blood [is] not the colour of snow.” The text interrupts Tamenund’s speech to describe “the wounded spirit of his listener, whose head was nearly crushed to the earth in shame” (825). Romero might argue that even the crushing of Cora’s head to the earth connects her to the Indians, who are characterized by headlong plunges, but the more

important facts here are Cora's shame, the curse of her ancestors, and the veil of dark hair by which she attempts to conceal her features.

In the person of Cora, the curse of miscegenation is present in the text. Like Chingachgook, Cora presents "a terrific emblem of death, drawn in intermingled colors of white and black" (500). But unlike Chingachgook, who is "nearly naked" throughout the novel, Cora constantly tries to conceal herself. From the moment of Magua's appearance, when Cora's veil falls open and "betray[s]" her "indescribable look," revealing that "her complexion was not brown" (488), the novel pulls away the veils that protect her. Finally, after Magua drags her through a subterranean passage that is compared to "the infernal regions" (860), she kneels upon a precipice, her arms outstretched to heaven, her face and body exposed to the gaze of the men who fight over her, and she waits for a nameless Huron to "sheath[e] his own knife" in her bosom (862).

Cooper's description of Cora's death is very visual; the reader's gaze joins with those of the warring men, and violates Cora almost as viscerally as the knife itself. Because of his pictorialism, a number of painters have tried to depict Cooper's landscapes and the events of his novels.¹⁰ However, the painting that best captures the mood of Cora's death was painted in Paris by John Vanderlyn, some twenty years before the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Vanderlyn's *The Death of Jane McCrea* (1804) depicts a white woman struggling with two shadowy Indians, one of whom pulls her back by her hair, while the other pulls her arm away from her chest, exposing her to blows from his tomahawk, but also exposing her to the violating gaze of the viewer. As her arms are pulled apart and her head is pulled back, her breasts are exposed; the nipple of her right breast is the focal point of the painting. Both Indians direct their gaze toward her bright white bosom, and the viewer's gaze is directed there as well, making the viewer complicit in the Indian attack, even as he or she is horrified and outraged by it.

Cora's murder recalls *The Death of Jane McCrea* visually, and in fact her story parallels that of the historical Jane McCrea in a number of ways. Jane McCrea was captured and murdered in 1777, as she travelled through the woods near Glenn's Falls, New York, obeying her Tory fiancé's summons, and trusting to General Burgoyne's avowed protection. June Namias writes that her death was a "turning point" in the war. The Americans used her story to "drum up support" for their cause, while the British forces were upset and demoralized by the tale. According to Namias, "the name of Jane McCrea was on many a patriot's lips going into battle" at Saratoga, and the American victory at Saratoga turned the tide of the Revolution.¹¹ Like the historical McCrea, the fictional Munro is of Scottish heritage, and is first captured at Glenn's Falls as she travels from Fort Edward to the camps of the British army.

Although McCrea is not described as being of mixed race like Munro, she was a similarly ambiguous figure in terms of the Revolution: her brother fought on the American side, and her fiancé was an officer in Burgoyne's army. Stories of McCrea's capture and murder differ, though most accounts agree that she was surrounded by a large group of Indians and killed by gunshot while she was sitting on a horse.¹² None of the contemporary accounts of McCrea's capture suggest that she was raped. In spite of this, during the revolutionary era McCrea symbolized the sexual violation of white women by Indian men, and as Richard Drinnon notes, Vanderlyn's painting of her death "helped set the pattern for an endless series of pictorial indictments of Jefferson's 'merciless Indian Savages.' Always the contrast was between dusky evil and fair innocence, between maddened red cruelty and helpless white virtue."¹³

The "merciless Indian savages" who were reviled for attacking McCrea were, in fact, Burgoyne's allies, and much of the contemporary outrage about her death focused on Burgoyne's failure to control them. Similarly, the massacre at Fort William Henry, in which Cora Munro is recaptured, is described in *The Last of the Mohicans* as a "stain" "upon the reputation of the French Commander" (677), Montcalm. Both stories evoke Thomas Paine's declaration in *Common Sense* (1776) that "There are thousands and tens of thousands who would think it glorious to expel from the country that barbarous and hellish power that has stirred up the Indians and the Negroes to destroy us."¹⁴

Both the popular legend of Jane McCrea and Cooper's fictional account of Cora Munro stir up the fears of Indians that Paine's *Common Sense* and Jefferson's Declaration of Independence used in their revolutionary rhetoric. Further, both stories sexualize the conflict between Indians and white Americans, and indirectly allude to fears of miscegenation and threats of rape. As Vanderlyn's *The Death of Jane McCrea* illustrates, this great tangle of fears and passions can be focused into a single gaze.

In the painting, the viewer's gaze that violates Jane McCrea also rests upon her Indian attackers, who are themselves "nearly naked." In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cora, Magua, and Uncas are united in their attempts to evade exploitive, violating gazes, and in their eventual exposures. Readers, like the viewers of Vanderlyn's painting, and like "Hawkeye," the figure who serves as the reader's guide through the novel, are permitted, and even encouraged, to gaze upon them.

After Magua abducts Cora and Alice from the site of the massacre, they are placed on a ledge overlooking the carnage. They cannot resist watching; Cooper writes that "the curiosity which seems inseparable from horror induced them to gaze at the sickening sight below" (676). The reader's gaze is held by a similar curiosity. Even in the death scenes,

the reader's curiosity and horror are focused on miscegenation as much as on murder. The most fascinating and horrifying spectacle that *The Last of the Mohicans* holds up to its reader's gaze is miscegenation. The massacre presents a violent mixing of bloods, realizing fears of miscegenation by depicting Indian warriors drinking the blood of their white female victims. In the same way, Cora's and Uncas's deaths present an even more explicitly sexualized version of miscegenation, the mixing of blood.

In the persons of Magua, Cora, and Uncas, miscegenistic desire becomes a horrifying, yet fascinating, spectacle. In fact, their bodies are as spectacular and as horrifying as the miscegenistic possibilities that their bodies represent. In her article, "Who Is That Masked Woman?" Gwen Bergner asserts that "The white man's gaze produces a psychic splitting that shatters the black man's experience of bodily integrity."¹⁵ Similarly, the male gaze shatters women; Bergner compares Fanon's description of "corporeal disintegration under the white gaze"¹⁶ to Jacqueline Rose's description of the violence done to women by the male gaze, and concludes that "both women and blacks are identified as the bodily and sexual within the scopic regimes of gender and race."¹⁷ Cora and Uncas are both unwilling objects of insistent, even intrusive gazes. Detailed descriptions of their bodies work to objectify them, to deny or destroy their subjectivity, and ultimately, to disintegrate their very corporeality, and to spectralize them.

Cora is the first character who tries to evade the spectralizing gaze. As I have mentioned, Cora is introduced as "the other" sister,

who . . . concealed her charms from the gaze of the soldiery with a care that seemed better fitted to the experience of four or five additional years. It could be seen, however, that her person, though moulded with the same exquisite proportions, of which none of the graces were lost by the travelling dress she wore, was rather fuller and more mature than that of her companion. (488)

The irony of this description is that Cora's effort to "conceal her charms" actually serves to call attention to her body. Because her face is hidden, the narrator does not scruple to describe the "exquisite proportions" of her figure, and to discuss her body's fullness and maturity. When she sees Magua, her veil is "allowed to open its folds" (488), and her "not brown" face is exposed as well. After the massacre in which Cora and Alice are recaptured by Magua, Uncas finds a fragment of Cora's veil, which Hawkeye describes as, "the rag she wore to hide a face that all did love to look upon" (683). His description emphasizes the veil's failure: Cora wears it in order to hide her face, but it serves merely to identify her as one whom everyone loves to "look upon."

The invasive gaze is sexually violent. After Cora is captured, the sexual

violence of this unwelcome gaze becomes explicit when Magua bends “his fierce looks on the countenance of Cora, in such wavering glances, that her eyes sunk with shame, under the impression that, for the first time, they had encountered an expression that no chaste female might endure” (589–90).

The gaze is also racially definitive. Unlike Alice, the mixed-race Cora is a spectacle. In the first scene, her slipping veil reveals that she has an “in-describable look,” and that her “complexion [is] not brown” (488). The very massacre that unleashes a “crimson tide” of female blood (672) also unveils her permanently, revealing the “tell-tale blood” (546) that so often “crimson[s]” (546) her features, and showing that she is not only a female spectacle, but also a racially subjected spectacle.

The text allows and even encourages its readers and its characters to “look upon” Cora against her will because she is a woman of mixed-race background, completely subordinate in the scopic regime of the novel. Magua and Uncas are also subordinates in that scopic regime, and both experience their subordination as feminizing. Although Hobomok’s body is described in flattering terms, it is not subject to the invading gaze. Magua and Uncas, on the other hand, experience the gaze as invasive, and attempt to evade it. While Cora repeatedly attempts to veil her features, Magua and Uncas both insist upon covering their torsos. Cooper first describes Uncas’s body as “more than usually skreened [*sic*] by a green and fringed hunting shirt, like that of a white man” (529). Magua also wears a shirt, and he explains to Cora that he does so in order to hide the dishonorable scars of having been “whipped like a dog.”

“See!” continued Magua, tearing aside the slight calico that very imperfectly concealed his painted breast; “here are scars given by knives and bullets—of these a warrior may boast before his nation; but the gray-head has left marks on the back of the Huron chief that he must hide, like a squaw, under this painted cloth of the whites.” (588)

Magua is like a woman, “like a squaw,” not only because he wears a shirt in an attempt to hide his torso, but also because his attempt to evade the dishonoring gaze cannot succeed—the “slight calico . . . very imperfectly conceal[s] his breast.”

Uncas, of course, is even more like a woman than Magua, since Uncas is “the last of the Mohicans,” and the Mohicans are, by definition, women. In the preface, Cooper explains that the Lenape have been persuaded to “lay aside their arms . . . becoming, in short, in the figurative language of the natives, ‘women’” (471). Because he is figuratively female, Uncas is subject to an inspecting gaze, and to a detailed physical description of his noble “proportions” that recalls the first description of Cora’s “exquisite proportions” (488):

The ingenuous Alice gazed at his free air and his proud carriage, as she would have looked upon some precious relic of the Grecian chisel, to which life had been imparted, by the intervention of a miracle; while Heyward, though accustomed to see the perfection of form which abounds among the uncorrupted natives, openly expressed his admiration at such an unblemished specimen of the noblest proportions of man. (529)

Uncas is described as sculptural, as a spectacle. Not only Heyward, a white man, but also Alice, a white woman, may gaze at him, "openly," even "ingenuously." When Alice inspects him, Uncas suffers the fate Bergner describes: he "experience[s] the system as additionally destructive to his masculine identity since he is made the recipient of a dismembering gaze that is normatively the male prerogative."¹⁸

After he has been inspected by Alice and Heyward, Uncas is repeatedly feminized by the narrative, first when he made to act "as attendant to the females" in a manner "that served to amuse Heyward, who well knew that it was an utter innovation on the Indian customs, which forbid their warriors to descend to any menial employment, especially in favor of their women" (532). Later, when he is captured, a Huron woman mocks him by saying "your nation is a race of women . . . The Huron girls shall make you petticoats and we shall find you a husband" (747). Even Uncas's moment of triumph, when he is recognized by the Delawares as a chief, is plotted to present him as a feminized victim. One of his tormentors "seized the hunting shirt of the young warrior, and at a single effort, tore it from his body. Then with a yell of frantic pleasure, he leaped toward his unresisting victim" (829). Thus in order to be accepted as chief of the Delawares, that "nation of women" (749), Uncas must be an "unresisting victim" of assault, forcibly stripped and exposed to the scrutiny of the group. Indeed, Uncas is characterized as an "unresisting victim" to his own feminization throughout the text. At the moment of apotheosis, just before he leaps toward Cora and Magua on the ledge, Uncas calls out to Magua: "Stay; dog of the Wyandots! . . . A Delaware girl calls stay!" (861). These are Uncas's last words. Renouncing both subjectivity and masculinity, he speaks in the third person, and he figures himself as a "Delaware girl."

As Uncas leaps to defend Cora from Magua, one of Magua's nameless "assistants . . . plunged his own knife into the bosom of Cora" (862). Without protecting Cora from harm, Uncas sacrifices himself. Magua "buried his weapon in the back of the prostrate Delaware" (862), and then "seized the nerveless arm of the unresisting Delaware, and passed his knife into his bosom" (862). Like Cora's, Uncas's bosom is penetrated by a knife, in an act of sexualized violence. Cora does not resist her murder, but Uncas is forced to assist at his own, holding onto his own knife while it is passed into his bosom, in the same way that he has been complicit in his own feminization, naming himself a "Delaware girl."

Even after his death, Uncas is a spectacle. The Delaware are transformed into a “nation of mourners” (865), and “each eye was riveted on” the bodies of Cora and Uncas. Cora lies concealed “under a pall of Indian robes,” but Uncas is “seated, as in life,” and “arrayed in the most gorgeous ornaments that the wealth of his tribe could furnish.” Nonetheless, “his dull eye and vacant lineaments” reveal that he is dead (866). His father watches him, and his “steady, anxious look,” as well as his stillness make him indistinguishable from his dead son. “So riveted, and intense had been that gaze, and so changeless his attitude, that a stranger might not have told the living from the dead” (867).

When Cora and Uncas die, they are spectralized in the most literal fashion. But long before they die, from the time that they are introduced, they have functioned as spectacles within the text, as objects of the unrelenting, uninvited gaze of the reader as well as the other characters. Bergner calls the gaze “dismembering,” and asserts that the gaze disintegrates corporeality as it turns its target into an object rather than a subject, an appearance rather than a being of substance.¹⁹ The novel describes Cora’s and Uncas’s bodies so relentlessly that, paradoxically, it disembodies both of them, turns them into spectacles, appearances, apparitions, and finally specters. Their shared death is the obvious, indeed the only possible conclusion to their story.

Cooper’s Indians are finally either “unhappy ghosts” or “savage demons” (860). Uncas certainly ends the book as an “unhappy ghost.” Magua, on the other hand, is figured as a “savage demon,” “possessed of an evil spirit that no power, short of Omnipotence, can tame” (728). Indeed, Magua is compared to “the Prince of Darkness” (799) himself, which might mean that he is the Devil, or simply that he is the chief of the dark-skinned Iroquois. Of course, in the heyday of romanticism, being compared to the “Prince of Darkness” is not necessarily unflattering. Indeed, when contrasted to the “unresistant” Uncas, Magua clearly wins. He may die, but he dies with his shirt on, and he finally avoids becoming a spectacle.²⁰ Rather, he vanishes, plunging and gliding into the abyss, and evading the gaze of readers and characters alike. But although his vanishing saves Magua from being objectified, it does not save him from destruction.

As Cooper’s Indians must be either ghosts or demons, his women must be either ghosts or angels. Because she is a white woman, Alice is, finally, “angel-like” (728), perhaps bodiless but not ghostly. She is carried away within a litter, “whence low and stifled sobs alone announced [her] presence” (875), to return “far into the settlements of the ‘pale-faces’” (876). Not only does she survive, she also evades the disintegrating gaze, and becomes a *feme covert*. Her invisibility in the final scenes of the book may be understood as an almost angelic ascension, similar to spectralization,

but also quite different in that it asserts her higher place in the scopic regime of the novel, and proclaims her procreative purpose.

The angelic Alice evades death, while the demonic Magua avoids burial. Instead, both disappear from the text. Alice is "borne away," back into the settlements, while Magua falls, Lucifer-like, to destruction. These disappearances are neither tragic nor unexpected. Indeed, Alice and Magua are so insistently figured as ideal beings, abstractions rather than realities, that their disappearances seem completely appropriate. From the first moments of the novel, Alice embodies the procreative potential of the white settlers, while Magua epitomizes Indian destruction. Although their fates, like their natures, are opposite, they are equally inevitable.

Cora and Uncas are not ideal beings. Both are blighted, made impure by the curse of miscegenation. Because Cora is the daughter of an "unnatural union," all of her desires are necessarily miscegenistic—there is no possible mate who shares an identical racial background. Uncas is also doomed to miscegenistic desire. Since he is "the last of the Mohicans," he can never find a mate who shares his tribal background. There are no Scottish-creole men for Cora, and there are no Mohican women for Uncas. But if they are both denied the angelic purity of Alice, they both renounce the demonic desires of Magua, and mingle their blood violently rather than sexually. They present their bosoms to the knives of their enemies, and enter into ghostliness together.

When he buries Cora and Uncas, Cooper gestures toward their ghostly marriage. Although they are buried separately, the Delaware maidens who sing their funeral song predict that they will spend their eternity together in "the blessed hunting grounds of the Lenape" (869). Hawkeye, who understands the Lenape song, silently shakes his head at the error they make in imagining Uncas and Cora's union. Cooper writes that "happily for the self-command of both Heyward and Munro, they knew not the meaning of the wild sounds they heard" (871). But later, after Cora is lain in her grave, Munro gives voice to a millennial vision of unity, asking Hawkeye to tell the Delaware women that "the time shall not be distant, when we may assemble around (God's) throne, without distinction of sex, or rank, or color" (874). Hawkeye refuses to translate his speech.

The narrative allows the Delaware girls and the grieving white father to imagine an afterlife where Indian men and white women, indeed, all people regardless of "sex, or rank, or color" (874), come together without dishonor, but it does not permit them to share their visions with each other. Both Indians and whites speak of their hopes, but neither hears the other's speech. Hawkeye rejects both visions as offensive or inappropriate. His vision dominates the novel. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, union and equality between the races and the sexes, if they are imaginable at all,

are imaginable only after death, in paradise. Hopes of such a paradise cannot be discussed. As Hawkeye explains, to speak of this “would be to tell them that the snows come not in winter, or that the sun shines fiercest when the trees are stripped of their leaves!” (874).

After Cora’s burial, Alice, Heyward, and Munro leave for the settlements. Uncas is interred, and Hawkeye and Chingachgook join hands over his grave, and weep together. Finally, Tamenund proclaims that “It is enough! . . . The pale faces are masters of the earth and the time of the red-men has not yet come again. My day has been too long. In the morning I saw the sons of Unâmis happy and strong; and yet, before the night has come, have I lived to see the last warrior of the wise race of the Mohicans!” (877–78).

Tamenund’s words are sorrowfully sweet, elegiac, and filled with nostalgia. Like the other elegies that the novel offers, Tamenund’s closing speech expresses his sorrow gently, in a manner that makes Uncas’s death seem as natural as sunset, more like disappearance than destruction, while the Mohicans’ extinction seems more like a magical illusion than a violent obliteration. Cora is similarly elegized, with songs and speeches that attempt to convey “sorrow, hope and resignation” (874).

The gentle, elegiac quality of the last chapter of *The Last of the Mohicans* smooths over the frenzied violence of Cora’s, Uncas’s, and Magua’s deaths in the chapter before, and the description of Cora and Uncas as ghostly bride and groom supersedes the description of their ghostly murders. But they are still irretrievably, irrecoverably dead. The bleak fact of *The Last of the Mohicans* is that spectralization is not merely a trope. Uncas and Cora are ghostlike, but they are also destined to become actual ghosts. They must die. The spectral metaphors in the novel shroud the finality of death with hopes of an afterlife, but they finally bespeak the inevitable, violent annihilation of those who are figured as spectral.

In 1829, three years after the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans*, Cooper returned to the themes of miscegenation and spectrality in *The Wept of Wish-Ton Wish*. Both the title and the choice of subject matter puzzled his contemporary readers. The book was a commercial and critical failure, and its sole American reviewer complained that it was an unsuccessful rehash of *The Last of the Mohicans*. According to John McWilliams, “The *Southern Review* opened the only American review of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* with the sentence, ‘This work is a failure.’ The reviewer went on to describe Cooper as ‘lingering in the field of his former fame,’ ‘inflicting the dulness of repetition’ upon his reader, and thwarting his reader’s hope for new subjects.”²¹

The title, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, is easily explained. The novel

is set in a small settlement in western Connecticut, around the time of King Philip's War. The settlement is called "Wish-Ton-Wish," which Cooper construes to mean "whip-poor-will."²² At the end of the novel, a daughter of the settlers, Ruth Heathcote, captured by Indians and re-named Narra-mattah, lies buried beneath a tombstone that eschews both her names in favor of the obscure epitaph: "The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish."

Beside her stone lies another, inscribed "The Narragansett," which marks the grave of her husband, Conanchet, "the last sachem of the broken and dispersed tribe of the Narragansetts" (403). As the second gravestone indicates, the novel repeats the miscegenation plot of *The Last of the Mohicans* by telling the story of the love between a white woman and "the last" of the Narragansetts, and by tracing that story to its inevitable ending at the graves of the lovers.

One can only guess at Cooper's reasons for returning to an Indian story with central themes of miscegenation and spectrality. His contemporary reviewer accused him of "imitating Catherine Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*."²³ Carolyn Karcher agrees, arguing that, as *The Last of the Mohicans* refuted *Hobomok*, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* also responded "to a woman novelist's challenge" (36), this time refuting Sedgwick's treatment of miscegenation. Although Cooper may have wanted to refute Sedgwick, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* seems to have some other, equally important motivations. First, the book is, notably, not called "The Last of the Narragansetts"; as the title indicates, the novel is about the white female protagonist of the miscegenation story rather than her Indian lover. More accurately, the novel is about the settlements from which she vanishes, rather than the wilderness from which he vanishes.

Cooper may have written *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* in order to balance the narrative scales, to tell the miscegenation story from the point of view of the white settlement that is left behind in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Although Ruth lives in the woods among the Narragansetts for much of the story, and prefers the Narragansett name of Narra-mattah, her father calls her "the wept of my household" (365). The title takes up his designation, and refers to her as a much-mourned absence from her white family. Ruth/Narra-mattah's and Conanchet's graves are marked by gravestones and laid in the Heathcote family plot, but the stones erase their names: She is "The Wept," and he is "The Narragansett." Their story is actually not their story at all, but the story of their alienation.

A second possible explanation for Cooper's return to the themes of miscegenation and spectrality might be based on the Freudian understanding of specters as beings that figure forth "the return of the repressed." *The Last of the Mohicans*, after all, is not so much about miscegenation as

it is about the repression of miscegenation. Cora and Uncas are killed, not merely to prevent their miscegenistic marriage, but even to prevent them from speaking about their love for each other. When Cora and Uncas are violently murdered and ceremoniously buried in *The Last of the Mohicans*, the possibility of miscegenation is violently and ceremoniously repressed. In *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, that haunting possibility returns with a vengeance; the protagonists marry and beget a son. However, after the novel calls forth the specter of miscegenation, it attempts, once again, to repress it. The lovers die, and their son disappears from the narrative.

I have argued that *The Last of the Mohicans* itself is haunted by the specter of miscegenation that *Hobomok* calls forth. Although *The Last of the Mohicans* attempts to repress *Hobomok's* narrative of miscegenation, that story uncannily returns in *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*. Thus, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is haunted by *Hobomok* as well as by *The Last of the Mohicans*. In fact, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* brings together most of the elements of miscegenation and spectrality of both novels.

The greatest similarity between *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* and *Hobomok* is that the white women actually marry their Indian lovers in both texts, and give birth to mixed-race sons. These marriages spectralize the women and men who enter into them. Ruth Heathcote's capture and subsequent marriage to an Indian spectralizes her by turning her into a haunting presence in the minds of her family. Further, Ruth's parents feel that her life among the Narragansetts is a "condition far more gloomy than that of the grave" (348). In both of these respects, Ruth Heathcote's marriage echoes Mary Conant's. The marriages also contribute to the eventual dispossession and removal of the Indian men who enter into them, *Hobomok* and Conanchet. Both men give up their wives because they believe that their wives will be happier among the white settlers. *Hobomok* removes himself westward, and Conanchet actually sacrifices his life. Another significant similarity between *Hobomok* and *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is the fate of the sons of miscegenation. Like little *Hobomok*, the nameless son of *Narra-mattah* and Conanchet is assimilated completely. The child may survive, but his name and his Indian heritage are erased from history. Finally, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, like both *Hobomok* and *The Last of the Mohicans*, uses spectralization to remove Indians from American territory.

Perhaps the greatest similarity between *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* and *The Last of the Mohicans* is that the miscegenation plot ends at the graveside of a white woman and her Indian lover. There are a number of other parallels as well. Like the forests of *The Last of the Mohicans*, the forest that surrounds the valley of *Wish-Ton-Wish* is filled with strange

and unearthly noises. The Indians who issue from that forest seem supernatural in their ability to appear and disappear at will. Although Conanchet, the last of the Narragansetts, is gifted enough in woodcraft to make himself invisible at will, he is nonetheless made into a spectacle and subjected to a spectralizing gaze and to the detailed physical descriptions that this gaze produces, as is Uncas, the last of the Mohicans. The young Ruth Heathcote is also a spectacle, like Cora Munro. In fact, Franklin compares her capture to Vanderlyn's painting, *The Death of Jane McCrea*.²⁴

Because Mark Heathcote hopes to acculturate him, "to place him on the straight and narrow path," Conanchet lives as a captive within the settlement for the first half of the book. The young Narragansett's captivity among the settlers neatly foreshadows the young Ruth Heathcote's captivity among the Narragansetts in the latter part of the book. The Heathcotes hold Conanchet prisoner as part of a conscious effort to convert him to their cultural and religious practices, to make him "a dweller" among them, rather than a wanderer, and a Christian rather than a heathen. The Narragansett's motives in adopting the seven-year-old white girl are not explained, but historically the motive for most captures of white children by Indians was adoption. James Axtell quotes a young French soldier's testimony, in 1757, that "the Indians keep many of the Prisoners amongst them, chiefly young People whom they adopt and bring up in their own way."²⁵ Most probably, the motives of Cooper's fictional Narragansetts were remarkably similar to the Heathcotes' motives for taking a young captive. *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* is also historically accurate in portraying the Indian's refusal to be acculturated and the white child's acquiescence. In the eighteenth century, Cadwalader Colden, Benjamin Franklin, and Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur all ruefully acknowledged that, as Crèvecoeur put it, "thousands of Europeans are Indians, and we have no examples of even one of those Aborigines having from choice become Europeans!"²⁶

In the first part of the book, however, the closest parallel to Conanchet's captivity is the captivity of a European fugitive. Unbeknownst to the reader until the novel's final pages, Conanchet has shared his quarters with a regicide judge, who is interred in the blockhouse to conceal him from the King's officers and the other inhabitants of the valley. Their relationship during the first part of the book is not described until the last pages of the novel. At that point, they discuss their shared confinement and the friendship that grew out of it, and the regicide reveals that Conanchet's "mysterious hints" (383) led him to warn the settlers of the first attack by the Narragansetts. However, the explanation is presented two hundred pages and more than ten years after the mysterious warning. Like the settlers, the readers experience the regicide's unexplained appearance as strange and supernatural.

During the first half of the book both Conanchet and the regicide are mysterious, inscrutable figures. Neither is given a name until the second part, and even then, the regicide is simply called by the oxymoronic epithet, "Submission." The bond between the spectral regicide and the spectral Indian is a curious one. Cooper links them first by making them both prisoners together, then by showing Conanchet's great respect for the fact that the regicide has "taken the scalp of a great chief" (345), and finally by making them into figures of the unburied dead. As they talk together in the last pages, they discuss the lonely deaths that they imagine for themselves. Submission declares that his bones "may whiten in the vault of some gloomy forest," and Conanchet says that he too will be unburied, that "falling leaves will cover my bones" (371). "Then hath the Lord given us a new bond of friendship" (371), Submission declares. It is notable that the final bond that links Submission and Conanchet to each other is the fact that they believe they will be graveless. Each thinks of himself as a living ghost, Submission because he is a fugitive and an out-cast from England, Conanchet because he is the last of "the broken and dispersed tribe of the Narragansetts" (403).

Both the regicide and the Indian are significant figures in the mythology of the American Revolution. The regicide is obviously a precursor of the king-toppling revolutionaries, while the Indian is an ideal American because he is truly American rather than English. (The tea party celebrants, for example, disguised themselves as Indians, and were known as "Mohawks.") Both of these are figurative ancestors for the young America, but they are also frightening and uncomfortable figures: The Indian may represent true Americanness, but he also represents his own dispossession. The regicide may represent rebellion, but he is also a blatantly patricidal figure, an outlaw, a skeleton in the closet of the young America.

In the particular case of *Wish-Ton-Wish*, both the regicide and the Indian are captive, concealed figures, who live in the tower at the center of the settlement. Both are kept within the tower against their wills. Because the regicide is concealed in their blockhouse, the King's officers are hostile to the Heathcotes. Because Conanchet is held captive there, the Narragansetts attack them.

The regicide and Conanchet warn the Heathcotes of the attack, and attempt to defend the young settlement. In spite of their efforts, the attacking Narragansetts succeed in driving the settlers into the blockhouse, and they burn it to the ground with all the settlers inside. The only two who escape the blaze are the young Ruth Heathcote and Whittal Ring, a "half-witted serving-lad" (17), who have been captured by the Indians. The next morning, Conanchet stands beside the ruins, mourning the family that held him captive throughout the winter. As Cooper frames it, "Regret soon gave place to awe. To the imagination of the Indian, it

seemed as if a still voice, like that which is believed to issue from the grave, was heard in the place" (192). Believing that the Heathcotes are dead, and that the voice he hears is ghostly, Conanchet leaves the valley, and keeps Ruth Heathcote and Whittal Ring in custody.

However, Conanchet, along with the reader, has been deceived. In fact, the family and their servants are hiding inside the well that watered the blockhouse. After the Indians leave, they emerge.

To one acquainted with the recent horrors, the breathing of the airs over the ruins might have passed for the whisperings of departed spirits . . . then a human head was reared slowly, and with marked suspicion, above the shaft of the well. The wild and unearthly air of this seeming spectre was in keeping with the rest of the scene. A face begrimed with smoke and stained with blood, a head bound in some fragment of soiled dress, and eyes that were glaring in a species of dull horror . . . (194)

The "seeming spectre" is, in fact, Eben Dudley, one of the Heathcotes' retainers. After he comes forth, the others follow him out into their desolated valley. Although the settlers survive, the Narragansett attack has transformed them all, at least temporarily, into spectral figures. When their settlement is burned, they themselves become figures of unsettlement.²⁷ They are "wild and unearthly." Eventually, they will rebuild their houses, and redomesticate themselves and the valley they live in. However, Wish-Ton-Wish will remain an "unearthly," unsettling, haunted place.

Ruth Heathcote's story parallels the historical story of Eunice Williams in a number of ways. In 1704, Eunice Williams was captured along with her family and most of the residents of Deerfield, a small settlement on the Connecticut River. She was seven years old, and according to her father's account of their captivity, she was "carried all the journey" to Canada, and "looked after with a great deal of tenderness."²⁸ In Canada, she was adopted into an Indian family in the mission town of Kahnawake, and after eight or nine years she married an Indian man, Arosen. During the first ten years of her life at Kahnawake, her "redemption" was repeatedly attempted by representatives of the Massachusetts General Court and the Williams family. However, Eunice had been formally adopted by her captors, and even during the first year of her captivity, John Williams was told that "the Macquas would as soon part with their hearts as my child."²⁹ After her marriage, she refused overtures and invitations to return to Massachusetts from numerous emissaries, including her father in 1714.

The 1714 meeting between John Williams and his daughter Eunice, ten years after her original captivity, is quite similar to the Heathcotes' reunion with their daughter ten years after her captivity. John Demos's

history of Eunice Williams's captivity, *The Unredeemed Captive*, makes a fascinating and ingenious effort to reconstruct the meeting from Eunice Williams's point of view, in spite of the fact that almost all of the written records are from the New England viewpoint.³⁰ However, Demos's attempt points out the great inaccessibility of Eunice Williams's own story, which belongs, like Ruth's, to another world.

The second half of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* brings the white world and the Indian world together. The Narragansett village has been destroyed by white forces in King Philip's War, and because they are homeless, the entire tribe accompanies the warriors who intend to attack Wish-Ton-Wish. Narra-mattah returns to her childhood home along with the attacking force of Narragansetts and Wampanoags.

The attack is again announced by the spectral regicide, who appears suddenly in church. As the minister exhorts his congregation to "Lift your eyes upwards," his sermon is interrupted by a "deep authoritative voice" saying, "Rather, turn them to earth!" and warning them of an Indian attack. The voice belongs to a "stranger of grave aspect," who turns out to be the regicide, descending from his secret hermitage because the settlement is in danger (280). Like the historical "Angel of Hadley," Cooper's regicide makes his mysterious appearance moments before the Indian attack, and leads the villagers in their own defense.

The Indians destroy the town and capture the Heathcote family, and then the two Indian leaders, Conanchet and Philip (Metacom), examine their captives. However, rather than describing the Heathcotes from the point of view of their Indian captors, Cooper focuses on Conanchet. Ostensibly, this is his moment of triumph.

At this textual moment Cooper subjects Conanchet to the narrator's feminizing, and finally spectralizing, gaze. The detailed descriptions of Conanchet as a feminized sculptural object shatter his physical integrity before the reader's eyes.

In form and in features, this young warrior might be deemed a model of the excellence of Indian manhood. The limbs were full, round, faultlessly straight . . . in the upright attitude, and in the distant and noble gaze which so often elevated his front, there was a close affinity to the statue of the Pythian Apollo; while in the full though slightly effeminate chest, there was an equal resemblance to that look of animal indulgence which is to be traced in the severe representations of Bacchus. . . . this peculiar fulness of chest . . . seemed to say, that . . . there was a heart beneath that might be touched by the charities of humanity. On the present occasion, the glances of his roving eye . . . were evidently weakened by an expression that betrayed a strange and unwonted confusion of mind. (304)

This description of Conanchet's body first denotes him as a model, and then as an actual statue, an object that belongs in a museum. It dismem-

bers him, dividing his limbs from his chest. After he is dismembered, he is figured as feminine, given full breasts which denote both "animal indulgence" and a "heart . . . that might be touched by the charities of humanity." Conanchet's subjection to the reader's gaze shatters his identity and weakens his own gaze. At the start of the passage Conanchet's own gaze is "distant and noble"; at the end, when Conanchet is a spectacle rather than a spectator, Cooper writes that "the glances of his roving eye were evidently weakened by an expression that betrayed a strange and unwonted confusion of mind."

Seeing his confusion, his ally Philip assumes that he has seen a ghost, and asks, "What troubles the Great Sachem of the Narragansett? His thoughts seem uneasy. I think there is more before his eye than one whose sight is getting dim can see. Doth he behold the spirit of the brave Miantinimoh, who died like a dog?" (321). "I do not see the spirit of my father," returned the young sachem" (322). Rather, he sees the Heathcotes, the family of his wife, whom he has believed to be dead for the past ten years. To him, the Heathcotes are ghosts. He tells Philip about the visions of his father crying out for vengeance that prompted his first, unsuccessful attack on Wish-Ton-Wish, about his captivity there, and then about the burning of the blockhouse. "All within were turned to ashes," he says, "Yet do they, who were in the blazing lodge, stand there!" (314-15). Philip is startled, and asks, "Does my son see spirits in the air?" Conanchet responds by saying that "The Yengeese deal with unknown gods; they are too cunning for an Indian" (315).

The two men return to question their captives, and Philip asks Mark Heathcote, "When a man of a pale-skin has gone up in the fire can he walk again on earth?" (318). The Puritan is "excited at the charge of necromancy," and he responds, "Thou hast heard some legend of thy wild people, man of the Wampanoags, which may heap double perdition on thy soul, lest thou shouldst happily be rescued from the fangs of the deceiver" (319). His vehement denial is an interesting testament to the seriousness of the charges. Philip asks, in effect, whether Heathcote is a ghost or a wizard. He denies both charges and declares that Philip is a "deluded victim of Satan," damned to perdition, and trapped in the "fangs of the deceiver" (319). The amusing thing about the interchange is that each believes the other to be devilish and otherworldly. Neither is certain of his adversary's reality; both suspect that their enemy is the ghost of a burning, tormented soul.

After Heathcote points out the ruined well, both Conanchet and Philip realize what had happened. Conanchet insists upon freeing his wife's family, while Philip argues that the Heathcotes should be put to death, and that Conanchet's judgment is impaired by his affection for Narra-mattah. While Philip is speaking of Narra-mattah, suddenly "a

being that singularly resembled this description appeared before him. . . . For the first moment, she stood in a suspended and doubting posture such as one might suppose a creature of mist would assume ere it vanished" (321). Ruth/Narra-mattah's reappearance is sudden, even apparitional; she materializes as Philip describes her, but she is figured as unsubstantial, "suspended and doubting," a "creature of mist" about to vanish. After she is reunited with her family, Cooper writes that, "Narra-mattah, as we shall continue to call her, in air, expression and attitude, resembled someone who had a fancied existence in the delusion of some dream" (348).

It is not clear whether the dream is hers or her family's. When Conanchet asks Narra-mattah whether she remembers her past, she describes a figure that she "sees in her dreams," "a woman with white skin; her eyes look softly on her child in her dreams; it is not an eye, it is a tongue! . . . it soundeth as one talking from the clouds. . . . Narra-mattah loves to listen, for the words seem to her like the Wish-Ton-Wish, when he whistles in the woods" (327-28). In this construction, her mother is identified with Wish-Ton-Wish, the bird and the place, and all are described as dream figures. After Narra-mattah describes her dreams, Conanchet resolves to reunite his young wife with her "unresisting and half-unconscious" (329) mother. In turn, her mother responds to Narra-mattah as if she were an apparition or a dream figure, saying, "Speak, mysterious and lovely being! Who art thou? . . . Vision of the woods, wilt thou not answer?" (330). Narra-mattah does not respond to her mother, but instead she calls out to Conanchet, her husband, "Come near, sachem, the spirit that talketh to Narra-mattah in her dreams is nigh" (330). Mother and daughter are reunited as dream figures, as "visions" rather than as realities.

The effort to make their reunion real rather than dreamlike is painful. When her mother embraces Narra-mattah, and she strains "the yielding frame of her recovered daughter to her heart, it appeared as if she strove to incorporate the two bodies into one" (331). Cooper writes that, "Conanchet was shaken" by the reunion. "Raising the hand, at whose wrist still hung the bloody tomahawk, he veiled his face, and turning aside, that none might see the weakness of so great a warrior, he wept" (331). His weeping betrays his weakness, but even more important, it marks the moment when his wife becomes his "wept," as she has been the "wept" of Wish-Ton-Wish during her time with him. Thenceforth, she is suspended between two worlds, neither Ruth nor Narra-mattah, "neither white nor red" (321). She is a spectral figure, a "wept," for both her white family and her Narragansett family.

In 1740, thirty-six years after her capture, Eunice Williams and her Indian husband briefly visited her white family in New England. Her brother

Stephen found his own mixed emotions about the meeting dreamlike and hard to describe, writing that, "We had ye joyfull, sorrowfull meeting of our poor sister," and that "I Seem as if I had been in a Sleep or Dream."³¹ Ruth/Narra-mattah's fictional brother, Mark, is similarly ambivalent about his sister. He may rejoice in her return, but he is certainly saddened as well. Even before he sees her, he imagines that she may be married, and the prospect horrifies him. "The delusion is gone," he says, "and in its place a frightful truth has visited me. . . . Oh! 'tis horrible to believe that she is the bondwoman, the servitor, the wife of a savage!" (267). Rather than the childish Ruth that he has dreamed of heretofore, he imagines her as a woman, a wife and mother. The vision is "frightful" and "horrible."

Ruth/Narra-mattah's reunion with her white family is dreamlike, both joyful and sorrowful. Soon after Narra-mattah rejoins her family, Conanchet sends their son to her. The part-Indian baby comes as an unpleasant shock to Narra-mattah's white family. Once again, Cooper appropriately protests the indescribability of the encounter:

the wild being . . . was holding before the bewildered gaze of her mother the patient features of an Indian babe.

It would exceed the powers of the unambitious pen we wield, to convey to the reader a just idea of the mixed emotions that struggled for mastery in [her countenance]. The innate and never-dying sentiment of maternal joy was opposed by all the feelings of pride that prejudice could not fail to implant even in the bosom of one so meek. (357)

Although her mother attempts to deceive Ruth/Narra-mattah by kissing her infant grandson, "Narra-mattah detected the difference between the cold salute and those fervent embraces she had herself received, and the disappointment produced a chill about her own heart" (357). Ruth/Narra-mattah's father chastises his wife for her reaction to the mixed-race baby, "Our daughter is grieved that thou turnest a cold eye on her babe" (357). But her parents' utmost efforts cannot completely convince Narra-mattah that they are pleased with her son. "Shades of regret" (357) cloud their brows.

Significantly, Conanchet, like the Heathcotes, believes that his marriage to a white woman is morally wrong. Conanchet wants Narra-mattah to return to her white family because he believes that "The Great Spirit of thy fathers is angry that thou livest in the lodge of a Narragansett" (328), but Narra-mattah argues that "He seeth further than the skin and knoweth the color of the mind" (328). Her mind may be Narragansett because she is accustomed to Narragansett ways, but her heart is also Narragansett. The child is living proof that Narra-mattah is no longer Ruth Heathcote, that she has been fundamentally changed by her decade among the Narragansetts. She loves Conanchet, and she loves their child.

When Conanchet asks her whether she likes “the lodges of her father,” she answers that “Narra-mattah is a wife” (396).

When she asserts that their union is good, he disagrees. “‘It is like that boy,’ said the chief, pointing to his son; ‘neither red nor pale’” (396). She lifts the “smiling boy” before his eyes and asks, “doth Conanchet say this fruit is not good?” (396). He does not respond. Instead, he tells her that he has been sentenced to death. She pleads with him to “quit the woods, and go into the clearings with the mother of his boy,” but he answers with “severe and cold displeasure,” “Woman, I am a sachem and a warrior among my people” (397).

About to die, he tells Narra-mattah that his “Good Spirit . . . calls his son to hunt among the braves that have gone on the long path. Thine points another way.” He commands his wife to “Let thy mind be like a wide clearing. Let all its shadows be next the woods; let it forget the dream it dreamt among the trees” (402). In his farewell speech, Conanchet figures himself and his people as ghostly figures in the happy hunting grounds, as shadows in the woods, as dream-beings among the trees.

Like Hobomok, like Uncas, Conanchet finally acquiesces to his own spectralization. He ghosts himself voluntarily. Like Hobomok’s and Uncas’s acts of self-sacrifice, Conanchet’s self-sacrifice makes America possible. Hobomok removed himself so that Mary Conant could create her own American reality. Uncas was slaughtered at Cora’s side so that America might remain, like Alice, “spotless and angel-like” (728), and racially pure. Conanchet gives his life for Submission the regicide, the man who killed the king of England.

Consider the bonds between the Indian and the regicide. At first, both are concealed and confined within the Heathcotes’ home. Both wish the settlers well, and both endanger them and frighten them by their very presences. They are figures of fear and horror as well as objects of reverence and affection for the Heathcotes. Both consider themselves homeless outcasts, living ghosts whose bones are destined to be graveless. They are the spectral beings who haunt the white American family, and they are also the mythical figures who haunt the American nation. The Indian and the regicide are the unacknowledged ancestors of America, the lawless fathers who figure forth illegitimacy and patricide rather than law and patriarchy. They are the fathers of the American Revolution.

Because of his ties to his wife, her white family, and their spectral protector, Conanchet must die. Because of her love for him, his death “de-range[s] some of that fearful machinery which links the soul to the body” (409), and Ruth/Narra-mattah dies beside him. They are haunting figures, made into a “sad spectacle” (405) beneath the gaze of the settlers and the readers, while their corpses “gaze at each other with a mysterious and unearthly intelligence” (412).

Their child, the "little flower of two colors" (403) who remains nameless throughout the novel, lies, "unheeded" (404) beside them. He is not mentioned again in the novel. Instead, the narrative moves to the early part of the nineteenth century, when "one who took an interest in the recollection of days long gone" (413) is visiting the graveyard where all lie buried. The narrator tells us that "research became difficult and painful" for the nameless inquirer, "But his zeal was not to be easily defeated" (413). The zealous searcher finds the graves of "The Narragansett" and "The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish" (415), and with their epitaphs, the story ends.

Perhaps that nameless historian is purely fictional. Perhaps he is an authorial persona. However, he might also be "The Rev. J. R. C. of *****, Pennsylvania," the man to whom Cooper dedicates the novel. In the dedication, Cooper thanks him for "the kind and disinterested manner in which you have furnished the materials of the following tale" (iii). The dedication continues by declaring:

You have every reason to exult in your descent, for, surely, if any man may claim to be a citizen and a proprietor in the union, it is one that, like yourself, can point to a line of ancestors whose origin is lost in the obscurity of time. You are truly an America. In your eyes, we of a brief century or two must appear a little more than denizens quite recently admitted to the privilege of residence. That you may continue to enjoy peace and happiness, in that land where your fathers so long flourished, is the sincere wish of your obliged friend. (iii)

The Reverend J. R. C. preferred to remain anonymous. Perhaps the "materials" that he furnished to Cooper were his own invention. Perhaps he did not exist. But Cooper presents him as a living man, a contemporary, and a "friend." More important, Cooper presents him as a descendant of Indians, who "can point to a line of ancestors whose origin is lost in the obscurity of time." The clear implication of the dedication is that Rev. J. R. C. is descended from Conanchet and Narra-mattah, that he is the zealous inquirer for whom the story is "difficult and painful" (413).

Most significantly, Cooper calls this nameless man, this child of miscegenation who is "[reluctant] to appear before the world," "an America."³²

This anonymous, perhaps nonexistent man, is the perfect embodiment of Cooper's America. He is white, civilized, and Christian, and he is haunted by his own illegitimacy, his secret history, his savage Indian and his ruthless Puritan heritage. In his mind, in his story, stalk stern Puritans and devilish regicides, ghostly, weeping mothers, and spectral Indian chiefs who are passionately joined to beautiful, frightening white women. These are America's ancestors, and these are America's ghosts.

PART THREE



RACE, HISTORY, NATION



William Apess and Nathaniel Hawthorne

☞ Indian spectralization and its obverse, European-American nationalism, shape the writings of William Apess and Nathaniel Hawthorne, but they are also writ large in the writer's lives and in the history of the ways that they have been forgotten and remembered. In the past century, Apess has been all but erased from the historical record, while Hawthorne has been monumentalized. I will approach Apess's and Hawthorne's works in terms of their careers and their reception. Rather than focusing on single books or tales, this section will trace the progression of each man's politics and aesthetics, and examine the central role of Indian Removal and spectralization in both men's public lives.

William Apess and Nathaniel Hawthorne were both prolific writers and well-known national figures. Both men divided their time between their writing and their political activities or public service. In their careers, politics and letters converge. Both attempted to articulate nationalist visions in their work. For both men, the politics of race were central. They fell on different sides of the great issues of the 1830s. Apess was vehemently opposed to Indian Removal and to slavery; Hawthorne was resigned to the necessity of both. Apess was an activist, whose writings directly supported his political activities, and who was an influential figure in New England politics. His impact on the thought and writing of his contemporaries was also great; strong cases can be made for his influence on the works of Lydia Maria Child, Henry David Thoreau, Frederick Douglass, and Herman Melville. Hawthorne was a public servant, a loyal Democrat, and a close friend of President Franklin Pierce. His political and literary influence is well documented. Unlike Apess, Hawthorne denied the relationship between his political activities and his literary production; certainly, his writing aestheticized his political viewpoint to a great degree. Nonetheless, Hawthorne's writing cannot be separated from his nationalism or from his politics. I will examine Apess and Hawthorne as national figures, struggling to articulate opposing perspectives on the racial issues that both men perceived as America's "national sin."

The following chapters take Hawthorne as a voice of America's repressive national culture and Apess as a voice of resistance. Hawthorne

was descended from Puritan settlers of Massachusetts. Apess was a Pequot Indian and a descendant of the Puritans' deadliest enemy, King Philip. Hawthorne was a Democratic partisan, and his livelihood depended on his support of Democratic policies, including Indian Removal. Apess vocally opposed such policies.

Hawthorne presented Native Americans as beings who had already vanished from New England, and who were fated to disappear from all of America. The Indians whom he did represent in his writing were described as ghosts or ghostly figures. He dismissed living nineteenth-century Indians (like Apess) as spectral representatives of their own doomed past rather than as vigorous contemporaries.

In 1833, when Apess published his "Indian's Looking Glass," he lived with his Pequot wife and children in Essex County, Massachusetts. He probably lived in the county seat, Salem, where Hawthorne also resided; certainly, he must have frequented the town. When we consider the fact that the well-known Pequot walked the streets of Salem alongside Hawthorne himself, Hawthorne's assertions of Indian disappearance begin to look very much like deliberate authorial sleight of hand.

Apess was a Methodist minister, an eloquent writer, and a passionate advocate for "the civil and religious rights of the Indians."¹ He lived in the early nineteenth century in New England, a territory from which most of his white American contemporaries imagined that Indians had vanished centuries before. Apess published five works between 1829 and 1838, but although they were well received, they were quickly forgotten by America's literary establishment. In 1990, Apess's sermon, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" (1833) was published in *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*.² In 1992, Barry O'Connell published an authoritative edition of Apess's complete works entitled *On Our Own Ground*. Since then, scholars and teachers have begun to regard Apess as the most important of the few Native American writers of the early nineteenth century. His work is extremely valuable for late-twentieth-century readers because it retrieves an Indian voice that many of them, like their nineteenth-century counterparts, imagine to have been silenced.

The rediscovery of Apess's work has been greeted with delight because it fills such a need in contemporary critical thought and curricula. Recently, scholars have compared Apess to Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Frederick Douglass, and Herman Melville.³ He can also be linked to Lydia Maria Child, who has been proposed as his "ghost writer,"⁴ to William Lloyd Garrison, who wrote a strong defense of him in *The Liberator*, and to Henry David Thoreau, whose concept of civil disobedience may well have been influenced by Apess's conduct of the Mashpee Revolt.

Along with Apess, the Mashpee Revolt has almost completely vanished from the historical record. This is somewhat surprising because the Mashpees won all they asked for and successfully resisted the nineteenth-century paradigm of the vanishing Indian. Unlike the Cherokees, who were defeated in their well-remembered struggle at the same time, the Mashpees were not removed. They were granted the full rights of citizenship, and they stayed in Mashpee, Massachusetts, where they have maintained a strong community up to the present.⁵

The facts of Mashpee history run counter to the narratives of Indian Removal and Manifest Destiny that usually describe the decades before the Civil War. They are, one might say, historically aberrant. But what does this tell us about our historical discourses? The myth of the vanishing Indian is still so powerful that it erases from historical consciousness those Indians who did not vanish, denies their existence as totally as it denies the existence of those Indians who were actually annihilated or removed to the nation's periphery.

In 1833, William Apess joined the Mashpee tribe in order to help the Mashpees organize protests against two authorities: overseers of their plantation who had been appointed by the state of Massachusetts, and Phineas Fish, the Congregational minister who presided over the Mashpee Indian Meeting House, appointed by Harvard College. Apess's rhetorical strategy was to adopt the language and ideals of the United States, and to demand that those ideals be achieved. He wrote, for example, that the Mashpees "concerted the form of a government, suited to the spirit and capacity of freeborn sons of the forest, after the pattern set us by our white brethren. There was but one exception, viz., that *all* who dwelt in our precincts were to be held free and equal, *in truth*, as well as in letter" (179).

The Mashpee strategy for political action was nonviolent resistance. On July 1, 1833, two white men attempted to gather firewood on Mashpee tribal lands. At Apess's direction, a group of Indians unloaded the wood from their cart, and asked them to leave. No violence occurred. Apess described the encounter:

I mildly stated to him the views and intentions of the tribe, saying that it was not their design to wrong or harm any man in the least and that we wished them to desist till we should have had a settlement with the overseers, after which everything should be placed on a proper footing. I begged them to desist for the sake of peace; but it was to no purpose. . . . I then, having previously cautioned the Indians to do no bodily injury to any man, unless in their own defense, but to stand up for their rights and nothing else, desired them to unload the teams, which they did very promptly. . . . Throughout this transaction the Indians uttered neither a threat nor an unkind word, but the white men used very bitter language at being thus, for the first time, hindered from taking away what had always been as a lawful spoil to them hitherto. (181)

On the Fourth of July, 1833, William Apess was arrested and charged with “riot, assault, and trespass” in the matter of the woodcarts (184). During the following months, Apess would be tried in the Barnstable Court, while Mashpee self-rule was debated in the Massachusetts legislature. Both Apess’s trial and “The Mashpee Revolt” would be subjects of intense public concern, covered extensively by Massachusetts newspapers (including *The Liberator* and the *Boston Advocate*), and hotly debated in public and private forums.

Apess lost his private case in Cape Cod’s courts: he was found guilty, sentenced to thirty days in jail, and fined one hundred dollars. But in March 1834, the Mashpees won their larger case in the Massachusetts General Court. After hearing the pleas of Apess and two other Mashpee speakers, and reading the complaint that Apess had prepared for the tribe, the Massachusetts legislature granted the Mashpee Indians rights of self-governance. The protests also convinced Harvard College to remove the objectionable Phineas Fish from the meeting house and parsonage, though Fish did not actually relinquish his hold on the property until 1846. By 1870, the state had extended full civil rights to the Mashpees, and granted them citizenship.⁶

In 1835, the year after his victory at Mashpee, William Apess published a compendium of documents such as personal letters, public declarations, legal papers, and newspaper articles, organized in narrative form and annotated extensively. He called the book *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Marshpee Tribe; or, The Pretended Riot Explained*.⁷ The following year, 1836, William Apess made his last public appearances. He delivered his “Eulogy on King Philip” twice at the Odeon Theater in Boston in January 1836, and published it in Boston in 1836 and in a second edition in 1837.

There is strong evidence that Apess and the Mashpee Revolt influenced Thoreau. This is another indication that Apess was a very significant figure in early-nineteenth-century America. As we discover Apess’s historical importance, we discover the great power of the discourses of erasure and spectralization that removed him from American literary, political, and intellectual history.

Consider the evidence. First, there is a striking similarity between Apess’s strategy of resistance in 1833 and Thoreau’s in 1849. Second, there is Thoreau’s proximity to Boston during the years 1833 to 1837, when Apess was a popular advocate for Native American rights who often spoke publicly, and Thoreau was an undergraduate at Harvard. Third, there is the evidence of Thoreau’s studious devotion to Native American history and culture. Fourth, there are Thoreau’s travels to Mashpee. Fifth, and perhaps most important, Apess and Thoreau use similar language to describe their times in prison. Lastly, Apess’s affiliation

with William Lloyd Garrison provides a probable link to Thoreau and also to Frederick Douglass.

Henry David Thoreau's lifelong interest in Native Americans and Native American history has been well documented, most notably by Robert Sayre in *Thoreau and the American Indians*. But Sayre's book does not treat Thoreau's undergraduate years, the years when he might have heard or met or at least read about William Apess, who was very much in the public eye. Thoreau might have heard Apess in any of a number of public addresses delivered between 1833 and 1836. If Thoreau didn't hear the speeches, he might have read them, or even talked about them with Apess or one of his Mashpee allies. My research has not yet turned up documentation of such a meeting, though Jack Campisi's book, *The Mashpee Indians*, includes the tantalizing detail that in 1849, the year he published "Resistance to Civil Government," Thoreau stayed at the Attaquin Hotel in Mashpee, owned by Solomon Attaquin, brother of Ezra Attaquin, one of the first selectmen appointed when the tribe won its fight for township status.⁸

Thoreau's description of his confinement in the Concord jail is uncannily parallel to Apess's comment on having been imprisoned in Barnstable. In *Indian Nullification*, published in 1835, Apess comments,

Since this affair took place, I have been kindly informed by a gentleman of Barnstable that my punishment was not half severe enough. I replied that, in my mind, it was no punishment at all; and I am yet to learn what punishment can dismay a man conscious of his own innocence. Lightning, tempest, and battle, wreck, pain, buffeting and torture have small terror to a pure conscience. The body they may afflict, but the mind is beyond their power. (203)

In "Resistance to Civil Government," published in 1849, Thoreau wrote,

I could not help being struck by the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. . . . I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. . . . I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance, and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body.⁹

For both men, jail taught that the mind could not be controlled or confined by the state. Following Apess's example, Thoreau explained that by allowing himself to be confined he could turn the system against itself, use the mechanics of the judicial system to protest and to publicize societal injustices. Thoreau's call for just men to force the government to imprison them seems substantiated by, if not derived from, Apess's imprisonment,

and the role that it played in his successful campaign for Mashpee rights. Thoreau's words:

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place today, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them; on that separate, but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not with her but *against* her—the only house in a slave state in which a free man can abide with honor.¹⁰

Significantly, Thoreau puts the fugitive slave beside the Indian in this passage. He implies that, by going to prison, he has met both. Along with Apess, he may be referring to Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave who arrived in Massachusetts in 1838. Both Douglass and Thoreau followed, literally, in Apess's footsteps, making the same public-speaking circuit through coastal Massachusetts—New Bedford, Cape Cod, Boston, and Salem—that Apess first travelled in the early 1830s. All three men were abolitionists, all were acquainted with William Lloyd Garrison, and all contributed to *The Liberator*. The link between Thoreau and Douglass is well documented: on one occasion, when Douglass was indisposed, Thoreau was called on to fill in for him. The connection between Apess and Douglass is less documented, though both men served as Methodist ministers in the New Bedford region. Bette Weidman presents a convincing case for reading Apess as an influence on Douglass in her essay "The Roots of American Oratory." On the basis of the verbal similarities between Apess's and Douglass's speeches, she speculates "that when the Red Power activists of the 1970s drew on 1960s black thought and civil rights activism, they were participating in an interchange of thought and resolve established early in the 19th century."¹¹ Thus, the circle is completed: a Native American activist inspires an African American and a white reformer to develop a philosophy that shapes the course of African American activism, and, in turn, reinvigorates Native American advocacy.

Apess was a strong presence in New England's political, literary, clerical, and philosophical circles. But, as I have argued, he has been largely forgotten. In contrast to the repression of Apess, consider the monumentalization of Nathaniel Hawthorne, a writer who helped to construct the discourse of Indian disappearance that succeeded in erasing Apess from history for a century and a half. In "Main Street," Hawthorne describes an illusionist who presents a phantasmagoria, so as "to call up the multi-form and many-colored Past before the spectator, and show him the

ghosts of his forefathers.” The phantasmagoria begins by projecting the “spectral image” of “the Great Squaw Sachem.” She is joined by her son, Wappacowet. Hawthorne describes Wappacowet as a conjurer of phantoms. He is “the priest and magician whose incantations shall hereafter affright the pale-faced settlers with grisly phantoms, dancing and shrieking in the moonlight.”

However, Wappacowet himself is the one whom Hawthorne destines for spectrality: Hawthorne writes,

greater would be the affright of the Indian necromancer, if, mirrored in the pool of water at his feet, he could catch a glimpse of the noon-day marvels which the white man is destined to achieve; if he could see, as in a dream, the stone-front of the stately hall, which will cast its shadow over this very spot; if he could be aware that the future edifice will contain a noble Museum, where, among countless curiosities of earth and sea, a few Indian arrow-heads shall be treasured up as memorials of a vanished race!¹²

In this highly overdetermined staging of Indian spectralization, Hawthorne presents the fabricated ghost of an Indian conjurer, standing beside a mirrorlike pond that foretells the Indian’s eventual disappearance from Salem and from New England. These Indians are spectral, but they are not horrifying—rather, their attempts to scare the Puritan settlers are revealed as pathetic, while both their mysterious presence and their inevitable disappearance ennoble the American landscape that is destined to become a new nation.

Much of Hawthorne’s writing is haunted by ghostly Indian figures: elsewhere, for example, he describes Indians as “shadowlike and unreal,” and as “misty phantoms.” These phantoms may have been particularly important to Hawthorne’s work, since he conceived of the writing project itself as a sort of conjury. But Hawthorne was certainly not the only early-nineteenth-century American writer who constructed Indians as ghostly figures. His work was part of a shared early-nineteenth-century discourse of Indian spectralization. Because Native American ghosts are ubiquitous, even unavoidable, I must content myself with the bare mention of a horde of literary ghosts that will remain uninvestigated here. At this point, I will quickly examine a few works by two of Hawthorne’s contemporaries, Herman Melville and Edgar Allan Poe.

For Herman Melville (as for Hawthorne) race, gender, and the phantasmic imagination are central to American nationalism. In his well-known review of Hawthorne’s *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Melville writes that in “spite of all the Indian-summer sunlight on the hither side of Hawthorne’s soul, the other side—like the dark half of the physical sphere—is shrouded in blackness, ten times black.”¹³ Critics have worked and reworked this assertion, and most have concluded that Melville’s

blackness is more Melville's than Hawthorne's—that Hawthorne's pleasing ambiguities turn to horrifying ambivalences and deathly uncertainties in Melville's dark glass. Few have commented, however, on the racialized language that Melville uses to describe the ideal American artist's imagination. He speaks of "Indian summer," of "the other side," and of "blackness." The "Puritanic gloom"¹⁴ of the American mind is shaded with Indian red and African black. Since this darkness is located on the other side of the moon—"the dark half of the physical sphere"—it is also allied with female realms, and set against the daylight sphere of male rationalism.

Melville's evocations of "the other side" of the nationalist imagination are closely related to Hawthorne's, though he wields the ambivalent discourses of spectrality and race with a certain desperate horror that Hawthorne evades. In *Typee*, Tommo's terror grows as his ability to distinguish between savage and civilized diminishes. In *Moby Dick*, *Pierre*, and *Israel Potter*, Melville obsessively returns to the question, "What separates the enlightened man from the savage? Is civilization a thing distinct, or is it an advanced stage of barbarism?"¹⁵ Finally, in *The Confidence Man*, the Indian-hater is spectralized alongside his ghostly quarry; Melville writes that, "the Indian-hater is as good as gone to his long home, and 'Terror' is his epitaph. . . . there can be no biography of the Indian-hater *par excellence*, any more than . . . one of a dead man."¹⁶

Because he is spectral and savage, Melville's Indian-hater is indistinguishable from the Indians whom he hates. In this respect, he is a scion of *Edgar Huntly*. As a "Leather-stocking Nemesis," he is also related to Cooper's own *Leatherstocking*. In addition, he recalls Edgar Allan Poe's avatar of the Red Death, the allegorized specter of racism that ensures the nation's doom. The Red Death is the ultimate Indian ghost, the disembodied phantom of inescapable racial hatred and ineradicable national guilt. Poe's Gothic tales are often shaded in red and black, as Hawthorne's and Melville's, and many of them evince a certain racial terror. Most notably, Poe's novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, conflates the conventions of the Gothic with those of the sea tale and the exploration narrative in order to take its reader into a horrifying realm where whiteness and blackness struggle against each other in the persons of a group of black-skinned, black-toothed savages, and a "shrouded human figure . . . of the perfect whiteness of snow."¹⁷ Both the white figure and the black savages are explained as emblems of vengeance. The novel breaks off abruptly, and mysteriously, but its vengeful white specters and terrifying black savages can be joined to the specter of the Red Death in a chorus of racial horror. Poe's vision is perhaps best summed up by the last line of "The Masque of the Red Death." "And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death [hold] illimitable dominion over all."¹⁸

With this brief mention, I will pass over Melville and Poe. I must also overlook many other Indian ghosts of the period, including those presented by Ann Eliza Bleecker, William Cullen Bryant, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, George Catlin, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. The fact that I am forced to neglect so many fascinating and important examples of Indian spectralization testifies to the strength and centrality of the trope.

Instead of conjuring forth an overwhelming multitude of ghostly figures, the following chapters will look closely at the work that Native American ghosts do in writings by two authors, Nathaniel Hawthorne and William Apess. As we consider Apess, let us bear in mind the tradition of political resistance that his works originate. Similarly, in examining Hawthorne's career, we must not forget that his work authorizes an American nationalist literary tradition that extends far beyond his writings. It seems appropriate to hold Apess and Hawthorne next to each other, if only because Apess has been so long forgotten, while Hawthorne has been so long cherished. The Native American functions as a subversive ghost who haunts and questions the American tradition, while the descendant of Puritans is canonized as a literary saint who authorizes the same tradition.



William Apess's "Tale of Blood"

“Though an Indian, I am at least a man, with all the feelings proper to humanity, and my reputation is dear to me; and I conceive it to be my duty to the children I shall leave behind me, as well as to myself, not to leave them the inheritance of a blasted name.”¹ William Apess closes *Indian Nullification* (1835) with this remarkable declaration. Each clause reverses a specific element of the white American mythology of Indianness in the 1830s. Apess controverts white American stereotypes of Indians as children, as emotionless stoics, as social outcasts who were neither aware of nor concerned about their social standing in the predominantly white community, as improvident people who were unable or unwilling to provide for their children, and as the last, heirless remnants of their families. When Apess mentions the children who will survive him, and his powerful feelings of duty toward them, he contradicts the assumption that he is irresponsible as well as the expectation that he is the last of his race. He also denies his white American readers’ right to think of themselves as the only people who will survive him, and as the ones to whom the remnants of the Pequot legacy must descend.

Apess’s final reason for writing is that he wants to avoid leaving behind him “the inheritance of a blasted name.” A blasted name is cursed, blighted, perhaps destroyed. In the context of Pequot history, Apess’s reference to his own blasted name is especially significant; one of the provisions of the Treaty of Hartford at the end of the Pequot War in 1638 explicitly forbade the use of the tribal name “Pequot.”² From then on, European Americans systematically denied Pequots their names and their heritage. When Apess declares that it is his duty not to leave his children with the inheritance of a blasted name, he is not only fighting the specific calumnies directed against him during the crisis at Mashpee that precipitated the book, but he is also struggling to assert a Pequot identity that has been “blasted” by white Americans for almost two hundred years.

In addition, Apess’s choice of the adjective “blasted” alludes to the supernatural and reverses white associations of Indians with supernatural forces. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “blasted” as “stricken by meteoric or supernatural agency,” and refers to Macbeth’s “blasted

Heath." By constructing his white critics as supernatural (if not meteoric) figures, Apess inverts two centuries of white discourse that represent Indians as supernatural.

By referring to the discourse of spectralization, I invoke a Foucauldian model of language as a culturally hegemonic agent of social control. But the Foucauldian narrative is inescapable, incontrovertible. I will argue here that, although the discourse of spectralization does enforce power relations with a circular effectiveness that is hard to escape or contradict, it can be resisted and even reversed. "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" exemplifies the successful reversal of the discourse of spectralization because it projects and affirms Indian identity by inverting the very terms of the discourse.

Apess's inversion of the discourse of spectralization is a notable achievement. He spent years developing it. In his first two publications, *A Son of the Forest* (1829) and "The Increase of the Kingdom of Christ" (1831), he resisted the white American discourse that depicted Indians as doomed, vanishing figures, but he failed to escape it. Finally, in 1833, in his third book, Apess constructed an "Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man,"³ and successfully reversed Indian spectralization for the first time. Afterward, in *Indian Nullification* (1835) as well as his fifth work, "Eulogy on King Philip" (1836), Apess inverted Indian spectralization with the offhand ease that his use of "blasted" illustrates, moving beyond his struggle with supernaturalism and on to a concrete struggle for "the civil and religious rights of the Indians" (169) in nineteenth-century America.

"An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" marks important turning points both in Apess's intellectual and literary career and in American letters. The project required great creative and imaginative effort: Apess was trying to controvert the haunting stories of Indian cruelty and doom upon which he himself had been raised by his white masters, and to construct himself as an Indian, without denying that he was an educated, able, and virtuous American Christian of the early nineteenth century.

In order to accomplish these formidable goals, Apess constructs his "Indian's Looking Glass" as a magician's mirror. The essay enacts a verbal phantasmagoria. It reverses white spectralization of Indians. Then, the essay dispels the preternatural shadows of doom that shade the Indians who haunt the early-nineteenth-century American imagination. It exposes the evil workings of American racism, and, finally, it tries to make white readers fear for their immortal souls.

Of course there are great paradoxes in this project. Apess needs to claim for himself and attempt to redirect the metaphors, the language, the very alphabet of white American oppression of Indians. He must invoke

phantoms in order to deny their existence. He risks vanishing into his own hall of mirrors, turning his considerable literary and intellectual powers to the service of the discourse he seeks to dispel. They are grave risks. For a time it may have seemed as if he had succumbed to them.

A few recent scholars have sought to bring Apess's name and work back into the light, but even the best of these have had a hard time resisting the use of spectral language in describing Apess's career. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, for example, ends her brief sketch of his career with the statement that "Apess disappeared from view,"⁴ while Barry O'Connell asserts that the "silence surrounding the final act of this man of passion and eloquence seems eerie."⁵ And yet, thanks to the efforts of these scholars, and a handful of other critics and historians, William Apess's work has been resurrected from the archives and published in a complete, authoritative edition, and in an undergraduate anthology. In the last decade of the twentieth century, Apess's writing retains its power to reverse and even to haunt the early-nineteenth-century discourse of spectralization.

This is not to say that the discourse of spectralization is easy to resist. Taught by the narratives of Lydia Maria Child, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and all their literary milieu that Indians are spectral figures, late-twentieth-century readers and critics of early-nineteenth-century writing continue to expect Indians to be silent, shadowy, or vanishing figures. Their expectations are usually fulfilled.

In his essay on Apess's own first book, *A Son of the Forest*, Arnold Krupat writes that Apess "proclaims a sense of self, if we may call it that, deriving entirely from Christian culture," and further that, "If there is a Pequot dimension to Apes's [text], [it] is not apparent to me. In Apes's case, indeed, there is the implication that when the Native lost his land, he lost his voice as well."⁶ Krupat makes a strong case for his assertions. Apess's first two publications can certainly be read as capitulations to white discourse, or at least as unsuccessful resistances. Nonetheless, Krupat's essay illustrates the startling truth that it is perfectly possible to read the published autobiography of a Pequot Indian activist solely in terms of the discourse of Indian disappearance, extinction of native identity, and silence.

William Apess knew what he was up against. In his autobiographical writings, as well as in his sermons, Apess countered the discourse of disappearance and spectralization in a variety of ways. His first strategy of resistance to spectralization was, quite simply, writing and publishing works that described his life. By emphatically asserting his own existence, he challenged contemporary ideas of vanishing Indians and extinct Pequots. By writing and publishing his own story, he also made himself present within a discourse that figured Indians as absent, voiceless, and silenced.

In fact, William Apess was anything but voiceless. He supported himself by public speaking and by sales of his written work. For the most part, his speeches were Christian sermons, but he also spoke to the Massachusetts General Court as an advocate for the political rights of the Mashpee Indians of Cape Cod and delivered an address at the Odeon in Boston which was popular enough to prompt a return engagement. He published at least five works during a nine-year period, and three of them went into second editions. Throughout his career, Apess spoke and wrote as a Native American, specifically as a Pequot; the full title of his first, autobiographical book was *A Son of the Forest: The Experience of William Apes, a Native of the Forest, Comprising a Notice of the Pequot Tribe of Indians*. His subsequent publications also declared his Indian identity; *Indian Nullification*, for example, published in 1835, has "by William Apes, an Indian and Preacher of the Gospel" on its title page.⁷

Though all of his books asserted his Indian identity, his first books also revealed his strong identification with white American consciousness. Throughout all his works, including the earliest, he draws on a sophisticated awareness of the supernaturalized place that Native Americans and other dark-skinned people hold in the white American imagination. For example, in *A Son of the Forest*, Apess relates his own childhood horror of Indians before he expresses his adult conviction that, on the basis of history, white Americans should inspire more fear and horror. Unable to escape the discourse of spectralization, the first book tries to enlarge it instead, to make white Americans as frightening as Native Americans.

Another of Apess's strategies for resisting the white American discourse of Indian spectralization is playing with supernatural descriptions of white Americans. In his second publication, "The Increase of the Kingdom of Christ: A Sermon" (1831), he includes an essay, "The Indians: The Ten Lost Tribes" that acquiesces to the myth of the inevitably vanishing Natives. But even as he rehearses the tale of the "vanishing Indians," he inverts and resists the conventions that figure those Indians as supernatural if not satanic figures, explaining Indian disappearance as the result of whites' evil magic.

William Apess was intimately acquainted with whiteness. His paternal grandfather was white, and he was raised in a white family. However, he was an indentured servant rather than an adopted son, and the family that raised him strictly maintained its racial superiority over him. He was the Pequot Indian son of a part-white, Pequot father named William Apes. His mother was also Pequot, and perhaps part African American. O'Connell believes that she may have been Candace Apes, a slave in the household of Captain Joseph Taylor at the time of Apess's birth.⁸ In *A Son of the Forest*, Apess describes his parents this way:

my father was of mixed blood, his father being a white man, and his mother a native or, in other words, a red woman. On attaining a sufficient age to act for himself, he joined the Pequot tribe, to which he was maternally connected. He was well received, and in a short time afterward married a female of the tribe, in whose veins a single drop of the white man's blood never flowed. (4)

O'Connell reads Apess's denial of "a single drop of the white man's blood" as a backhanded avowal of his mother's African American ancestry. When Apess wrote this description in 1829, he considered himself a Pequot Indian like his parents, despite his mixed-blood heritage. In 1833 he became a member of the Mashpee tribe and moved to Mashpee, on Cape Cod, a hundred miles away from the Pequot town of Colchester, Connecticut. Becoming a Mashpee did not necessarily constitute a renunciation of his Pequot identity; rather, it seems to have signified Apess's increasing commitment to a pan-tribal understanding of Indian identity. Acknowledging his hybrid racial identity, he finally came to describe himself as an Indian and a "man of color" and to be an increasingly vocal advocate of African American as well as Native American rights (*Eulogy*, 86).

At first, Apess's writing seems to bear out an ethnicity-based paradigm of racial identity, in which individuals are free to shift alliance between group identities. Apess relates that when he was a child, "darkness itself was a terror to me" (*Experiences*, 123). Later, he identified himself as a "Pequot," then as "an Indian," and finally as a "man of color." Taken together, his works give evidence of gradual consent to his own darkness.

But how much of a choice did William Apess have? His white foster father beat him, called him an "Indian dog," and sold his indenture to a wealthy judge (*Son*, 12, 13, 15). Most churches would have denied him membership because of his race; even the relatively egalitarian Methodist Episcopal church refused to ordain him because he was an Indian. In the United States, it would have been illegal for him to claim a white identity, or the citizenship that was predicated upon whiteness. He could not choose to be white. His consent to the racialized identity of a "man of color" was forced. Since Apess himself was probably African American as well as Pequot and white, it is quite fitting that he conceived of the three races as inextricably joined in bloody conflict, not only within his own body but also within the national body and within the minds and bodies of all individual Americans. He dreaded the dark, and he was terrified by his own dark specters of whiteness. He also knew that white Americans were haunted by both their red and black compatriots.

In 1833, Apess published *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe; or, An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man*. The book marked the midpoint of his brief publishing career; before it, he had published a book and a pamphlet, and afterward he would publish one

more book and one more pamphlet. The concluding essay, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man," marks a significant turning point in Apess's thought. It successfully reversed the discourse of spectralization, using the phantasmagoric strategy of projecting the specter of a doomed and degraded Indian figure in order to reveal the mechanics that create such a specter. The two works written afterward, *Indian Nullification* (1835) and "Eulogy on King Philip" (1836), move beyond the circular logic of Indian spectralization. They refer confidently to white ghosts, but they focus on the civil and political rights of Indians rather than on supernatural status, and they do not invoke ghostly Indians.

Apess needs to dispel native phantoms because for him they are much more than a metaphor for guilty conscience—they are a means of oppression. His struggle to exorcize Indian ghosts from the white American consciousness is a struggle to reclaim the American spirit for Native Americans. In order to reverse and explode the discourse of Indian spectralization, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" adopts the ghost-dispelling rhetoric of the phantasmagoria.

As chapter 3 describes, phantasmagorias call up ghosts that frighten and horrify their audiences. Then they reveal the mechanical apparatus that has created the ghosts and attempt to diminish their audiences' fear and exorcize the ghosts. The risk is that the phantasmagoria may merely displace the fear, making audiences fearful of their own minds and bodies—their fallible perceptive abilities—rather than ghosts.

For William Apess, such displacement of fear is a positive benefit. In "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man," he hopes to exorcize his white readers' fear and hatred of Indians and to replace it with fear of their own evil. He means to argue that spectral Indians, degraded and doomed to vanish, are nothing more than the products of the systematic degradations of racism and of Indian Removal so obsessive it borders on erasure. Instead of fearing Indians, he wants his white readers to fear their own "black principles" and "national crimes."

It is hard to know whether his strategies worked or what effect Apess's rhetoric had on his readers. Like most Methodists, Apess valued spontaneity and extemporaneous speech highly, and it is not likely that he ever presented "An Indian's Looking Glass" verbatim to an audience. He did, however, preach frequently on the topics discussed in the essay, and it is quite probable that his spoken presentations used similarly phantasmagorical rhetorical strategies. At the beginning of *Indian Nullification*, he describes the speaking tour that initially brought him to Mashpee in 1833, the year that "An Indian's Looking Glass" was published. He seems to refer to two different speeches, each delivered on a few occasions. One concerned "the civil and religious rights of the Indians," and the other, "Indian degradation." Since "An Indian's Looking-Glass"

begins by asking “if degradation has not been heaped long enough upon the Indians” (155), it is reasonable to suppose that the published piece bears some similarities to the “Indian degradation” sermons, perhaps also to the “civil and religious rights” sermons.

At any rate, he comments on the reception of sermons about “Indian degradation” twice: in Great Marshes, “I gave the audience a word in season, upon the subject of Indian degradation, which did not appear to please them much”; while in Hyannis, “I again preached on the soul-harrowing theme of Indian degradation; and my discourse was generally well received, though it gave much offense to some illiberal minds, as truth always will, when it speaks in condemnation” (172). The mix of displeasure and offended sensibilities that greeted Apess’s sermons, even when they were “generally well received,” does not seem to surprise him. To the contrary, it may be the very effect he is seeking.

Did his spoken sermons succeed in harrowing the souls of his listeners as well as offending them? Did his listeners fear for themselves or even begin to fear themselves? Did these new fears displace their fears of dark-skinned Americans? Audience response is difficult to judge. Quite a few people bought the published essay, “An Indian’s Looking Glass.” The book that contained it, *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians*, was enough of a success to be reprinted in a second edition. However, that second edition excised the final essay, substituting a single, inoffensive paragraph entitled “An Indian’s Thought.” The removal of “An Indian’s Looking Glass” in the second edition might be interpreted as a testament to its success at offending and horrifying readers, but no one has yet located any contemporary reviews of the essay. No one knows for sure.

It is easier to critique the effect of Apess’s phantasmagorical strategy on his own writing and his thought. “An Indian’s Looking Glass” exorcizes the supernatural dread and terror that haunt the first books. In this respect, the comparison of phantasmagoria to psychoanalysis is also helpful. After he has explained it all, to himself and his readers, he is able to move beyond it.

Apess’s childhood fears of the dark and the dark-skinned were quite powerful. In *A Son of the Forest* (1829), he gives an account of his own childhood fear of Indians. At about age four, he was severely injured in a beating by his Pequot grandmother. Hoping to provide a safer alternative for the child, the town of Colchester, Connecticut, bound him out as an indentured servant to a white couple, Mr. and Mrs. Furman. For years afterward, Apess writes, “a mere threat of being sent away among the Indians into the dreary woods had a much better effect in making me obedient to the commands of my superiors than any corporal punishment that they ever inflicted” (10). In order to illustrate, “the dread which pervaded my mind on seeing any of my brethren of the forest” (10), Apess

tells the story of a berry-picking expedition that occasioned a chance meeting in the woods with some white women whose "complexion was, to say the least, as *dark* as that of the natives. This circumstance filled my mind with terror, and I broke from our party with my utmost speed, and I could not muster courage enough to look behind until I had reached home. By this time, my imagination had pictured out a tale of blood" (10–11, his emphasis).

This story bears all the hallmarks of the uncanny. Like many uncanny tales, it hinges on mistaken or ambiguous identity. The sudden appearance of a group of strange women revives Apess's childhood fears of his own not-so-dark-skinned female relations, the mother who abandoned him and the grandmother who abused him. At the same time, their unaccountable darkness revives his own infantile fear of the dark; in another context, Apess relates that "darkness itself was a terror to me."⁹ The fear of the dark, as well as the dark-complexioned, that Apess recalls, is not surprising; the whole notion that his Indian family was defined in terms of its dark skin must have been terribly confusing to a child who was likely to meet darker-skinned whites when he wandered through the woods. The very uncertainty about whether he perceives darkness or whiteness lends a terrifyingly ambiguous quality to the boy's encounter.

His "tale of blood" amply proves that Apess identified with white fears of Indians. He explains his own horror by referring to the "unnatural treatment of my own relations," presumably meaning the parents that left him in the custody of his alcoholic grandparents, and his grandmother's abuse. But he also asserts that his fears were prompted by the tales of terror that he heard at the Furmans' fireside:

It may be proper for me here to remark that the great fear I entertained of my brethren was occasioned by the many stories I had heard of their cruelties toward the whites—how they were in the habit of killing and scalping men, women, and children. But the whites did not tell me that they were in a great majority of instances the aggressors—that they had imbrued their hands in the lifeblood of my brethren, driven them from their once peaceful and happy homes—that they had introduced among them the fatal and exterminating diseases of civilized life. If the whites had told me how cruel they had been to the "poor Indian," I should have apprehended as much harm from them. (11)

The narratives of white aggression that were repressed during Apess's childhood offer an additional explanation for the uncanny dread and horror that pervade his tale of meeting the strange white women. Perhaps their sudden appearance in the forest revived Apess's own repressed consciousness of white cruelty. As an adult, he recalls the stories of Indian cruelty that caused his early terrors with a surprisingly deadpan tone: "they were in the habit of killing and scalping men, women, and children"

(11). His adult horror is reserved for the white atrocities that had been concealed from him as a child: rather than being “in the habit of killing” Indians, the whites are described as having “imbrued their hands in the lifeblood of my brethren.” The fear of whites that the adult expresses consciously may have been repressed into an even more terrifying unconsciousness in the child.

What is most striking about the incident, though, is that the Indian child Apess experiences his own terror as fear of Indians. In his imagination, other and self double back on each other so thoroughly that both became strange and frightening. When he calls it a “tale of blood,” Apess refers to the violence that he pictured for himself, but also to the horrifyingly invisible hierarchies of blood and history that defined skin color without reliance on actual appearance. Because of the uncanny uncertainties at the heart of racial identification, both whiteness and Indianness are potent sources of terror, conscious and unconscious.

The adult Apess, the Indian activist, seems somewhat chagrined and embarrassed by his own childhood fear of Indians. At the same time, however, he finds it useful to write about them in order to express his identification with and understanding of white people’s fears of Indians and in order to argue that racism is a learned attribute rather than an essential one. By acknowledging his own early hatred of Indians, Apess is able to construct *A Son of the Forest* as a narrative of enlightenment, of progress from childhood fears of his own Indianness to adult pride in his Indian identity.

Yet although *A Son of the Forest* affirms Apess’s Indian consciousness, and succeeds in explaining and defusing his childhood fears of Indians, the book does not escape from the discourse of spectralization. In his own narrative, as well in the appendix that follows it, Apess seems to accept the inevitability of Indian disappearance. Of course, his appendix is drawn largely from the works of European American writers; it is a compendium of the works of Elias Boudinot, David Brainerd, Cadwallader Colden, Washington Irving, and others, interpolated with some brief comments by Apess himself. Notably, Irving’s “Traits of Indian Character,” which, as I discuss in chapter 3, presents Native Americans as romantic fantasy figures, is quoted at length. Since so much of the appendix relies on the work of other authors, it may be described as a narrative *authorized* rather than authored by Apess. But it does represent his vision of American Indian history, and of his Native American contemporaries. They are not figures of horror for him; he has escaped the white narratives of his childhood to that extent. However, as Apess presents them in both the 1829 and the 1831 editions of *A Son of the Forest*, Indians are doomed and degraded and fated to disappear.

Apess’s clearest avowal of the inevitability of Indian extinction comes

at the end of "The Indians: The Ten Lost Tribes," which was published with "The Increase of the Kingdom of Christ" in 1831. The peroration of the essay neatly encapsulates the myth of the vanishing natives:

They received the strangers from "the world beyond the waters" with every token of esteem; high-minded, noble, generous, and confident to a fault, they placed implicit confidence in the professions of their visitors; they saw not the aim and design of the white man, and the chains of a cruel bondage were firmly entwined around them before the illusion was dispelled; and when their eyes were opened, they beheld naught as the portion of their cup but servitude and sorrow. Hundreds of thousands perished before the face of the white man. Suffice it to say, what is already known, that the white man came upon our shores—he grew taller and taller until his shadow was cast over all the land—in its shade the mighty tribes of olden time wilted away. A few, the remnant of multitudes long since gathered to their fathers, are all that remain; and they are on their march to eternity. (115)

At first glance, this passage reads like a completely conventional expression of the story. However, I quote it here at length because, throughout, Apess seems to be struggling against the very narrative he is offering, inverting it even as he writes it. To begin with, the perspective is Native, rather than European. Apess does not describe America as a new world; instead, the "world beyond the waters" is the strange and novel place. Indians are not the necromancers in this account; instead, the otherworldly Europeans turn out to be deceivers and illusionists. The Indians are quite literally enchanted by Europeans: "the chains of a cruel bondage were firmly entwined around them before the illusion was dispelled." Rather than dying, fleeing for the West, or mysteriously fading away, Apess's Indians enter into servitude and sorrow. The mention of servitude reflects historical realities as well as Apess's personal history, and it also counters American mythologies that frame Indians as noble savages rather than humble servants.

Even his final capitulation to the discourse of spectralization betrays his resistance to it. Before he describes the inevitable extinction of his people, Apess interjects, "Suffice it to say, what is already known," thereby marking his account as public discourse, a discourse of spectralization that he himself is not completely comfortable voicing. Although the overt intention of his statement is to acknowledge and express the accepted doctrine of Indian disappearance, he cannot help subverting himself, inverting the common association of Indians with the shade and whites with the sunlight.¹⁰ In his figuration, the white man's "shadow was cast over all the land—in its shade the mighty tribes of olden time wilted away."

Apess's subtle reversals of the conventional narrative of Indian disappearance are all linked to the supernatural: The European world is

strange and otherworldly. The Europeans themselves are deceitful illusionists. Indians are enchanted into servitude. Whites are creatures of the shadows. None of these inversions lessens Apess's acquiescence to the myth that Indians are destined to vanish from America, but all of them work together to signal his discomfort with it. In 1831, in "The Indians: The Ten Lost Tribes," Apess works both within and against the discourse that figures his people as phantoms.

Two years later, in "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man," Apess adopts the ghost-dispelling rhetoric of the phantasmagoria in order to reverse and explode the supernaturalizing discourse that had entrapped him in his earlier works. Mary Louise Pratt uses the term "auto-ethnography" to describe "instances in which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that *engage with* the colonizer's own terms."¹¹ Along similar lines, "An Indian's Looking Glass" might be termed "autophantasmagorical." Apess engages with the discourse of spectralization, and uses his own, *Indian* mirror to construct a phantasmagorical representation of Indian identity that serves to dispel the shades of doom that have been projected around the Indian, and to expose the racism that shadows Indian identity.

The "Indian's Looking Glass" reflects white constructions of Indians in order to sketch the accursed and profligate Indian figures that haunt the beginning of the essay. But it is an *Indian's* looking glass, and it is based more on Indian consciousness than on white. By showing his white readers an image of their own behavior, as it is perceived or experienced by Indians, Apess attempts to show them that white racism is a far more horrifying spectacle than Indian degradation.

Reflecting his Indian consciousness, Apess's title may include a double-coded reference to Eastern Algonquian etymology. According to Roger Williams, who learned Eastern Algonquian from the Narragansetts, neighbors of the Eastern Algonquian-speaking Pequots, "*Michachunck* the soule, . . . is of affinity, with a word signifying looking glasse, or cleere resemblance, so that it hath its name from a cleere sight or discerning."¹² If Apess associated the looking glass with the soul and with vision and discernment, those associations gave resonance to his title. Not only a mirror, he also offered an Indian's soul and an Indian's vision and discernment to the white man whom he expected to read his work.¹³

Though it is probable that Apess did associate the looking glass with the soul, the association is quite problematic. Williams wrote of the "affinity" in 1643, little more than two decades after the Narragansetts had first seen looking glasses. Williams himself was renowned as a "friend" to the Indians but he was also the proprietor of one of the first successful trading posts in New England. Cloth, hoes, hatchets, needles, knives, and looking glasses were the primary European commodities that he traded

for American fur.¹⁴ He saw the Indians' desire for looking glasses as evidence of vanity, writing that "It may be wondered what they do with Glasses, having no beauty but a swarfish colour, and no dressing but nakedness; but pride appears in any colour."¹⁵ It seems that Williams associated the looking glass with cultural inferiority as well as with sinful pride; of the trade goods he mentions, only the mirrors can be classed as trifles or trinkets, nonutilitarian objects of comparatively small value to Europeans, traded for goods that the Europeans deemed far more valuable. Thus, the looking glass can be read as an emblem of unequal exchange or of mercantile exploitation.

In such a context, the Narragansetts' association of their souls with looking glasses is troubling. At the least, it implies that Indian identity and spirituality were greatly affected by European trade. It may also imply that the Narragansetts invented or constructed a notion of soul in order to placate an Indian trader and Christian proselytizer. Perhaps, by 1643, the very souls of the Narragansetts were defined in terms of a European culture and technology bent on exploiting or even exterminating them.

The ambiguities inherent in the Narragansett usage of *michachunck* to mean a soul affiliated with a looking glass seem to inform Apess's use of the looking glass metaphor. But even without the Algonquian linguistic context, the uncanny doubling and inversions of identity associated with mirrors make them startlingly appropriate tools for projecting the culturally mixed identity of an Indian who lives in New England. Like most of his early-nineteenth-century readers, many who read Apess today think of "authentic" Indians as those who are unsullied by contact with Europeans. Apess is not such an idealized being. Neither, it must be pointed out, were the seventeenth-century Pequots or Narragansetts. Nor are their twentieth-century counterparts. To the contrary, the pernicious notion of pure Indianness is a white American construction that serves only to deny or degrade the Indian identity of every Native who actually survives his or her encounter with a European. Apess is not a "pure" Indian; he acknowledges and proudly affirms his culturally mixed identity. The critic David Murray argues that Apess's rejection of "unmediated Indianness" is "the most interesting thing in his writing."¹⁶ Apess also rejects the notion of unmediated whiteness; one of the central goals of his writing is to point out to the members of his white audience that their own identity is as culturally mixed as his. White consciousness—or, more properly, repression of consciousness—of Indians is central to white identity.

Apess foreshadows the transformation that his essay will enact in its first lines, which declare his "desire to place a few things before my fellow creatures who are traveling to the grave with me" (155). Of course, he is aware that his audience sees him as representative of a doomed race;

describing an earlier sermon, he writes that, “crowds flocked out, some to *hear* the truth and others to *see* the ‘Indian’” (*Son*, 51). His introduction reminds his listeners or readers that they are also mortal; they share his doom.

After this solemn reminder, Apess describes the accursed Indians who live on reservations in New England. He paints the reservations as hells on earth, home of “the most mean, abject, miserable race of beings in the world” (155). Those beings are Apess’s own “brethren within the limits of New England” (155), the Indians. He describes their reservations as populated by “children half-starved and some almost as naked as they come into the world,” by women who are “left without protection and are seduced by white men, and are finally left to be common prostitutes for them,” and by drunkards who are destined to be “destroyed by that burning, fiery curse that has swept millions, both of red and white men, into the grave with sorrow and disgrace—rum” (155).

The “complete place of prodigality and prostitution” (155) that Apess projects before his audience conforms almost precisely to their expectations, though, by describing Indians who live in New England, it does challenge the commonly held belief that New England’s Indians have already disappeared into extinction. This is not much of a challenge, especially since the Indians he describes are in the process of being “destroyed,” and “swept . . . into the grave with sorrow and disgrace” (155).

Yet even as he projects the phantomlike figures of cursed, degraded, and disappearing Indians before the white men for whom his piece is intended, he is transforming the spectral Indians into emblems of the “black principle” of racism. The “burning, fiery curse,” of rum is just one of many reasons that New England’s Indians are a “miserable race of beings.” Among the causes of Indian degradation, Apess mentions their lack of economic opportunity, their legal status as “minors,” the unscrupulousness of Indian Agents, and the fact that Indians are denied education. All of these reasons can be summarized in Apess’s final explanation: Indians suffer “because there reigns in the breast of many who are leaders a most unrighteous, unbecoming, and impure black principle, and as corrupt and unholy as it can be—while those very same unfeeling, self-esteeming characters pretend to take the skin as a pretext to keep us from our rights” (156). With this, the “black principle” of racism takes the place of red or black skin as the focus of the piece, and is projected before the audience with grisly and horrifying intensity.

White New Englanders, Apess argues, are marked by their sins against their dark-skinned neighbors. More specifically, they are blackened. When Apess asserts that an “unrighteous, unbecoming, and impure black principle” reigns in the breasts of New England’s leaders, he purposefully adopts the color hierarchy that places whiteness above blackness and he

uses that color hierarchy to show that white leaders contain blackness within themselves; indeed, that they are ruled by blackness. Of course the simplest interpretation of his color-coded language is merely that some whites are evil, or that evil principles reign within their breasts. However, by calling such principles "black," Apess intentionally confuses and reverses the hierarchy of colors that the "black" principle of racism encodes.

It is obvious that Apess is conscious of his own inversions of the color hierarchy. After he asserts the blackness of the principle that defines whiteness as superior, he interjects, "But, reader, I acknowledge that this is a confused world, and I am . . . merely placing before you the black inconsistency that you place before me—which is ten times blacker than any skin you will find in the universe" (157). His acknowledgment of the "confused world," where, uncannily, whiteness turns out to be blackness, is an acknowledgment of his own rhetorical intentions, though he emphatically denies that he has invented or created the confusion. Instead, he is pointing out "the black inconsistency" at the heart of white oppression of dark-skinned peoples.

Having asserted the self-subverting blackness of racist principles, Apess goes on to ask his readers to imagine those principles literally inscribed onto white skins for judgment:

Now suppose . . . each skin had its national crimes written upon it—which skin do you think would have the greatest? I will ask one question more. Can you charge the Indians with robbing a nation almost of their whole continent, and murdering their women and children, and then depriving the remainder of their lawful rights, that nature and God require them to have? and to cap the climax, rob another nation to till their grounds and welter out their days under the lash with hunger and fatigue under the scorching rays of a burning sun? I should look at all the skins, and I know when I cast my eye upon that white skin, and if I saw those crimes written upon it, I should enter my protest against it immediately and cleave to that which is more honorable. (157)

It is terrible to contemplate one's own guilt, especially one's "national" guilt, the responsibility one bears for the systemic crimes of one's nation rather than for individually chosen action. It is also horrible to imagine being flayed or mutilated. The scene holds out the fearsome prospect of becoming marked by blackness. It figures forth losing control of the narrative; being written upon, rather than being the writer. In addition, the specific disfigurements that it brings to mind are tattoos, scars, and brands, the marks of savages and slaves.

American Indians, like many "savage races" were associated with skin marked by tattooing. William Wood's 1633 account of encounters with Massachusetts natives mentioned their tattoos, while the plot of James

Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) turns on Uncas's Delaware tattoo.¹⁷ Like Apess, Herman Melville uses the tattoo to signify the terrifyingly fluid relation between savagism and civilization, darkness and whiteness. In *Typee* (1846), Tommo describes himself as "half wild with terror and indignation" at the threat of being tattooed. Tommo's "utter abhorrence" of tattooing is clearly linked to his fear of going native. For a white person, to be tattooed, in Melville's construction as in Apess's, is to lose his or her white identity, to "be disfigured in such a manner as never more to have the *face* to return to my countrymen."¹⁸

Branded and scarred skin marked slaves rather than savages. According to Winthrop Jordan, parliamentary statutes in sixteenth-century England authorized the punitive branding of white Englishmen to mark them as lifetime slaves.¹⁹ Punitive branding was also associated with African American slavery, though Eugene Genovese writes that, "during the nineteenth century branding, ear cropping, and assorted mutilations gradually disappeared from the list of punishments prescribed at law and shrank to a minimum in plantation practice." The scars of whipping, however, never disappeared. "On some . . . plantations every slave's back had scars."²⁰

Even Frederick Douglass's skin was marked by whip scars. In his public letter to his former master, Thomas Auld, Douglass wrote,

The grim horrors of slavery rise in all their ghastly terror before me, the wails of millions pierce my heart, and chill my blood. I remember the chain, the gag, the bloody whip, the death-like gloom overshadowing the spirit of the fettered bondman. . . . Say not that this is a picture of fancy. You well know that I wear stripes on my back inflicted by your direction.²¹

As Douglass formulates it, the marks of the whip inscribe upon his body a record of "the grim horrors of slavery." Apess reverses this construction when he asks his white readers to imagine the national crime of slavery inscribed upon their own bodies, rather than (or as well as) upon the bodies of slaves and Indians.

The idea of writing on the body is particularly significant because the denial of literacy played an important role in maintaining racial oppression. In "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man," Apess describes white refusal to educate Indians as an "efficient way to distress and murder them by inches," adding that, "there is no people in the world but who may be destroyed in the same way" (156). In *Indian Nullification*, he writes that "the white man, when he wanted to cheat and subdue our race," attempted to "steal away their brains, knowing that their lands would follow" (250). According to Apess, one method of stealing Indian's brains was encouraging them to drink alcohol. The other, more

pertinent method, was denying them access to education. He reminds his readers of the Massachusetts "legislative act of 1789, section 5, for the regulation of the plantation, prohibiting the instruction of the Marshpees in reading and writing, under pain of death" (186), and asks, "Is not depriving them of all mental culture the worst of all robberies?" (188). In such a context, Apess's depiction of the national crimes *written* upon white-skinned bodies is an astonishing and astonishingly appropriate reversal.

The sentiment that follows may have been even more astonishing for his white readers: "I should enter my protest against [white skin] immediately," he writes, "and cleave to that which is more honorable. And I can tell you that I am satisfied with the matter of my creation, fully—whether others are or not" (157). Dark skin is more honorable than white, Apess writes. In fact, he prefers his dark skin (and his unstained soul) to the white skins, which cover blackened souls. For some readers, this declaration may be the most shocking in the essay. That white Americans were guilty of the racial crimes of African American slavery and Indian genocide (or ethnocide, if you will), if only because they were complicit with them, was not a new idea. William Lloyd Garrison, for example, had written, "We are guilty—all guilty—horribly guilty" in a much-publicized essay in *The Liberator*, on January 7, 1832.²² But for a dark-skinned man to thank God that he was not white! If images of being flayed and disfigured and judged by God had not succeeded in horrifying the reader, Apess's simple preference for his own dark skin may have done so.

Following his inscription of the sins of racism onto the skins of white Americans, Apess directs his readers to "strive to penetrate more fully into the conduct of those who profess to have pure principles and who tell us to follow Jesus Christ and imitate him and have his Spirit" (157). He outlines the precepts of Jesus that forbid racism, and argues that because they were Jews, Jesus and his apostles "certainly were not whites." If they had been racists, they would have discriminated against the whites who were "the most degraded people on the earth at that time[,] and none more so, for they sacrificed their children to dumb idols" (158). If white readers of Apess's essay were affronted by his preference for dark skin over the blackened souls beneath white skin, how much more insulted would they have been by his claim that Christians worshipped a man of color, that Christ himself was dark-skinned? Readers accustomed to the whitewashed pieties of institutional Christianity of the time may have felt as if they were lost in a terrifying hall of mirrors, where each reflection further distorted and challenged their most cherished assumptions.

Apess interrogates white Christian racism by means of a series of questions. His first question is "Did you ever hear or read of Christ teaching

his disciples that they ought to despise one because his skin was different from theirs?" (158). He follows this with question after question—there are at least twenty-two questions in the next three paragraphs. Among his questions: "Why is not a man of color respected? . . . Why is all this distinction made among these Christian societies? . . . My white brother, what better are you than God? And if no better, why do you, who profess his Gospel and to have his spirit, act so contrary to it? Let me ask why the men of a different skin are so despised?" (158–59).

Finally, Apess proposes an answer to his own questions.

Perhaps you will say that if we admit you to all of these privileges you will want more. I expect that I can guess what it is—Why, say you, there would be intermarriages. How that would be I am not able to say—and if it should be, it would be nothing strange or new to me; for I can assure you that I know a great many that have intermarried, both of the whites and the Indians—and many are their sons and daughters and people, too, of the first respectability. And I could point to some in the famous city of Boston and elsewhere. . . . I do not wonder that you blush, many of you, while you read; for many have broken the ill-fated laws made by man to hedge up the laws of God and nature. (159)

With his inscription of black crimes onto white skins at judgment, he has frightened his readers. With his reversals of white Christianity's racism he has shocked them. Now, just as deftly, he shames them by exposing their sexuality. In early-nineteenth-century America, interracial sex was a potent source of fear, and the prohibitions against it were effective engines of racial and sexual control. Neither threats of damnation nor invocations of Christ would have outweighed his readers' aversion to the prospect of sexual unions between individuals of different races. Christ and Hell require a certain imaginative leap, after all; sexual miscegenation, on the other hand, is immediate and undeniable. Apess's own ancestry may have been his best evidence for the prevalence of miscegenation in early-nineteenth-century America. Most probably, he was red, white, and black, descended from Pequots, Europeans, and Africans. When he wrote that intermarriage was "nothing strange or new to me," he was understating.

His hint that there are hidden histories of intermarriage among even the most "respectable," that there are whites with mixed heritages even in "the famous city of Boston," reveals an unmentionable truth. To an audience terrified by miscegenation, his accusation is horrifying. It can even be said to be uncanny: early in his own essay on "The Uncanny," Freud points out Schelling's statement that "*Unheimlich* is the name for everything that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light."²³

Apess continues, "I do not wonder that you blush, many of you, while you read." With these tell tale blushes, Apess makes his discussion of

miscegenation parallel to his earlier discussion of the "national crimes" of racism. First, he has blackened his readers' white skin. Now, he reddens it. The readers' blushes acknowledge the repressed sexuality of which they are terrified, and at the same time, the blushes give evidence of their forebears' sexual transgressions, proving that, in some senses at least, they are red-skinned. When Apess paints his white readers red and black, he is attempting to revive the consciousness of guilt and sin that they have repressed, to touch them emotionally, to force them to stare into the darkness that haunts and terrifies them, and to acknowledge that they themselves are marked, even defined, by that darkness.

Did Apess's bold condemnation of his white readers spring from personal resentment? He denies it. "You may think I am what is called a hard and uncharitable man," he writes. "But not so" (160). For one thing, he did not believe that mixed-race marriages were wrong. For another, Apess was a revivalist preacher. Though the racial component of his argument might have been surprising, his condemnation of his audience—and his effort to make them feel the shame and horror of that condemnation—were completely orthodox expressions. In this sense, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" fits seamlessly into the American revivalist tradition of Jonathan Edwards's "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Apess's declaration that "there reigns in the breast of many who are leaders a most unrighteous, unbecoming, and impure black principle, and as corrupt and unholy as it can be," seems a clear echo of Edwards's statement that "there are in the souls of wicked men those hellish principles reigning that would presently kindle and flame out into hell fire, if it were not for God's restraints. . . . There are those corrupt principles, in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are seeds of hell fire."²⁴ Like Edwards, Apess hopes to terrify his readers or listeners with their own mortality, in order to extirpate the evil principles that reign over them. The twist, of course, is that while Edwards condemns all "corrupt principles," Apess focuses on the "black principle" of racism.

Apess's contemporary readers were steeped in the revivalist tradition, and they would have expected nothing less than a rousing condemnation from him. Within the conventions of hellfire and brimstone, his performance would have been judged in terms of its power to chasten or even to frighten. Apess's essay was expected to make its readers feel their own guilt emotionally, deeply, and—just as important—freshly; in a new way, as they had never felt their sin before. In order to revive the consciousness of his somewhat jaded readers, Apess must give them more than they bargain for, try to scare them so much that they change their lives.

Like the showmen who presented phantasmagoric spectacles, Apess uses smoke and mirrors—the smoke of hellfire, the mirror of Indian

consciousness—to invoke specters in order to destroy them. In many respects the workings of the phantasmagoria are strikingly similar to the workings of the revivalist sermon; both project the images of mortality and doom before their audiences, and both attempt to terrify their audiences with those specters in order to enlighten and educate them. Apess's essay is also phantasmagorical in its transformation of images. By means of a series of uncanny doublings and inversions, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" deftly transforms one spectral image to another. Each is more terrifying than the last. The piece begins with the ghostly figure of the doomed and degraded Indian, but that image quickly metamorphoses into the "black principle" that has caused Indian degradation. Finally, the essay projects before its audience a white-skinned body condemned by God and humanity, blackened by guilt, reddened by blushes that acknowledge its shameful history and degrading desires.

Such metamorphoses were typical of phantasmagorias; Terry Castle notes that several of Etienne-Gaspard Robertson's most striking phantasmagorical illusions, performed from 1798 through the early 1800s, "specifically involved a metamorphosis, or one shape rapidly changing into another—an effect easily achieved by doubling two glass slides in the tube of the magic lantern over one another in a quick, deft manner. Thus, the image of 'The Three Graces, turning into skeletons.'"²⁵ Robertson ended his phantasmagoria by saying, "I have shown you the most occult things natural philosophy has to offer, effects that seemed supernatural to the ages of credulity, but now see the only real horror . . . see what is in store for all of you, what each of you will become one day. . . ." Suddenly, the clouds of smoke dissolved, the lights came up, and the audience beheld a human skeleton on a pedestal in the lighted theater.²⁶

Likewise, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" reminds Apess's readers that they are "traveling to the grave" alongside him. His essay is phantasmagorical (as well as Edwardsian) in its insistent and terrifying intimations of mortality; like Robertson (and perhaps like Freud), Apess wants his audience to mistrust their bodies and their minds. He tries to replace his audience's fear of ghosts with a fear of their susceptibility to the tricks of conjury, fear of the unreliability of their senses and their judgment, fear of their fallibility, sin and death.

Paradoxically, "An Indian's Looking Glass" intends to instill its audience with hope and courage by invoking fear. It shares this paradox with the discourses of the phantasmagoria, of psychoanalysis, and of the Great Awakening. Phantasmagorias projected ghosts in the name of rational enlightenment. Psychoanalysis probed psychic wounds in the name of healing. The Great Awakening dramatized damnation in the name of salvation. "An Indian's Looking Glass" exposes Christian America's

"black inconsistencies" in the name of Christian and American ideals. All of these discourses can be understood in terms of the American jeremiad, which prophesies doom in order to solidify national glory.

The position of America within "An Indian's Looking Glass" is quite striking. The essay starts by invoking the grave, and ends with America. The last sentence of the essay is the first to use the word "American." It reads: "Do not get tired, ye noble hearted—only think how many poor Indians want their wounds done up daily; the Lord will reward you, and pray you stop not till this tree of distinction shall be leveled to the earth, and the mantle of prejudice torn from every American heart—then shall peace pervade the Union" (161). Appropriately, there are violent undertones to this peroration. Trees are leveled, mantles torn from hearts; there are hints of murder and excoriation. Yet despite these shadows, the sentence is strong. It is an exhortation to courage and an articulation of faith in the American union.

As I have mentioned, in 1833, the year that Apess published "An Indian's Looking Glass," he undertook a speaking tour around Massachusetts, delivering sermons on "Indian degradation" and "the civil and religious rights of the Indians." The published essay, "An Indian's Looking Glass," shows the intellectual transition from degradation to civil and religious rights. It is notable that the last words of "An Indian's Looking Glass" invoke an American ideal rather than a Christian one. "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man" enacts a progression from God to nation, from Christianity to American ideals.

In fact, the closing invocation of American hearts and the American union is one of the first mentions of "America" in any of Apess's works. Before "An Indian's Looking Glass" in 1833, Apess barely referred to America. His only explicit and detailed reference occurs in "The Increase of the Kingdom of Christ," a sermon published in 1831. In that sermon, Apess asks:

Have not the great American nation reason to fear the swift judgments of heaven on them for nameless cruelties, extortions and exterminations inflicted on the poor natives of the forest? We fear the account of the national sin, which lies at the doors of the American people, will be a terrible one to balance in the chancery of heaven. (106–7)

The germ of "An Indian's Looking Glass" is contained in these sentences. However, their rhetorical strategy is very different. While the early statement begins with "the great American nation," the later essay does not mention America until its closing sentence. The first sermon simply declares in passing that the American nation and the American people are guilty and should be afraid. The later essay attempts to make its audience

feel guilty and afraid for themselves by subtly transforming their fears of dark skin to fears of black principles. Apess holds off on his condemnation of America itself, as well as his invocation of American ideals, until his audience is drawn deep into his argument.

Indian Nullification (1835) and “Eulogy on King Philip” (1836), the works that follow “An Indian’s Looking Glass,” focus squarely on Americanness, arguing for the civil rights of Indians within the American political system. Apess does not abandon Christianity, but his last two works engage with the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence as much as with the Bible. In *Indian Nullification*, he describes the Mashpee’s organization as parallel to that of the Continental Congress, except that it grants the privileges of citizenship without regard to race. This shift from the spiritual realm to the political, from the realm of American Christianity to that of American politics marks the most significant change in Apess’s career. It also indicates Apess’s new feeling of solidity rather than spectrality. “An Indian’s Looking Glass” provides the intellectual framework that makes *Indian Nullification* possible. In the later works, Apess writes from beyond the looking glass.

Apess’s escape from the discourse of spectralization that haunts his first two books is evidenced in his playful reversals of the conceits that loomed large in the early works. In *Indian Nullification*, he boldly and matter-of-factly declares his disbelief in the inevitability of Indian disappearance as well as Indian Removal. He surveys the Mashpee Indian Burying Ground with unfeigned delight, and he portrays the ghostly white churchgoers whom he encounters within the precincts of the graveyard as comic figures rather than dreadful beings. These instances directly reverse his capitulation to Indian disappearance in “The Indians: The Ten Lost Tribes,” and his uncanny horror when he encounters the dark figures of white berry pickers in *A Son of the Forest*.

In “The Indians: The Ten Lost Tribes,” Apess belabored the myth of Indian disappearance, reluctantly acquiescing to it while underhandedly subverting by explaining it in terms of white Americans’ black magic. In *Indian Nullification*, Apess calmly refers to the notion that Indian Removal and Indian disappearance are inevitable and dismisses it out of hand, saying that, “Assumptions of this kind never convinced William Apess of its own justice. He is still the same unbelieving Indian that he ever was” (168–69). Apess’s insouciant declaration elides the tortured acceptance of the doctrine of Indian disappearance in his early works, but it does not ring false. On the contrary, his early works seem to belie his fundamental convictions. Apess has always doubted; perhaps he has always been “an unbelieving Indian.” Now, after the catharsis of “An Indian’s Looking Glass,” he is able to declare that disbelief confidently and even to appropriate an old racist slur as he does so.

A few pages later in the text, Apess describes his first meeting with the congregation at Mashpee Indian Meeting House:

The sacred edifice stood in the midst of a noble forest and seemed to be about a hundred years old, circumstances which did not render its appearance less interesting. Hard by was an Indian burial ground, overgrown with pines, in which the graves were all ranged north and south. A delightful brook, fed by some of the sweetest springs in Massachusetts, murmured beside it. After pleasing my eyes with this charming landscape, I turned to meet my Indian brethren and give them the hand of friendship; but I was greatly disappointed in the appearance of those who advanced. All the Indians I had ever seen were of a reddish color, sometimes approaching a yellow, but now, look to what quarter I would, most of those coming were pale faces, and, in my disappointment, it seemed to me that the hue of death sat upon their countenances. (170)

This account is astonishing in a number of ways. Though it is a comic tale rather than an uncanny one, it precisely mirrors his childhood "tale of blood" from *A Son of the Forest*. In the first story, he fears the dark complexions of the berry pickers. Now, he stands among gravestones rather than berry bushes, but he is sanguine. The graves are evidence of Indians' rights and attainments, not their deaths or their ghostliness. When he meets the white churchgoers, he is surprised by their complexions but he is not by any means terrified. Rather, he is disappointed and bemused. The congregation is pale-faced; he compares them to ghosts by saying that "the hue of death sat upon their countenances," but his touch is light and sure. There is no terror here, no ambiguity or uncanny dread. He treats the story as a joke rather than a "tale of blood."

The reversals testify to Apess's personal and literary transcendence of the white American discourse of spectralization. However, the escape from spectrality is not central to his book. Instead *Indian Nullification* makes a passionate argument for the civil rights of the Mashpees, and by extension, for the civil rights of all American Indians. In the case of the Mashpees, his argument succeeded.

Two years after his victory for Mashpee, William Apess made his last appearances in the public eye. He delivered his "Eulogy on King Philip" twice at the Odeon Theater in Boston in January 1836, and published it later that year. Since Apess had resisted, reversed, and denied the white American discourse of Indian spectralization throughout his career, it was fitting that he should close his publishing career with a eulogy, particularly a eulogy for an Indian man who had haunted the New England imagination for the better part of two centuries.²⁷

The speech is not about death. Apess's eulogy brings its subject to life, asserts his greatness, and even argues for his immortality. In order to do so, it recounts New England's history from a Native American perspective,

arguing that the Indians were virtuous while their Puritan enemies were evil, and comparing Philip's rebellion to the American Revolution. The speech compares Philip to Washington, arguing that Philip was the greater man. Finally, it compares Philip's Indian descendants to the white Americans who consider Washington their national father, and declares that Philip is immortal because his descendants still revere him and act as living monuments to him. Thus, the declaration of Philip's immortality is also a declaration of Native American perseverance. Philip will not be forgotten because his descendants will never disappear.

The "Eulogy" describes Philip as an active, living being. He is a "hero of the wilderness" (277), "as active as the wind, as dexterous as a giant, firm as the pillows of heaven, and fierce as a lion, a powerful foe to contend with indeed, and as swift as an eagle" (296). Indeed, Apess declares that Philip is "the greatest man that ever lived upon the American shores" (290). His greatness is important in itself, but it also a testament to the evil hypocrisy of his Puritan enemies. Apess writes that, "I shall pronounce him, the greatest man that was ever in America; and so it will stand, until he is proved to the contrary, to the everlasting disgrace of the Pilgrims' fathers" (308).

Reversing the spectralizing discourse that associates Indians with death, Apess uses his "Eulogy" to construct the Pilgrims as deathly figures. The Pilgrims are the villains in his piece, committing, "injuries upon injuries, and the most daring robberies and barbarous deeds of death" (278). As in "An Indian's Looking Glass," he equates the Pilgrims with blackness, writing that because of their hypocrisy in claiming to be messengers of Christ, "their crimes still blacken" (300). His association of the Pilgrims with the forces of evil and death is made most explicit when he proclaims: "let every man of color wrap himself in mourning, for the 22nd of December and the 4th of July are days of mourning and not of joy. . . . Let them rather fast and pray to the Indian's God, the Great Spirit, who deals out mercy to his red children, and not destruction" (286).²⁸

By declaring that the Pilgrims were evil and that King Philip is the greatest American of all time, Apess thoroughly reverses the narrative of American history on which most of his readers or listeners have been reared. O'Connell comments that "Apess is, very consciously, I think, echoing and disputing Webster's reverential reading both of the 'Fathers' and of the Pilgrims" (286, n. 15). But even as Apess disputes the Websterian account of the Pilgrim Fathers, he is invoking Daniel Webster's Revolutionary Fathers, and directly comparing Philip to George Washington.²⁹ Apess compares Philip's rebellion to the American Revolution repeatedly, calling, "his cause, though unsuccessful, yet as glorious as the American Revolution" (277). This comparison is at once a challenge to

white American filiofietistic nationalisms and an invocation of it; Apess hopes to convince American patriots to honor Philip's war as they honor Washington's. He does not denigrate the Revolution, but instead appeals to its ideals. Such an appeal may have rendered his work more persuasive but it is easy to imagine an audience affronted rather than inspired by the comparison.

At every turn, Apess's "Eulogy on King Philip" reverses its audiences' expectations. It controverts spectralization. It refuses to portray Indians as evanescent or extinct. Apess acknowledges that there are not many Indians in New England—he counts himself among "the few remaining descendants" of King Philip. But he has no intention of vanishing. To the contrary, Apess and the other survivors "remain as a monument of the cruelty of those who came to improve our race and correct our errors—and as the immortal Washington lives endeared and engraven on the hearts of every white in America, never to be forgotten in time—even such is the immortal Philip honored, as held in memory by the degraded but yet grateful descendants who appreciate his character" (277).

In this construction, New England's Native Americans are monumental rather than spectral. They immortalize white cruelty, but they also immortalize Indian heroism, brilliance, and perseverance. Articulating the goals of his eulogy, Apess writes that, "Justice and humanity for the remaining few prompt me to vindicate the character of him who still lives in their hearts and, if possible, melt the prejudice that exists in the hearts of those who are in the possession of his soil, and only by the right of conquest—is the aim of him who proudly tells you that the blood of a denominated savage runs in his veins" (277). His first priorities are "justice and humanity." For the sake of Philip's heirs, he hopes to "vindicate the character of him who still lives in their hearts." He wants to prove that Philip was a good man, and also to assert that he still lives in his people's hearts. He also hopes that he can, "if possible, melt the prejudice" that reigns in the intransigent hearts of white Americans.

The last and most important goal of the "Eulogy on King Philip" is to lay claim to Philip's legacy. In 1829, in the first lines of *A Son of the Forest*, Apess introduced himself to the American public as a descendant of Philip, but disclaimed his inheritance, writing that, "I would not boast of my extraction, as I consider myself nothing more than a worm of the earth" (4). In 1835, Apess closed *Indian Nullification* with the statement that, "I conceive it to be my duty to the children I shall leave behind me, as well as to myself, not to leave them the inheritance of a blasted name" (274). In his last work, Apess styles himself "him who proudly tells you that the blood of a denominated savage runs in his veins" (277). The reversal is complete. Apess has transformed himself from a "worm of the

earth” to a living monument to an immortal hero. From the extremes of humility and humiliation, he has moved to defiance and pride.

King Philip, like Apess, may be “a denominated savage,” but Apess knows how to retell the “tale of blood,” so that he may “proudly” assert “that the blood of a denominated savage runs in his veins.” “Eulogy on King Philip” is an affirmation of Native American identity, an avowal of the Native American legacy, a promise to all the heirs of King Philip and William Apess. Philip is immortal because his people are immortal. They will never be extinguished. They will not vanish. Their names cannot be “blasted” from American history. White American crimes against Indians may haunt American consciences but Native American people are not, and never will be, living ghosts. Like Apess himself, his heirs are proud, defiant survivors.



Haunted Hawthorne

The conversation of our party soon became more animated and sincere, and we recounted some traditions of the Indians, who believed that the father and mother of their race were saved from a deluge by ascending the peak of Mount Washington. The children of that pair have been overwhelmed, and found no such refuge. In the mythology of the savage, these mountains were afterward considered sacred and inaccessible, full of earthly wonders, illuminated at lofty heights by the blaze of precious stones, and inhabited by deities, who sometimes shrouded themselves in the snow storm and came down on the lower world. There are few legends more poetical than that of “The Great Carbuncle” of the White Mountains. The belief was communicated to the English settlers, and is hardly yet extinct, that a gem, of such immense size as to be seen shining miles away, hangs from a rock over a clear, deep lake, high up among the hills. They who had once beheld its splendor, were enthralled with an unutterable yearning to possess it. But a spirit guarded that inestimable jewel, and bewildered the adventurer with a dark mist from the enchanted lake. Thus, life was worn away in the vain search for an unearthly treasure, till at length the deluded one went up the mountain, still sanguine as in youth, but returned no more. On this theme, methinks, I could frame a tale with a deep moral.

The hearts of the pale-faces would not thrill to these superstitions of the red men, though we spoke of them in the centre of their haunted region. The habits and sentiments of that departed people were too distinct from those of their successors to find much real sympathy. It has often been a matter of great regret to me that I was shut out from the most peculiar field of American fiction, by an inability to see any romance, or poetry, or grandeur or beauty in the Indian character, at least until pointed out by others. I do abhor an Indian story. Yet no writer can be more secure of a permanent place in our literature than the biographer of the Indian chiefs. His subject, as referring to tribes which have mostly vanished from the earth, gives him a right to be placed on a classic shelf, apart from the merits which will sustain him there.

—NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

“Our Evening Party among the Mountains” (1835)

☞ Nathaniel Hawthorne’s best-known pronouncement on Indians in American literature, “I do abhor an Indian story,” is embedded within a

passage so strikingly self-contradictory that it can be called self-deconstructing. The sketch from which it is drawn, "Our Evening Party among the Mountains," describes a group of travelers gathered at a lodge high in the White Mountains. As they sit beside the hearth, the tourists begin to discuss "some traditions of the Indians." At first, Hawthorne describes the group as "animated and sincere." He mentions "earthly wonders," "lofty heights," "precious stones," and "deities" shrouded in storm. He declares that there are "few legends more poetical" than the Abenaki story of "The Great Carbuncle," and asserts "On this theme, methinks, I could frame a tale with a deep moral" (*T*, 342–43).¹

His next paragraph abruptly changes tack, declaring that "the hearts of the pale-faces would not thrill to the superstitions of the red men, though we spoke of them in the very centre of their haunted region," and going on to say that "It has often been a matter of great regret to me that I was shut out from the most peculiar field of American fiction, by an inability to see any romance, or poetry, or grandeur or beauty, in the Indian character, at least until pointed out by others. I do abhor an Indian story." However, as soon as he has declared his abhorrence for Indian stories, he tacks again and begins to speak of their timeless value, commenting that the "biographer of the Indian chiefs" is "secure of a permanent place in our literature," because "his subject . . . gives him a right to be placed on a classic shelf" (*T*, 343).

Scholars and critics have offered as many contradictory interpretations of this text as it deserves. It has been variously construed as simple racism and as a statement of genuine sympathy for Native Americans, as an attack on writers of Indian stories and as a backhanded declaration of Hawthorne's own ambition to become a writer of Indian stories. As is often the case with Hawthorne's curiously overdetermined yet indeterminate prose, the text supports all of these contrary readings. But there is one thread that runs consistently through Hawthorne's otherwise inconsistent text. Hawthorne laments Indians' supposed disappearance, describes New England as a region haunted by their ghosts, and declares his abhorrence for their stories. Throughout, Native Americans and their stories are associated with the supernatural, with the language of magic, of hauntings, and of horror.

By situating Hawthorne's abhorrence for Indian stories within the frames of his literary career and national politics, this essay will point out the central role that the removal and repression of Native American people and the literary spectralization of Native Americans played in Hawthorne's work and in ante-bellum America. In 1833, Hawthorne published "The Seven Vagabonds," a tale in which he described himself as a wandering storyteller who traveled with a ghostlike, but flesh and blood, Penobscot Indian as a companion. In 1835, he published "Our Evening

Party among the Mountains,” which framed “The Great Carbuncle,” an Abenaki story in whiteface. Thereafter, Native Americans were excluded from his tales.

Hawthorne’s decision to remove Indians from his work in the early 1830s parallels the national policy of removing Indians from American territory. In *Removals*, Lucy Maddox argues that many works of early-nineteenth-century literature effect similar discursive Indian removals. But Hawthorne’s literary Indian removal caused him great ambivalence, perhaps even anguish. Considering the self-contradictions that plague “Our Evening Party among the Mountains,” it should come as no surprise that the sketch has never been published alongside the Indian story that it was written to introduce.

By 1846, when he wrote “The Old Manse,” Hawthorne had made a place for himself in national politics, and had resolved his artistic ambivalences into the delicate ambiguities that would shade his later work. Notably, his encounters with spectral Indians in “The Old Manse” are a source of “exquisite delight” rather than horror (*T*, 1129). Hawthorne’s joyful acceptance of being possessed by an Indian ghost marks his discovery of the literary method by which he internalizes national conflict and expresses that conflict as an aesthetic experience—a beautiful ambiguity. In *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), as in “The Old Manse,” the figure of the Indian ghost signifies the transformation of national conflict into psychological complexity. Hawthorne describes Hester Prynne herself as a spirit who roams the “moral wilderness . . . as freely as the wild Indian in his woods” (*N*, 290). In Hester, the spectralization of Native Americans is perfected. The Indian figures that haunt *The Scarlet Letter* exemplify the novel’s success at replacing soul-destroying ambivalence and abhorrence with the self-sanctifying forces of internalization, ambiguity, and compromise.

From “The Great Carbuncle” to *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne’s references to Indians or Indian tradition are simultaneously lurid and dusky, partly heavenly and partly buried. Not all are explicitly spectral, though his best known pronouncements on his own attitudes toward Native Americans do use ghost language. In 1837, he wrote, “Our Indian races having reared no monuments . . . when they disappear from the earth their history will appear a fable, and they misty phantoms” (*CE*, 8: 169). In 1844, he characterized the “Indian race” as “shadowlike and unreal to our conception” (*T*, 959). Some critics take these statements to mean that Hawthorne was simply not interested in Native American people or traditions. Lee Clark Mitchell goes so far as to say that “Few major American writers in the first half of the nineteenth century seemed less interested in Indian tribes than Nathaniel Hawthorne.”²

Such readings ignore the centrality of misty phantoms to Hawthorne’s

own theories of composition. The unique appropriateness of Hawthorne's work as an exemplar of Indian spectralization rises out of the fact that he conceived of the metaphors and mechanics of haunting as central to his art. As mentioned in chapter 2, "The Devil in Manuscript" explicitly describes writing in terms of haunting. In 1835, Hawthorne published "The Devil in Manuscript" and "The Haunted Mind" as well as "Sketches from Memory" and "The Great Carbuncle." Within these discussions of haunting, Hawthorne repeatedly emphasized the insight that ghosts embody eros as often as horror. For Hawthorne, Indian ghosts represent the horrors of guilty conscience attendant upon Indian Removal, and at the same time, they represent the triumphs of white Americanization.

"The Haunted Mind" makes it clear that Hawthorne understands ghosts as mental projections of desire as well as horror, and believes that both sorts of ghosts—the pleasant and the unpleasant—haunt minds rather than houses, dwell within mental space rather than physical space. "Passion and Feeling assume bodily shape," he explains, "and things of the mind become dim spectres to the eye" (*T*, 202). As Hawthorne describes haunting, it is a state of reverie that encompasses both fear and pleasure. The first procession of ghosts in "The Haunted Mind" is a procession of guilty and regretful thoughts, released from their prisons deep within the heart, and illuminated by a mysterious "deep-hued" star (reminiscent of the Great Carbuncle itself) (*T*, 201–3). The second train of visions, started by the gleam of "the slumbering embers on the hearth," is a pleasurable whirlwind of procreative images (*T*, 203–4). "The Haunted Mind" is haunted equally by the horrors of self-loathing and the pleasures of erotic fantasy.

Hawthorne's ambivalence toward ghosts mirrors his ambivalence toward the racial politics of the early nineteenth century. He seems to fear ghosts, and also to seek them out. Similarly, despite his sensitivity to the horror of cultural appropriation and racial domination, Hawthorne's writing holds out the erotic and artistic pleasures of Indian Removal along with its horrors.

Hawthorne's ambivalent acceptance of Indian Removal was a necessary part of his literary nationalism. His work reflects the surge of cultural nationalism in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Because American nationhood was, in some senses at least, imaginary, Americans felt a pressing need for works of the imagination that would express burgeoning American nationalism.

Hawthorne hoped to fill the need. His ambition brought him to the Notch of the White Mountains. "Our Evening Party among the Mountains" is based on Hawthorne's 1832 tour of New Hampshire and New York. As he explained to Franklin Pierce in a letter written in June, 1832,

he made “this journey on account of a book by which I intend to acquire an (undoubtedly) immense literary reputation” (*CE*, 15: 224). Hawthorne’s admittedly immense ambition was to construct American classics. His musings on the place of Indians and Indian stories in American literature ought to be read in terms of the literary nationalism of an early-nineteenth-century American writer; he longed to earn the “permanent place in our literature,” and the “right to be placed on a classic shelf” that he ascribed to “the biographer of the Indian chiefs” (*T*, 343).

Yet he wrote that he abhorred Indian stories. His emotion may have been caused by the violent debates over Indian removal that raged throughout the 1830s, or by the actual violences of Removal itself. In 1830, when Hawthorne published his first short stories, the Indian Removal Act was passed by Congress. The act was hotly debated and widely condemned in Massachusetts. That year, Sauk and Fox Indians were forced out of Illinois. In 1831, the Supreme Court upheld Georgia’s Indian Removal policy by declaring that it had no jurisdiction in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*. In 1832, in *Worcester v. Georgia*, the court reversed itself, but its decision was disregarded by President Andrew Jackson and his followers. The same year, a number of Sauk Indians, led by Black Hawk, returned to Illinois to plant crops. They were massacred by U.S. troops in an action later known as “The Black Hawk War.” In 1834, the Seminole Indians were ordered to remove themselves from Florida. In 1835, The Seminoles declared war on the United States. In 1837, U.S. troops defeated the Seminoles. In 1838, the Cherokees began their forced migration to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears.³

The debate over Indian rights moved much closer to Hawthorne’s home in 1833 with the Mashpee Revolt on Cape Cod. William Apess, the Mashpees’ advocate, had been Hawthorne’s fellow resident of Essex County, Massachusetts, until he moved to Mashpee in 1833. In 1835, Apess published *Indian Nullification*, his chronicle of the events at Mashpee. Apess’s book documents the successful protest of the Mashpee Indians of Massachusetts against discriminatory policies of the state and of Harvard College. That very year, while Apess was trumpeting the legislative victories of New England’s nineteenth-century Indians, Hawthorne published “Our Evening Party among the Mountains,” lamenting their supposed disappearance, describing New England as a region haunted by their ghosts, and declaring his abhorrence for their stories.

During the removal era, Native Americans were described as “vanished” far more often than they were described as vanquished. Of course, the construction was counterfactual. As Black Hawk and the Sauks and Foxes, Apess and the Pequots and Mashpees remind us, Native Americans did not actually vanish from the West or from New England during the nineteenth century. Neither did they vanish from the white American

imagination. Instead, flesh and blood, living Native Americans were conceived and even perceived as ghosts or ghostly figures.

Indian removal was concomitant with American expansion, which was predicated upon racial, territorial, and cultural domination of European Americans over Native Americans. But between 1830 and 1850, the national debate shifted from a debate over expansion to a debate over maintaining national cohesion, when America shifted its attention from fighting against Indians to fighting over slaves and slavery. By 1850, when the Missouri Compromise assured that slaveholding states and free states would maintain their precarious balance against each other as the national boundaries pushed westward, most American citizens shared the assumptions that national expansion was inevitable and that continued Indian Removal was likewise unavoidable.

Hawthorne's literary life and his political life became increasingly intertwined in the 1840s, as his work in both spheres became more successful. With the publication of "Mosses from an Old Manse" in 1846, Hawthorne became the national figure that he had always hoped to be. The year 1846 stands as a fulcrum point between the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the start of the Civil War. That year, the Mexican War started, Hawthorne's friend Thoreau went to jail, Hawthorne's New York publisher O'Sullivan coined the phrase "Manifest Destiny," and Hawthorne himself got a job at the Salem Customs House, a political patronage position. During the next fourteen years, until the outbreak of the Civil War, Hawthorne would spend seven years as a federal employee and seven as a writer. In terms of both political patronage and literary success, these were Hawthorne's glory years. One of his dearest friends was elected president. People bought his books, read them, and praised them. *The Scarlet Letter* became the first American novel to achieve "classic" status. Hawthorne himself came to be regarded as a national treasure.

It is no coincidence that Hawthorne achieved this success during the years when Americans were struggling to maintain their compromise over the divisive issues that would finally cause the Civil War. Hawthorne had always been able to see both sides of every story. Between 1846 and 1860, he perfected the craft of balancing each against the other, and he wrote the great novels of the compromise era.

Now critics characterize Hawthorne as a master of compromise. In his 1986 essay, "The Politics of *The Scarlet Letter*," Jonathan Arac argues that the narrative indeterminacy of *The Scarlet Letter* parallels Hawthorne's own resolute refusal to take a stance on slavery and the similar refusal on the part of the legislature that resulted in the Compromise of 1850. Sacvan Bercovitch begins his own examination of the politics of *The Scarlet Letter* with the assertion that, "No critical term is more

firmly associated with *The Scarlet Letter* than ambiguity.”⁴ His discussion of the novel’s “contrapuntal ambiguities” develops and enriches Arac’s.⁵ Following Arac’s and Bercovitch’s lead, many critics read Hawthorne’s ambiguities in *The Scarlet Letter* as ultimately serving to quell dissent as well as to foster compromise. Other scholars put more emphasis on Hawthorne’s analysis of the ironies of what Lauren Berlant calls “the national fantasy” than on his contributions to its production. Scholars who focus on the politics of Indian Affairs can be similarly divided: Lucy Maddox points out the relation between white women and Indians in Hawthorne’s writing, and argues that his treatment of both upholds their oppression, while Joshua David Bellin emphasizes Hawthorne’s awareness of the ironies attendant upon the figure of the Reverend John Eliot, missionary to the soon-to-be-supposed-extinct Indians of Massachusetts.⁶ In each of these examples, the difference is merely one of emphasis; all agree that Hawthorne’s work advocates compromise, and privileges the contemplation and internalization of social injustice over action toward reform.

By tracing the figure of the Indian ghost through Hawthorne’s works, one can see the development of the ambiguous voice of compromise that characterized the national politics of 1850 as well as *The Scarlet Letter*.

In the 1833 tale, “The Seven Vagabonds,” the storyteller’s traveling companion is a Penobscot Indian. “The Seven Vagabonds” shows that Hawthorne was aware of the Native American people who lived in New England at the time, and that he linked American Indians with his own project of American storytelling. The tale describes a New England landscape that is populated by large numbers of Penobscots who “paddle their birch canoes among the coasting schooners, and build their wigwam beside some roaring mill dam, and drive a little trade in basket work where their fathers hunted deer” (*T*, 150). A Penobscot man joins the group of vagabonds that includes the storyteller, and after the rest of the group disperses, the narrator tells his audience that he “joined [him]self to the Penobscot Indian, and set forth” (*T*, 155).

But even though the storyteller joins himself to the Indian, it is clear that the nameless Penobscot, the seventh vagabond of “The Seven Vagabonds,” is destined for removal. He is a ghostly figure, introduced in a manner that calls attention to his contemporary reality by questioning it. His sudden, mysterious appearance defines him as apparitional. When he appears, he is described as “a figure which made me imagine, either that our wagon had rolled back two hundred years into past ages, or that the forest and its old inhabitants had sprung up around us by enchantment” (*T*, 149–50). Even when he is present in the text, the Penobscot is a supernatural presence. Hawthorne writes:

Fate was summoning a parliament of these free spirits; . . . and last of all, appeared the representative of those mighty vagrants, who had chased the deer during thousands of years, and were chasing it now in the Spirit Land. Wandering down through the waste of ages, . . . roving now along the dusty road, as of old over the forest leaves, here was the Indian still. (*T*, 151)

This declaration of Indian endurance is also a declaration of Indian speciality. For Hawthorne, Indians are characterized by their dislocation within present realities and their mysterious connection to an idealized past. They act as representatives of their dead ancestors. They do not belong to the present. It is no surprise that they vanish completely from Hawthorne's later descriptions of nineteenth-century New England.

When Hawthorne published "The Seven Vagabonds," in 1833, he was at work on *The Story Teller*, the collection which was to have included "Our Evening Party among the Mountains" and "The Great Carbuncle."⁷ Nina Baym describes "The Seven Vagabonds" as the story that "anticipates the frame of *The Story Teller*."⁸ But Hawthorne banished his Native American contemporaries from his manuscript. Rather than identifying himself with a New England Indian, the ambivalent narrator of *The Story Teller* abhorred their stories, even as he appropriated them. And so, *The Story Teller* deconstructed itself. The tales were published separately from their framing sketches. Considering how badly Hawthorne longed for his own "permanent place in our literature," his abhorrence for Indian stories seems astonishingly ill-timed and ill-expressed. Indeed, the very inconvenience of his revulsion attests to its genuineness.

Jonathan Arac introduces his discussion of *The Scarlet Letter* with Walter Benjamin's assertion that "cultural treasures" cannot be contemplated "without horror."⁹ Arac's essay brings forward the horror that Hawthorne's work can inspire in late-twentieth-century readers who find the politics of compromise over slavery abhorrent. It is my contention that Hawthorne's own early work shows a similar historical consciousness, and that Hawthorne's self-declared "abhorrence" for Indian stories is closely related to Walter Benjamin's "horror." Benjamin defines "cultural treasures" as the "spoils" that are carried along in a "triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those who are lying prostrate." Because they are the spoils of cultural warfare, "There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another."¹⁰ The dichotomy between civil and barbaric (Roy Harvey Pearce would say "savagism and civilization")¹¹ evokes white-authored descriptions of the conflicts between white Americans and Native Americans.

In Benjamin's terms, we might say that America's cultural treasures

contain “barbarism” in two different ways. First, the savage traditions of Native American cultures are present within white American documents as spoils, expropriated and transformed to the purposes of European American “civilization.” Second, the American classics are tainted by the savagery and barbarism of the cultural conquest that they record. “Our Evening Party among the Mountains” signals Hawthorne’s awareness of the horrors of cultural conquest. He abhors Indian stories because they document the triumphal procession of white Americans over the conquered bodies of Native Americans. Yet he knows that Indian stories Americanize American letters, and afford them a unique claim to classic status.

Benjamin’s phrase, “cultural treasure” is a particularly felicitous description of the Great Carbuncle itself, a mysteriously glowing ruby that Hawthorne wrests from Abenaki tradition and turns to his own, white American purpose. The word “carbuncle” means ruby, but it derives from the Latin for a small, red, glowing coal. In the carbuncle of Abenaki legend, Hawthorne found a brilliant emblem of wildness and Indianness that he could set against the white American hearth around which the travelers gather in “Our Evening Party among the Mountains.”

The warm ruddy glow of the hearth defeats the brilliant red light of the wilderness in “The Great Carbuncle.” In Hawthorne’s version of the story, a newly wed couple finds the gem, but decides to renounce its “awful blaze” for the safer glow of their own fireside (*T*, 447). Their renunciation extinguishes the light of the Great Carbuncle, and signals the victory of white American domesticity over Native American tradition. For Hawthorne, the triumph of the hearth is a triumph for nationalist culture. In “Fire Worship,” for example, he explains that, “While a man was true to the fireside, so long would he be true to country and law—to the God whom his fathers worshipped—to the wife of his youth—and to all things else which instinct or religion have taught us to consider sacred” (*T*, 842).

But Hawthorne’s simple tale of cultural appropriation and domination is complicated by its last sentence, which not only admits the possibility that the carbuncle may not have been extinguished, but also confesses that the author’s own allegiance is, at best, divided: “Be it owned,” Hawthorne confides, “that many a mile from the Crystal Hills, I saw a wondrous light around their summits, and was lured, by the faith of poesy, to be the latest pilgrim of the GREAT CARBUNCLE” (*T*, 449). The tale’s closing phrase is an elegant compression of the conflict at the heart of his story. Hawthorne is a “pilgrim,” in the tradition of his pilgrim fathers, whose sacred mission is to colonize and to convert. At the same time, as a “pilgrim of the GREAT CARBUNCLE,” he is a worshipper journeying to a place sanctified by Indian tradition. The carbuncle has been

colonized, converted from its Indian past to a white American purpose. By means of its very redness the light continues to assert the violence of that conversion and its own incontrovertible Indian essence.

The scarlet light that suffuses Hawthorne's later writings emanates from the Abenaki carbuncle that he has buried deep within his artistic consciousness. His mysterious women are adorned with rich red ornaments. Georgiana's cheek is marked with a "Crimson Hand" (*T*, 766). Beatrice Rappacini's thoughts are filled with "fantasies of a gem-like brilliancy, as if diamonds and rubies sparkle" in her imagination (*T*, 993). Hester Prynne wears her scarlet letter. Zenobia keeps a richly jeweled flower in her hair, until she relinquishes it at Eliot's pulpit, where the famous Apostle to the Indians had asked them to renounce their Indianness. Miriam calls her secret past her "dark-red carbuncle—red as blood—" (*N*, 961), and after she incites murder, she begins to wear a ruby in her breast. Miriam's talisman, like all of Hawthorne's red emblems, evokes the splendid red gleam of "The Great Carbuncle."

Though all of these fictional women are linked to Native Americans by their darkness and their wildness, as well as by their scarlet jewels, none of them are explicitly Native American. The Indians who appear in Hawthorne's writing are spectral presences rather than fully dimensional characters. Yet they do continue to appear. In the tales and sketches published before 1846, Indian figures are consistently horrifying. "Wild figures in the Indian dress and many fantastic shapes without a model" give the mob in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," "a visionary air, as if a dream had broken forth from some feverish brain, and were sweeping visibly through the midnight streets" (*T*, 84). Roger Malvin and Reuben Bourne are Indian fighters, out after scalp bounties. An Indian-like death stalks Roger Malvin, "stealing gradually towards him through the forest, and showing its ghastly and motionless features from behind a nearer, and yet a nearer tree" (*T*, 95). Demonic Indians can be glimpsed in the red glare that illuminates the shadowy forests of "Young Goodman Brown," while an Indian necromancer is conjured forth in "Main Street's" phantasmagoric evocation of a vanished past. Finally, in "A Virtuoso's Collection," "the skull of King Philip" represents America (*T*, 703).

"The Old Manse," published in 1846, marks the turning point in Hawthorne's portrayals of Indians. In that sketch, Hawthorne embraces the Indian ghosts that haunt the nationalist imagination. He is happy when a ghostly Indian village springs up beside the Manse and when he is possessed by an Indian spirit of wild abandon as he rows upon the Assabeth. After "The Old Manse," Hawthorne's Indian figures signify eroticism and pleasure as well as death and horror.

To Hawthorne's delight, he says, "the Manse was haunted" (*T*, 1135). Its phantoms serve as the writer's inspiration. There are ghosts of Puritan

divines haunting the book-lined garret. Phantom kitchen maids clatter dishes in the scullery. The spirits of revolutionaries and redcoats linger near their graves on the nearby battlefield. Ghostly Indians reside in the wild tract of land between the battlefield and the orchard.

As he describes them in “The Old Manse,” the Indian ghosts that haunt the Manse’s meadows are a source of fierce, wild joy for Hawthorne. Thoreau sets him on the search for Indian relics, and he writes of his own “exquisite delight” in finding them. When he picks up an arrowhead, he says that it “builds up again the Indian village, amid its encircling forest, and recalls to life the painted chiefs and warriors, the squaws at their household toil and the children sporting among the wigwams; while the little wind-rocked papoose swings from the branch of a tree” (*T*, 1129).

Hawthorne takes such pleasure in imagining the long-departed Indians that he can not decide, he writes, “whether it is a joy or a pain, after such a momentary vision, to gaze around in the broad daylight of reality, and see, stone fences, white houses, potatoe fields, and men doggedly hoeing, in their shirtsleeves and homespun pantaloons” (*T*, 1129–30). We should note here that Hawthorne’s momentary pain, or at least his ambivalence, comes when his visions of Indianness are replaced by visions of white men at work in the fields they have wrested from Indian possession and from wildness. In other words, it is Indian disappearance—or at least the disappearance of Indian ghosts—that upsets him. But he dismisses the pain with the exclamation that, “This is nonsense! The Old Manse is better than a thousand wigwams” (*T*, 1130).

Later in the sketch, Hawthorne himself is possessed by a strange, Indian spirit of wild joy when he and his friend Ellery Channing go fishing. He writes, “Strange and happy times were those, when we cast aside all irksome forms and straight-laced habitudes, and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like Indians . . . during one bright semi-circle of the sun” (*T*, 1138). During that day, Hawthorne claims to see, to work, and even to eat as an Indian: “The painted Indian, who paddled his canoe along the Assabeth, three hundred years ago, could hardly have seen a wilder gentleness, displayed upon its banks and reflected in its bosom, than we did. Nor could the same Indian have prepared his noontide meal with more simplicity.” Hawthorne and Channing’s Indian-style meal is pleasurable, and at the same time it is haunted. He comments that, “what was strangest, neither did our mirth seem to disturb the propriety of the solemn woods; although the hobgoblins of the old wilderness, and the will-of-the-whisks that glimmered in the marshy places, might have come trooping to share our table-talk, and have added their shrill laughter to our merriment” (*T*, 1140). The abhorrent, violent Indian phantoms of the early 1830s, whose scarlet glow signifies the blood guilt of

their oppressors, are here transformed to hobgoblins and will-of-the-whisks, happily accompanying Hawthorne on a fishing trip, sharing his picnic and laughing shrilly at his nonsensical wit. They are harmless, but more surprisingly, they are Hawthorne's beloved companions.

The significance of Hawthorne's Indian days is not merely that they are happy. More important, they serve to make him free. He writes that, "the chief profit of those wild days . . . lay . . . in the freedom which we thereby won from all custom and conventionalism, and fettering influences of man on man. We were so free today that it was impossible to be slaves again tomorrow" (*T*, 1141). The Indian ghosts who haunt the land around the Manse, and who occasionally take possession of Hawthorne himself, are the spirits that teach him freedom. Even more than the revolutionary soldiers who haunt the nearby battlefield, or the Puritans who haunt his library, the departed Indians make Hawthorne American.

But there are notes of horror in this paean to American freedom. To be precise, there are fetters and slaves. Indian ghosts offer Hawthorne and his fellow Americans freedom from "fettering influences of man on man" making them "so free today that it was impossible to be slaves again tomorrow" (*T*, 1141). Strangely, or perhaps not so strangely, "The Old Manse" moves toward internalizing slavery and abolition in the same manner that Hawthorne's early work has internalized Indian Removal. The joyful embrace of spectral Indians coincides with Hawthorne's first efforts to bury the dusky specter of American slavery in the dark region from whence the Indian ghosts emerge. Jonathan Arac describes Hawthorne's attitude toward the conflicts over slavery as a horrifying "fantasy of evanescence."¹² Similarly, "The Old Manse" can be described as a delightfully idyllic fantasy of Indian evanescence.

With the publication of *Mosses from an Old Manse*, and his appointment at the Salem Custom House, Hawthorne was well on his way to becoming the voice of the great compromises of 1850—spokesman for the Missouri Compromise, and author of that masterpiece of American literary compromise, *The Scarlet Letter*. "The Old Manse" sketch, which begins *Mosses from an Old Manse*, describes Hawthorne's newfound pleasure in the notion of Native American ghostliness. Likewise, "The Custom House" sketch, which precedes *The Scarlet Letter*, shows that internalizing Native American qualities was central to Hawthorne's process of writing in 1850.

Hawthorne wrote *The Scarlet Letter* after he was fired from the Custom House when a new administration came to power. He was enraged by his dismissal, and his anger was directed at Charles W. Upham, whom he blamed for it. So the purpose of *The Scarlet Letter* was twofold: Hawthorne hoped to resuscitate his own literary career, and he also hoped to avenge himself in print.

In a letter to Horace Mann, Hawthorne explained that he wanted to damage Upham's reputation, writing that, "I shall do my best to kill and scalp him in the public prints" (*CE*, 16: 293). The public scalping took the form of "The Custom House" sketch exposing the corruption and abuses of the customs officers. The sketch caused an uproar. The preface to the second edition of *The Scarlet Letter* expressed disingenuous surprise at the public storm that attended his exposé. Public outrage "could hardly have been more violent," Hawthorne wrote, "had he burned down the Custom-House and quenched its last smoking ember in the blood of a certain venerable personage against whom he is supposed to cherish a particular malevolence."

Hawthorne denied everything. "As to enmity, or ill-feeling of any kind, personal or political, he utterly disclaims such motives," he wrote (*N*, 119). This disclaimer was false, as his private letter to Mann reveals. But rather than focusing on Hawthorne's duplicity, I want to draw attention to his language: he kills, scalps, burns down the house, and quenches its embers in the blood of his enemy. In short, Hawthorne becomes a savage. He is possessed by the spirit of a Native American warrior, and in that spirit, he writes his haunted novel.

There are many ghosts in "The Custom House." Hawthorne describes his encounter with a ghostly historian, his predecessor, Mr. Surveyor Pue: "With his own ghostly hand, the obscurely seen, but majestic, figure had imparted to me the scarlet symbol, and the little roll of explanatory manuscript. With his own ghostly voice, he had exhorted me to . . . bring his mouldy and moth-eaten lucubrations before the public" (*N*, 147). Hawthorne waits for further inspiration in a deserted parlor that is distinctly reminiscent of the bed chamber described in "The Haunted Mind." There, where moonlight and firelight mingle, and where "ghosts might enter," he hopes to "dream strange things, and make them look like truth" (*N*, 149, 150).

His strange, haunted dream is *The Scarlet Letter*. It is haunted by Indians who are utterly unlike the shadowy figures that lurk behind trees in the forests of "Young Goodman Brown." For one thing, there are real, substantial Indians in town. The Indians who watch the Election Day festivities are described as being equally remarkable for the brightness of their clothes and the gravity of their countenances. Neither quality is spectral. Nonetheless, in some senses Indian spectralization plays a more central role in *The Scarlet Letter* than it does in any of Hawthorne's tales or sketches. As the novel progresses, each of the main characters is transformed into an Indian, or, at the very least, is described as internalizing Indian consciousness.

The ambiguously Americanizing force of internalized Indianness that Hawthorne outlines in *The Scarlet Letter* can be deathly or erotic, dark

or bright, vindictive or freeing. Roger Chillingworth and Arthur Dimmesdale both sojourn among Indians. Chillingworth, who starts as a captive, becomes practitioner of an Indian lore that resembles black magic. Dimmesdale, on the other hand, is returning from a missionary visit to Eliot's Indian converts when he and Hester meet in the forest, in "A Flood of Sunshine," to reclaim their love. The child Pearl is also identified with Indians, though it is hard to say whether that identification darkens or brightens her aspect. When she looks "an Indian in the face," he grows "conscious of a nature wilder than his own" (N, 329).

Hester Prynne, the central character of *The Scarlet Letter*, is also identified with spectral Indians. Because she is an outcast, she is ghostlike. Hawthorne writes that, "She stood apart from mortal interests, yet close beside them, like a ghost that revisits the familiar fireside, and can no longer make itself seen or felt . . . or, should it succeed in manifesting its forbidden sympathy, awakening only terror and horrible repugnance" (N, 190). She is also free. "In her lonesome cottage, by the sea-shore, thoughts visited her, such as dared to enter no other dwelling in New-England, shadowy guests, that would have been as perilous as demons to their entertainer, could they have been seen so much as knocking at her door" (N, 259). Finally, Hester is a wanderer in the "moral wilderness." Hawthorne declares that, "Her intellect and heart had their home, as it were, in desert places, where she roamed as freely as the wild Indian in his woods" (N, 290).

Within her story, Hawthorne succeeds in replacing his soul-destroying ambivalence with the self-sanctifying force of ambiguity. The scarlet A that marks Hester as an adulteress and as an angel, completely ambiguous and perfectly American, may also mark her as Abenaki. It is no coincidence that the letter is scarlet. Its red glow emanates from the Great Carbuncle itself. Culminating with *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne constructs a white America with a blood-red Indian legacy at its heart. That legacy may be blood-stained and horror-filled, but for Hawthorne it is also a treasure.



Conclusion

☞ Spectral Indians appear everywhere in our national literature. They haunt eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century poems and novels. Their phantoms lurk in the shadows of judicial and legislative writings and of the Constitution itself. They stalk through national history as well as through literary history, and they appear in works by Native Americans as well as those by European Americans.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the figure of the Indian ghost began to appear more and more often in published accounts of Native American speeches, and in narrated Native American autobiographies. These accounts are often mediated by white transcribers or editors, but they point to a Native American reappropriation of the spectral trope that is of great interest. In 1853 or 1855, for example, Chief Seattle is said to have delivered a speech that brought together most of the spectral metaphors I have discussed.

There was a time when our people covered the land as the waves of a wind-ruffled sea cover its shell paved floor, but, that time has long passed away with the greatness of tribes that are now but a mournful memory. I will not dwell on, nor mourn over, our untimely decay, nor reproach my paleface brothers with hastening it as we too may have been somewhat to blame. . . .

Day and night cannot dwell together. The Red Man has ever fled the approach of the White Man, as the morning mist flees before the morning sun. . . .

It matters little where we pass the remnant of our days. They will not be many. The Indians' night promises to be dark. Not a single star of hope hovers above his horizon. Sad voiced winds moan in the distance. Grim fate seems to be on the Red Man's trail, and wherever he goes he will hear the approaching footsteps of his fell destroyer and prepare stolidly to meet his doom. . . .

And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall have become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon, the highway, or in the silence of the pathless woods, they will not be alone. . . . The White Man will never be alone.

Let him be just and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not powerless.¹

I quote Seattle's speech at length because it offers such startling echoes of Jefferson's Chief Logan, as well as of Freneau, Morton, Brown, Irving,

Child, Cooper, Hawthorne, Melville, and Poe. It is a compendium and a summary of the discourses of spectralization. The speech accepts Indian disappearance and spectralization wholeheartedly, and offers a Native revision of the ghost figure that has certain subversive power.

However, as Rudolf Kaiser's work demonstrates, "The authenticity of the speech is in doubt."² The original version was published in 1887, thirty years after its delivery. H. A. Smith, the man who published the speech, had been present at its delivery, but it is unlikely that he had understood the language in which Seattle spoke, Lushotseed. Smith probably relied on an interpreter who may have translated Seattle's words into English or into Chinook Jargon, the common intertribal language at the time. Smith took notes in his diary, and thirty years later he reconstructed the speech based on his notes. Because the speech was a reconstruction of a translation, perhaps of a translation of a translation, subsequent editors and adapters have felt free to alter its tone and even its meaning. At this point there are countless published variations of the speech. Kaiser records versions that are directly contradictory—for example, when the Southern Baptist Convention used the speech, they altered Seattle's statement that "The white man's God cannot love his red children," to read instead, "His compassion is equal for the red man and the white."³ In the hands of environmentalists, the speech changed meanings again, as a completely new ecological message was woven into the text.

Smith's version of Seattle's speech closes with the assertion that, "the dead are not altogether powerless."⁴ But the story of the ruthless manipulation and alteration of his words shows the limitations of Seattle's own power to speak to us. Kaiser concludes that "The text does not represent the mind of the old Chief, but the mind of a sensitive Euro-American, worried about our ecological situation and the general dualism in our culture."⁵ White Americans and Europeans want to hear their own mythology so much that they put it into the mouth of a dead Indian. This is ghostwriting with a vengeance.

The specter of the ghost writer also haunts the works attributed to Black Elk and Kicking Bear, two of the best-known voices of the Ghost Dance religion. Charles Eastman, the Sioux writer and physician who attended the survivors of the Ghost Dance Massacre at Wounded Knee, published a number of books afterward that described his conceptions of Native spirituality and his understanding of ghosts. But Charles Eastman may also have had a ghost writer. His wife and literary collaborator, the European American writer Elaine Goodale Eastman, transcribed, edited, and revised his work extensively before it was published, and critics question the authenticity of his narrative voice.⁶

The fact that Black Elk, Kicking Bear, and (to a less-determinable extent) Charles Eastman all recounted their stories through European

American ghostwriters lends another layer of rich confusion to this investigation. But the multivocalism, hybridity, or impurity of Native American texts of the latter part of the nineteenth century does not negate their importance. Gretchen Bataille and Kathleen Mullen Sands's *American Indian Women*, David Brumble's *American Indian Autobiography*, and Arnold Krupat's *For Those Who Come After* all explore the theoretical and critical issues surrounding multivocal Native American (auto)biographies.⁷ As these books demonstrate, the careful examination of these texts is of great importance. Much of the interest and value of such work turns out to be the illumination of European American cultural and racial expectations, and the exposure of white American narrative strategies that use Native mouthpieces to give voice to white conceptions. Yet careful study reveals traces of Native resistance to European American narrative domination. The much-altered and distorted Native voices that these texts present are well worth attention.

Nonetheless, the mediated nature of Native American accounts of the Ghost Dance do make it difficult to analyze the movement's use of the ghost figure. The Ghost Dance refashioned two of the most powerful topoi of nineteenth-century European American culture when it drew on messianic Christianity and Native spectralization. The metaphors of ghostliness take on new power when they are used in conjunction with Native Americans who practiced or observed the Ghost Dance. The Ghost Dancers turned Indian ghosts to purposes that brought them great hope and new solidarity. At the same time, the specter of Native strength terrified the United States Army and the white American public. At Wounded Knee, United States troops killed the dancers. The massacre revised and grimly fulfilled Ghost Dancers' belief that they would be reunited with their ghostly ancestors.

The Ghost Dance and the Massacre at Wounded Knee show the deeply divergent meanings that Native American ghosts held for Native Americans and European Americans by the close of the nineteenth century. Seattle's speech, first printed in 1887 as talk of the Ghost Dance was beginning to sweep across the Plains, hints toward a Native revision of the trope that emphasizes the power of ancestral connections to the land. Wovoka (Jack Wilson), the Ghost Dance prophet, developed the positive implications of Native American ancestral ghosts into one of the central elements of his vision. From the white American viewpoint, the same figures caused abject terror. The Massacre at Wounded Knee brutally illustrates the United States' refusal to allow the invocation of Native American ghosts.

Wounded Knee did not succeed in making Indian phantoms disappear. If anything, the massacre gave new power to the figure, increasing its resonance for Native people as a figure for their rights, and for white

Americans as representative of their guilt. Two contemporary works, *Ceremony* (1977) by the Laguna Pueblo writer Leslie Marmon Silko and *Pet Semetary* (1983) by Stephen King, demonstrate these divergent uses of Indian spectralization.

Both Silko's and King's works reflect the continued importance of Native American ghosts in the national imagination. Both are also related to contemporary national politics of Indian Affairs. Silko's work rises out of the Red Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s. King's responds to the Maine Land claims of the late 1970s and early 1980s. In Silko's work, Native American ghosts are envisioned as healing and empowering figures. In King's they represent the guilty terrors of possession.

In 1973, members of the American Indian Movement converged on Wounded Knee, South Dakota. They seized and occupied a church and a trading post for seventy days in order to publicize Native American grievances against federal policies. AIM's choice of Wounded Knee for its most important political action gives good indication of the important legacies of the Ghost Dance religion and the massacre. Twentieth-century Native American activists made canny use of both the positive ancestral ghosts recalled by the Ghost Dance and the guilty specters of racism that haunt the site of the massacre.

Around that time, Silko began work on *Ceremony*. The novel was published in 1977, to great acclaim. *Ceremony* relies heavily on Laguna Pueblo traditions, and presents a contemporary Laguna view of the world. In the novel, white Americans are marginal, ghostly, and evil. The great strength of the work is its ability to place the land and people of Laguna Pueblo at the center of the world. But the novel's main character, Tayo, is only part Laguna. He is also part white. The book records the struggles of white and Native America as they are manifested in Tayo's consciousness.

Ghosts function in a number of ways in the story. Tayo himself begins the story as a ghostly figure, an invisible man. He is in a Veteran's Hospital, recovering from the traumas of World War II. Silko writes,

For a long time he had been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital, because white smoke had no consciousness of itself. . . . The smoke had been dense; visions and memories of the past did not penetrate there. . . . If they had not dressed him and led him to the car, he would still be there, drifting along the north wall, invisible in the grey twilight.⁸

The plot of *Ceremony* centers around Tayo's emergence from invisibility. He is not the only ghostly figure in his tale. His cousin Rocky and his uncle Josiah are ghosts who haunt and trouble him, and his lover, Ts'eh, is also a ghostly being. As Naomi Rand explains it, "This female apparition is as much a part of his Native American past as his cousin Rocky or

from his invisibility and to reconnect with the Laguna people. In order to get the spotted cattle back, Tayo has to kneel on the rocks and cut a large hole in the rancher's barbed wire fence. Silko writes: "The white man, Floyd Lee, called it a wolf-proof fence, but he had poisoned and shot all the wolves in the hills, and the people knew what the fence was for: a thousand dollars a mile to keep Indians and Mexicans out; a thousand dollars a mile to lock the mountain in steel wire, to make the land his" (187–88). When Tayo opens the fence, he challenges the rancher's possession of the stolen land as well as the stolen cattle, and he makes a significant step toward reversing the destructive forces that have turned him into an invisible victim. By the end of the novel, Tayo is at home in the kiva, and the white rancher is a shadowy and powerless figure in his story.

At the end of *Ceremony*, Tayo's Old Grandma comments, "It seems like I already heard these stories before . . . only thing is, the names sound different" (260). In one sense, her statement is meant to emphasize the continuity of Silko's novel with the old Laguna stories. Elaine Jahner asserts that contemporary American Indian novelists fashion "structures that relate as intimately to the life of the modern American Indian community as the oral forms have related to the continuing life of the community."¹¹ According to Ruoff, Silko "not only uses the motif of the ritual journey of the war twins but also structures the novel around the Laguna emergence myth and embeds parts of other myths into the narrative."¹² Because the novel echoes traditional Laguna stories, it sounds familiar.

There is another reason for the uncanny familiarity of the narratives of *Ceremony*. The novel precisely reverses the discourses of spectralization. It marginalizes European Americans just as they have marginalized Native Americans. It demonizes whites, and then it gradually teaches its hero to transcend his hatred of them—not for their sake, but for the sake of his spiritual well-being. The races, like the names, sound different, but the narrative is surprisingly similar to its opposites. Like William Apess, Silko has constructed "an Indian's looking glass for the white man." Her magic mirror transforms the discourses of Indian spectralization into those of affirmation and empowerment.

It would delight me to end with *Ceremony's* transformation of Native ghosts into feminist, life-affirming spirits, and to argue that Silko's reversal of the tropes of spectralization is itself irreversible. But the successes of Red Power were attended by a remarkable backlash of white anxiety and racism. In Maine, for example, the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy land claims threatened most white residents of the state with loss of title to their lands, and the emotions ran particularly high. In 1964, the tribes began litigation to reclaim land granted to them by a 1794 treaty. They continued their suit against the state of Maine through the 1970s, and by

1977 it had become clear that the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy case was a winner. According to Paul Brodeur, "Reaction in Maine . . . ranged from expressions of outrage to calls for violence." Tom Tureen, the lawyer for the tribes, describes the late 1970s as "a nasty and disillusioning time in Maine."¹³

On December 12, 1980, Jimmy Carter signed an appropriations bill that settled the Maine Indian land claims for 81.5 million dollars. The money was deposited into a tribal account for the purpose of purchasing three hundred thousand acres of land in Maine. Andrew Akins, chairman of the Passamaquoddy-Penobscot Negotiating Committee and tribal administrator, stated that the Passamaquoddies and Penobscots "witnessed something that no one around here thought possible when I was young—the rebirth of an Indian nation in the state of Maine."¹⁴

Stephen King, who is described on his own book jacket as "the world's best-selling novelist" lives in Bangor, Maine. His popular horror novels plumb the depths of the American unconscious. From February 1979 to December 1982, as the Maine land claims were being settled and the Indian nation was being reborn in the state of Maine, King wrote a novel plotted around the contested ownership of an Indian burying ground in the Maine woods.¹⁵ *Pet Sematary* struck a chord in the popular imagination. It topped the best-seller list for months and continues to sell as a trade paperback. In 1989, *Pet Sematary* was released as a film which was enough of a popular success to generate a sequel, *Pet Sematary II*, in 1992.

Pet Sematary is a novel of terror. It begins when a young white family buys an old house on the edge of the woods. Behind their house, they discover a hilltop with a small cemetery on it. "Honey, do we *own* this?" Rachel Creed asks. Her question is an important starting point for the plot. The neighbor who is showing them around responds, "This way, nothing but woods for fifty miles or more. . . . Ends up going onto those state lands I told you about, the ones the Indians want back. I know it sounds funny to say your nice little house . . . is on the edge of a wilderness, but it is" (38, 39).

King calls the Indians that haunt his novel Micmacs rather than Penobscots or Passamaquoddies. By basing his story on a nonexistent Micmac land claim, King deflects focus from the actual land claims cases that gave rise to the story, but he does not deflect it far. Historically, the Micmacs were part of a confederacy that included the Passamaquoddies and Penobscots. The Micmacs, like the Maine tribes, are Algonquian Indians, who share a similar language, culture, and religion. In Algonquian religion, the Wíitiko (which King styles the Wendigo) is an important figure, an evil giant, a cannibal who drives humans to cannibalism.

The Wendigo lurks just behind the Creed's house, in "the Indian woods" (46). "The Micmacs believed this hill was a magic place," Louis

Creed learns. “Other tribes steered clear of it—the Penobscots said these woods were full of ghosts. Later on, the fur trappers started saying pretty much the same thing” (137). His neighbor tells him that the Micmac burying ground “has a power . . . and I think that power goes through phases, same as the moon. It’s been full of power before, and I’m ascaered it’s coming round to full again” (275).

As Andrew Akins celebrated the rebirth of an Indian nation in the state of Maine, Stephen King fantasized about the waxing power of an Indian demon. In the novel, the spirits that rise out of the disputed burying ground take possession of the Creed family. Louis Creed buries the family cat in the burying ground, and its corpse is reanimated (though it continues to decompose). Before long, he has buried his son and his wife there as well, and shares his house with their decaying bodies, which are possessed by the Algonquian Wendigo. It is a ghastly story.

It is also an immensely popular one. I take *Pet Sematary*’s popular success as an index of contemporary popular fascination with phantom Indians. The story evokes current white anxieties about Indian possession and repossession of land. It also draws on white guilt about Indian dispossession, and white fear that they themselves might be possessed by the vengeful spirits of the dispossessed. Akins, the Penobscot chief, offers a similar analysis of white reactions to the land claims in the late 1970s:

It was as if we had touched a raw nerve that extended back into the innermost recesses of the true personality of the white people around here and unleashed all their deep hatred for Indians, together with their guilt for what they had done to the Indians over all the years. We had been invisible for so long, you see, that the whites simply couldn’t conceive that we had any rights except those they chose to confer on us. Well, we’re not invisible any longer.¹⁶

Akins’s language of invisibility and his talk of “the innermost recesses of the true personality of the white people,” their deep hatred and their guilt, give strong support to the understanding of Native American spectralization that I have advanced. Akins also explains the historical context for the central themes of *Pet Sematary*, one of the most popular novels of our time. Native Americans “aren’t invisible any longer,” but, in the world of *Pet Sematary* at least, their visibility shows simply that the ghosts that haunt the American imagination are growing powerful again.

We can interpret this accession of power to mean either that Americans are becoming more afraid of their own histories and of themselves, or else that they are becoming certain of themselves. The third interpretive possibility is that both are true: that the spectacular popularity of *Pet Sematary* happened because the novel fulfills the deepest wishes and counter-wishes of an ambivalent modern American subject, both reminding

Americans of the ongoing conquest of Native Americans, and calming their fears, allowing them to forget.

It seems curious, to say the least, that a spectacularly popular novel (and two successful films) about the Algonquian demons that haunt the Maine woods could serve to calm American anxieties about Native American challenges to United States sovereignty. It's also surprising that such a well-known story has never been discussed in its political context. But it is certainly true. By creating fantastic Native American demons, *Pet Semetary* makes its readers and viewers forget about Native American people and politics. In "Make My Day: Spectacle as Amnesia in Imperial Politics," Michael Rogin uses the example of Poe's "The Purloined Letter," which is hidden in plain sight, to argue that political spectacles produce political amnesia, and that such spectacles work by means of racial demonology. Surely this is the case with *Pet Semetary*. Most Americans remember King's story. Most have forgotten that the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes won their land claims. This work of forgetting is accomplished by means of describing an Algonquian ghost so compelling that it wipes the reality of living Penobscot and Passamaquoddy people from the nationalist imaginary.

Compelling though it may be, the dynamic is puzzling. Why would writers as different as Philip Freneau and Stephen King choose to invoke threatening Native specters in order to shore up white hegemony? Why are their invocations of these ghosts so enduringly popular? "The Indian Burying Ground" is the only poem of Freneau's that we read any longer. In many survey courses, it stands as the lone representative of early Federal poetry. According to its book jacket, *Pet Semetary* is one of the most popular novels that has ever been published. Between Freneau and King are more than two centuries of writing filled with repetition and return to the figure of the Native American ghost.

Some of this might be explained simply by saying that most Americans like ghost stories. But I want to propose another reason for the enduring power of these images. Throughout this book, I have referred to American national consciousness, or the American national imagination a number of times. Of course, the concept of a collective mind is deeply problematic. However, it seems a logical extension of Anderson's description of imagined communities to say, at least, that nationalism is all about the desire for a shared consciousness. On some level, each American wants to partake of a collective American mind.

But on some other level, each American wants to resist that collectivity. We want to be the ghosts rather than the haunted. In 1991, Leslie Marmon Silko returned to her contemplation of Native ghosts, in a novel much angrier and more terrifying than *Ceremony* or *Pet Semetary*: *Almanac of the Dead*. As its title indicates, Silko's *Almanac* focuses on the

dead rather than the living. Rather than affirming life, it affirms death. The novel concentrates on the destroyers, the evil Native witches who called forth the European conquerors, and the wicked (and spectral) Europeans who came in answer to their call.

Although *Almanac of the Dead* offers a very different perspective from *Ceremony*, the books do not contradict each other. *Ceremony* tells the story of Tayo's return to Laguna Pueblo from the Bataan Death March. *Almanac of the Dead* tells the story of a Laguna man named Sterling who has been expelled from the Pueblo into the sleazy underworld of Tucson, Arizona. In Tucson, Sterling must live among drug dealers, gun smugglers, pornographers, real-estate developers, thieves, and hit men. Silko depicts the depravity and cruelty of these destroyers with relentless clarity, and the novel calls for the complete destruction of the United States society that is based on their greed.

The *Almanac of the Dead* is filled with ghosts and spirits who call for the destruction of European America. Curiously, one European ghost joins the sixty million Native American dead. It is the ghost of Karl Marx. Angelita La Escapía, a guerrilla from Chiapas, is "lost in the imaginary embraces of fierce Marx,"¹⁷ whom she describes this way:

Marx, tribal man and storyteller; Marx with his primitive devotion to the workers' stories. No wonder the Europeans hated him! Marx had gathered official government reports of the suffering English factory workers the way a tribal shaman might have, feverishly working to bring together a powerful, even magical, assembly of stories. . . .

Marx had understood stories are alive with the energy words generate. Word by word, the stories of suffering, injury and death, had transformed the present moment, seizing listeners' or readers' imaginations so that, for an instant, they were present and felt the suffering of sisters and brothers long past. . . . He had sensed the great power these stories had. Poor Marx did not understand the power of the stories belonged to the spirits of the dead. (631-32)

This invocation of Marx's ghost returns us to the very beginning of this book, which also invoked the specter of Marx. But Silko's invocation is far different from that earlier one. For Silko, Marx is a student of Native American communalism and tribal culture. He is a shaman and a storyteller who unknowingly invokes the spirits of the dead Native American ancestors. Because of this, Angelita La Escapía loves him. But when she is questioned, Angelita shouts, "Do we follow Marx? The answer is no! No white man politics! No white man Marx! No white man religion, no nothing *until we retake this land!*" (518, original emphasis).

The land is what matters to Angelita La Escapía, and to Leslie Marmon Silko, and to the Native American ghosts whom she invokes:

Sixty million dead souls howl for justice in the Americas! They howl to retake the land as the black Africans have retaken their land!

You think there is no hope for indigenous tribal people here to prevail against the violence and greed of the destroyers? But you forget the inestimable power of the earth and all the forces of the universe. You forget the colliding meteors. You forget the earth's outrage. . . .

The truth is the Ghost Dance did not end with the murder of Big Foot and one hundred and forty-four Ghost Dance worshipers at Wounded Knee. The Ghost Dance has never ended. It has continued, and the people have never stopped dancing; they may call it by other names, but when they dance, their hearts are reunited with the spirits of the beloved ancestors and the loved ones recently lost in the struggle. Throughout the Americas, from Chile to Canada, the people have never stopped dancing; as the living dance, they are joined again with all our ancestors before them, who cry out, who demand justice, and who call the people to take back the Americas! (723-24)

The ghosts that Silko describes in *Almanac of the Dead* rage against injustice. They thirst for blood and they hunger for earth. They are powerful specters, and when the novel works, it convinces its readers that when Native ghosts join forces with living Native people, they will change political realities.

When the angry ghosts of the *Almanac* are read side by side with the restorative ghosts of *Ceremony*, it becomes clear that the metaphors of Native spectrality can work to empower Native people and to challenge United States hegemony. But this possibility does not lessen the power of *Pet Sematary* or of the long nationalist tradition in American letters. Native Americans construct ghosts that call for the return of the land, for justice, and for the wholeness of stories and of memory, but in the minds of white men, Native American ghosts continue to create political amnesia and a nationalist imaginary that locates all Native people within the white American self, and authorizes the theft of native land.

Native American ghosts return to us again and again. The specters are signs of death and justice, and signs of life and hope. They are signs of the land itself, and of the land's history. They stand for the United States of America. They stand for Native American community. Native American phantoms signify the triumph of nationalism. They also prophesy its failure.

NOTES

I. Indian Ghosts and American Subjects (pp. 2–19)

1. William Hubbard's translation, quoted in Apess, *Son of the Forest*, 63.
2. Cheyfitz, *Poetics*, 43.
3. Dippie, *Vanishing American*; Michaels, *Our America*; Maddox, *Removals*; Lubbers, *Born for the Shade*.
4. Jehlen, *American Incarnation*, 13.
5. Balibar, *Race, Nation, Class*, 95, 93.
6. Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 37.
7. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.
8. *Ibid.*, 9, 11.
9. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, 2.
10. Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 203.
11. Castle, *The Female Thermometer*, 131, 161.
12. Thomas, *Decline of Magic*, 597, 602.
13. Balibar, "Subjection," 4.
14. *Ibid.*, 10, 13.
15. Armstrong and Tennenhouse, *Imaginary Puritans*, 8. The Foucault quotation can be found there as well.
16. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 157. Subsequent citations of works by Freud will be included parenthetically in the text.
17. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 9.
18. Studies of women's ambivalent subjectivity include Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Nina Auerbach's *The Woman and the Demon*, and Luce Irigaray's *This Sex Which Is Not One*. Black subjectivity is addressed by W. E. B. DuBois's *The Souls of Black Folk*, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, and also by a number of Homi Bhabha's essays, including "Of Mimicry and Man." Both Fanon and Bhabha offer analyses of explicitly colonial black subjectivity, while Gayatri Spivak's work presents (or at least announces its inability to present) the subjectivity of the colonized woman.
There are also quite a few recent books that focus on the ambivalences within dominant subjectivity. I would characterize Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, for instance, as a book about the minds (and cultures) of colonizers. Fredric Jameson's *Political Unconscious* is a Marxist analysis that posits a collective mind, rather than an analysis of individual workers' fractured subjectivities. Anne McClintock's *Imperial Leather* brings together gender, race, colonial, and class analyses, but focuses more on dominant subjectivity than on the minds of women, people of color, colonial subjects, or workers.
19. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 38.
20. Fiedler, *Vanishing Americans*, 185, 11.
21. Smith-Rosenberg, "Subject Female," 485, 504.
22. *Ibid.*, 485.
23. Wald, *Constituting Americans*, 11, 13.
24. The speech was first published in 1775. Notably, Thomas Jefferson included it in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, first printed in 1785. His acceptance

- of the speech as genuine caused some partisan controversy, and in the 1800 edition of *Notes*, he included a lengthy appendix "Relative to the Murder of Logan's Family." See William Peden, ed., *Notes on the State of Virginia by Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Norton, 1982) 62–63, 226–58, 298–301.
25. Wald, *Constituting Americans*, 22–40.
 26. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 35–36.
 27. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, 16.
 28. John Adams to Abigail Adams, 14 April 1776, in Schneur, ed., *Feminism: Essential Writings*, 4. Also cited in Wald, *Constituting Americans*, 18.
 29. Troy Boone, "Narrating the Apparition," 177.
 30. *Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, Seneca Falls, 1848*, in Schneur, ed., *Feminism: Essential Writings*, 79.
 31. Gardner, "Alien Nation," 453.
 32. Morrison, "Unspeakable Things," 13.
 33. See Berlant, *National Fantasy*, 1–18; and Wald, "Terms of Assimilation."
 34. Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness*, 23.
 35. Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*, 124, 125.
 36. Balibar, *Race, Nation, Class*, 96.

2. Summoning the Invisible World (pp. 25–37)

1. C. Mather, *Invisible World*, 99. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
2. Armstrong and Tennenhouse, *Imaginary Puritans*.
3. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder*, 71.
4. Elliott, *New England Puritan Literature*, 181.
5. Kibbey, *Material Shapes*, 1–4.
6. Bercovitch, *Puritan Origins*, 18–19.
7. Cheeshateamuck, *Honoratissimi benefactores*, quoted in Hochbruck and Dudensing-Reichel, "Honoratissimi," 5.
8. I. Mather, preface to Rowlandson, *Sovereignty*, 67.
9. Armstrong and Tennenhouse, *Imaginary Puritans*, 212.
10. Wald, *Constituting Americans*, 7.
11. Rowlandson, *Sovereignty*, 11. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
12. Salisbury, introduction to Rowlandson, *Sovereignty*, 48.
13. Breitwieser, *American Puritanism*, 9.
14. Smith-Rosenberg, "Subject Female," 487.
15. Armstrong and Tennenhouse, *Imaginary Puritans*, 210.
16. Emerson, *Nature*, 7.
17. Bell, *Hawthorne*, ix.
18. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 11.
19. Terry Castle, *Female Thermometer*, 143.
20. Cagidemetrio, *Fictions of the Past*, 17.
21. Castle, *Female Thermometer*, 149.
22. Brewster, *Letters on Natural Magic*, 14.
23. Weeks, *John Quincy Adams*, 190.
24. Pease, *Visionary Compacts*, 49–80.
25. Hawthorne, "The Devil in Manuscript," 333.
26. Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance*, 633.

3. The Haunted American Enlightenment (pp. 40–46)

1. Carey, *American Museum*, 580, 216, 329, 79, 80.
2. *Ibid.*, 563, 474, 566.
3. *Ibid.*, 77, 414, 515.
4. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.
5. Ferguson, *American Enlightenment*, 496.
6. *Ibid.*, 496.
7. Ferguson, *Law and Letters*, 110–11.
8. Madison, “Federalist No. 10,” in Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, *The Federalist*, 53–62.
9. Carey, *American Museum*, 474.
10. Lewis Leary, *That Rascal Freneau: A Study in Literary Failure*.
11. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 57.
12. Morton, *Ouabi*, 38. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
13. Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*, 124.
14. Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*, 119.

4. “The Diseased State of the Public Mind” (pp. 49–60)

1. Brown, *Edgar Huntly*, 6. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
2. Grabo, introduction to *Edgar Huntly*, xxi.
3. Smith-Rosenberg, “Subject Female,” 491. Her exact words are “Fusion is confusion.”
4. Christopherson, *Apparition in the Glass*, 11, 12.
5. Krupat, *Ethnocriticism*, 5.
6. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 160–61.
7. Smith-Rosenberg, “Subject Female,” 481, 495.
8. Gardner, “Alien Nation,” 429.
9. Isaac Kramnick, “Discourse of Politics in 1787,” 15–16.
10. Christopherson, *Apparition in the Glass*, 156.
11. Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1.4.50–114.
12. Irving, “Philip of Pokanoket,” 1018.
13. *Ibid.*, 1014.
14. *Ibid.*, 1021–22.
15. Irving, “Traits of Indian Character,” 1011–12.
16. Woodworth, *Champions of Freedom*, 2: 336.
17. *Ibid.*, 2: 336.
18. Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables*, 358.

5. Contesting the Frontier Romance (pp. 63–66)

1. To avoid confusion, I will call the author Lydia Maria Child throughout this chapter, following Carolyn Karcher’s example. However, when she wrote *Hobomok* she was actually known as Maria Francis, after changing her first name from Lydia to Maria, and before changing her last name from Francis

to Child. To further complicate matters, she published anonymously, as “An American.”

2. Child, *Hobomok*, 13. Subsequent citations of *Hobomok* will be included parenthetically in the text.
3. Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 490. Subsequent citations of *The Last of the Mohicans* will be included parenthetically in the text.
4. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, 43, and passim.
5. Cooper, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, 404. Subsequent citations of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* will be included parenthetically in the text.
6. Karcher, *First Woman in the Republic*, 35.
7. Karcher, introduction to *Hobomok*, xxxv; Baym, “How Men and Women Wrote Indian Stories,” 73.

6. The Phantom Lovers of *Hobomok* (pp. 69–82)

1. Kelley, *Private Woman, Public Stage*, 182.
2. Lydia Maria Child to William P. Cutler, 10 July 1862, *Selected Letters*, 415.
3. Child’s attitude would change about this—in *The First Settlers of New England* (1828), she would write, “It is, in my opinion, surely wrong to speak of the removal or extinction of the Indians as inevitable.” Child, *Hobomok*, 153.
4. Lucy Maddox has written at length about the literary Indian removals that paralleled and supported the national policy of Indian Removal. See Maddox, *Removals*.
5. Eastburn and Sands, *Yamoyden*, xi, ix, xi.
6. Palfrey, *Review*, 480.
7. Lydia Maria Child to Rufus Wilmot Griswold, Oct.? 1846?, *Selected Letters*, 232.
8. Child, *Hobomok*, 12, 13. Subsequent citations of *Hobomok* will be included parenthetically in the text.
9. Karcher, introduction to *Hobomok*, xxi.
10. Slotkin, *Regeneration*, 142.
11. Karlsen, *Devil in the Shape of a Woman*, 36.
12. Karcher, *First Woman in the Republic*, 26.
13. Karcher, introduction to *Hobomok*, xxxv.
14. For a detailed history of Eunice Williams, see Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive*; for Mary Jemison see Namias, *White Captives*, 84–112, 145–203.
15. Karcher, *First Woman in the Republic*, 33.
16. Namias, *White Captives*, 182.
17. Clifford, *Crusader for Freedom*, 44.
18. Seaver, *Life of Mary Jemison*, 44.
19. *Ibid.*, 7.
20. The *Narrative* describes Jemison as intimidated, if not forced, into her marriage to Sheninjee: “My sisters told me that I must go and live with . . . Sheninjee. Not daring to cross them, or disobey their commands, with a great deal of reluctance I went.” However, James Axtell doubts the truth of this statement. He writes that “the weight of the evidence suggests that marriage was not compulsory for the captives. . . . Mary Jemison . . . was unusual in implying that she was forced to marry an Indian,” and “it is likely that she was less compelled in reality than in her perception and memory of it.” Critics

such as Arnold Krupat, Gretchen Bataille, and Kathleen Mullen Sands might suggest questioning the text rather than questioning Jemison's memory or perception; they offer critical discussions of the mediated nature of narratives such as Jemison's/Seaver's. June Namias also writes about "the cultural history of the Jemison legend." Seaver, *Life of Mary Jemison*, 44; Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, 193; Arnold Krupat, *For Those Who Come After*; Bataille and Sands, *American Indian Women*; Namias, *White Captives*, 150.

21. *North American Review* 15 (1824): 262–63.
22. *North American Review* 16 (1825): 87.
23. Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, 190.
24. Karcher, *First Woman in the Republic*, 26.
25. Spenser, *The Faerie Queen*, I.i.13.6.
26. *Ibid.*, I.i.14.9.
27. *Ibid.*, I.i.18.3.
28. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 10; Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 6; and Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 1.
29. Bell, *Hawthorne*, 11.
30. Freud, "The Uncanny," 249, 248.
31. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 364–65.
32. See Castle, *Apparitional Lesbian*, 62–63.
33. This moment has been remarked upon by a number of recent critics. See Karcher, *First Woman in the Republic*, 32; Maddox, *Removals*, 92–103; and Wald, "Terms of Assimilation," 68–71.

7. Cooper's Gaze (pp. 83–107)

1. Cooper, *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish*, 409. Subsequent citations of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* will be included parenthetically in the text.
2. Fiedler, *Love and Death*, 205; Tompkins, *Sensational Designs*, 114; Samuels, "Generation through Violence," 99.
3. Franklin, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 127, 244–45.
4. Castle, *Female Thermometer*, 184.
5. Sedgwick, "Jane Austin and the Masturbating Girl."
6. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, 43, and passim.
7. Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 472. Subsequent citations of *The Last of the Mohicans* will be included parenthetically in the text.
8. Romero, "Vanishing Americans," 115.
9. Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, 2.1.1–2.
10. See Ringe, *The Pictorial Mode*, and Nevius, *Cooper's Landscapes*.
11. Namias, *White Captives*, 118, 119.
12. *Ibid.*, 133. See also 117–41.
13. Drinnon, *Facing West*, 101.
14. Paine, *Common Sense*, 99.
15. Bergner, "Who Is That Masked Woman?" 78.
16. *Ibid.*, 79.
17. *Ibid.*, 79.
18. *Ibid.*, 80.
19. *Ibid.*, 80, 79.
20. Curiously, Thomas Cole's paintings of Magua, Cora, and Uncas on the ledge dress Uncas, and strip Magua—Cole's iconography is what the viewer

- expects—Magua is a naked, savage villain like the Indian murderers of Jane McCrea, while, Uncas, the hero, is fully clothed. This reversal of Cooper points out how startling Cooper's original figuration actually is. See Cole, *Landscape with Figures* and *Indian Sacrifice*.
21. McWilliams, introduction to *Fenimore Cooper*, 12.
 22. Cooper's source for the word is unknown. In *The Last of the Mohicans*, Hawkeye, Heyward, and David Gamut discuss the bird, using both "whip-poor-will" and "wish-ton-wish," and Gamut declares that "'Tis a pleasing bird, . . . and has a soft and melancholy note" (733). A number of critics mention that "wish-ton-wish" is the Caddo name for the prairie dog, but it is doubtful that Cooper intended to refer to the Caddo meaning (see Franklin, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 256).
 23. McWilliams, introduction to *Fenimore Cooper*, 12.
 24. Franklin, *James Fenimore Cooper*, 139.
 25. "Further Examination of Michael La Chauvignerie, Jun'r, 1757" in Samuel Hazard et al., eds., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 3 (1853), 306, quoted in James Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, 173-74.
 26. Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 214. (See Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, 172.)
 27. I intend this as a reference to Freud's *unheimlich*, usually translated as "uncanny," though a literal translation might be "un-home-y" or "unsettled."
 28. Williams, *The Redeemed Captive*, 179.
 29. *Ibid.*, 189.
 30. Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive*, 189.
 31. Stephen Williams, *Diary*, 3: 321, 324-25 quoted in Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive*, 189, 196.
 32. I have been told that some editions of *The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish* use "American" rather than "America" here. Those that I have examined use "America."

8. William Apess and Nathaniel Hawthorne (pp. 112-118)

1. Apess, *Indian Nullification*, 169. Subsequent citations to the works of William Apess will be included parenthetically in the text.
2. Paul Lauter et al., *The Heath Anthology*, 1886-72.
3. For Irving, see Murray, "The Aesthetic of Dispossession." For Cooper, see Ashwill, "Savagism and Its Discontents." For Douglass, see Weidman, "The Roots of American Oratory." For Melville, see Welburn, "Apess after Words."
4. O'Connell, introduction to *On Our Own Ground*, xliii.
5. See Clifford, "Identity in Mashpee." In addition, my own appreciation of contemporary Mashpee is based on a speech by Russell M. Peters, President of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council, "Culture and Identity of the Mashpee Wampanoags," delivered on April 26, 1996, at Dartmouth College. The speech described the tribe's strong communal identity, their recent restoration of the Mashpee Indian Meeting House, their construction of new tribal offices, and their long struggle for federal recognition, which would be granted in 1996.
6. See McQuaid, "William Apes, Pequot," and Nielsen, "The Mashpee Indian Revolt of 1833."
7. In the 1837 editions of the *Eulogy on King Philip* and *The Experiences of*

- Five Christian Indians*, the author changed the spelling of his name from “Apes” to “Apress.” Many scholars use the former spelling (Apes), which appeared in all the first editions of his work. However, Barry O’Connell makes a convincing case for using the latter spelling (Apress), which the author preferred at the close of his career (O’Connell, “Introduction,” *On Our Own Ground*, xiv, n. 2).
8. Jack Campisi, *The Mashpee Indians: Tribe on Trial* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), *The Hotel Attaquin*, illustration 78f.
 9. Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government,” 639.
 10. *Ibid.*, 637.
 11. Weidman, “The Roots of American Oratory,” 1.
 12. Hawthorne, “Main Street,” 1024. The “Squaw Sachem” whom Hawthorne describes may be based on Awashonks, leader of the Sakonnet (Wampanoag), or Weetamoo, leader at Pocasset (Narragansett). See Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 60; Bourne, *The Red King’s Rebellion*, 114–15.
 13. Melville, “Hawthorne and His Mosses,” 1158.
 14. *Ibid.*, 1159.
 15. Melville, *Israel Potter*, 573.
 16. Melville, *The Confidence Man*, 1001.
 17. Poe, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, in *Poetry and Tales*, 1179.
 18. Poe, “The Masque of the Red Death,” in *Poetry and Tales*, 490.

9. William Apress’s “Tale of Blood” (pp. 120–142)

1. Apress, *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Marshpee Tribe: or, The Pretended Riot Explained* (Boston: Jonathan Howe, 1835) in *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apress, A Pequot*, ed. Barry O’Connell (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 274. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
2. Treaty of Hartford, 21 September 1638, reprinted in Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, 340–41. “Pequot” has an alternate spelling, “Pequod.” Although Apress and most of his contemporaries (including Melville) spelled the tribal name “Pequod,” the conventional spelling at this time is “Pequot” (O’Connell, “Introduction,” *On Our Own Ground*, xiv, n. 2).
3. William Apes, *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequot Tribe; or, An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man* (Boston: By the Author; James B. Dow, Printer, 1833). Barry O’Connell, editor of *On Our Own Ground*, reports that some copies of the first edition were printed with the shorter title, *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians*, while others have the full-length title. All of the copies include five conversion narratives and the piece called “An Indian’s Looking Glass for the White Man.”
4. Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures*, 63.
5. O’Connell, “Introduction,” *On Our Own Ground*, xxxviii. Since the publication of *On Our Own Ground*, O’Connell has found Apress’s death certificate and reconstructed a plausible account of his last years.
6. Krupat, “Monologue and Dialogue,” 145, 147.
7. Apress, *Indian Nullification*, title page.
8. O’Connell, “Introduction,” *On Our Own Ground*, xxvii–xxix.
9. Apress, *Experiences*, 123.

10. In his recent book, *Born for the Shade*, Klaus Lubbers argues that it was one of the most important and common stereotypical conceptions of Native Americans. He attributes it to James Kirke Paulding, who describes an Indian orator saying to President Monroe: "The white man is born for the sunshine, the red man for the shade." Paulding, like Sedgwick and Cooper, presents the image ventriloqually, as from the mouth of an Indian. Apess cannot mouth the words. Instead, he reverses them (Lubbers, *Born for the Shade*, 5).
11. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7 (her emphasis).
12. Williams, *A Key into the Language of America*, 194.
13. Apess probably knew some Algonquian: in his *Eulogy on King Philip*, he recites The Lord's Prayer in King Philip's language. It is not possible to determine how much of the language he knew, or whether his knowledge derived from his own childhood experiences or from later research. He may even have read or studied Williams's *Key* itself; the *Eulogy* portrays Williams with affectionate familiarity. However, Narragansett and Mohegan-Pequot are distinct dialects of Eastern Algonquian, so if his knowledge of Eastern Algonquian came from his Pequot grandmother, he may not have been aware of the Narragansett use of *Michachunck*, or of the "affinities" that Roger Williams discussed. Although it is possible that he may have been unaware of the double and triple significances of the looking glass in some dialects of the Eastern Algonquian language, there is no reason to assume his ignorance (Apess, *Eulogy on King Philip*, 308).
14. Williams, *A Key into the Language of America*, 219–20.
15. *Ibid.*, 219.
16. Murray, *Forked Tongues*, 58.
17. Russell, *Indian New England*, 30; Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 829.
18. Melville, *Typee*, 255.
19. Jordan, *White over Black*, 51.
20. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 67, 65.
21. Douglass, "Letter to Thomas Auld," 139.
22. Sundquist, "Slavery," 1.
23. Freud, "The Uncanny," 224–25.
24. Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners," 130. "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" may have been a direct source of inspiration for Apess. Sereno E. Dwight's complete edition of Edwards's writings was published in New York in 1829–1830, and it seems quite likely that Apess would have been eager to read the works of the famed preacher who had spent seven years as a missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge.
25. Castle, *The Female Thermometer*, 149.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Philip was born around 1639, and died in 1676. He was the leader of a coalition of Native tribes that fought against the colonial governments in King Philip's War, the most devastating conflict ever to occur on New England's soil. See Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion*.
28. December 22 is celebrated as the anniversary of the Pilgrims' landing at Plymouth. This passage closely parallels a passage in *Indian Nullification*: "I think that the Indians ought to keep the twenty-fifth of December (Christmas) and the fourth of July as days of fasting and lamentation, and dress themselves, and their houses, and their cattle in mourning weeds, and pray to heaven for deliverance from their oppressions; for surely there is no joy in those days for the man of color" (O'Connell, *On Our Own Ground*, 187).

29. The most pertinent speeches of Webster's are: "First Settlement of New England," "The Bunker Hill Monument," "Adams and Jefferson," and "The Character of Washington." Webster, "The Great Speeches," 25-54, 123-35, 156-78, 339-46.

10. Haunted Hawthorne (pp. 146-156)

1. Quotations from Nathaniel Hawthorne's works are cited parenthetically in the text with the abbreviations *CE* for *Centenary Edition*, *N* for *Novels*, and *T* for *Tales and Sketches*.
2. Mitchell, *Witnesses to a Vanishing America*, 113.
3. For an overview of Jacksonian policies toward the Indians, see Wallace, *Andrew Jackson and the Indians*.
4. Bercovitch, *The Rites of Assent*, 207.
5. *Ibid.*, 241.
6. Maddox, *Removals*, 89-130; Bellin, "Apostle of Removal.
7. Alfred Weber, "Hawthorne's Tour of 1832," 1-23.
8. Baym, *The Shape of Hawthorne's Career*, 50.
9. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 256, quoted in Arac, "Politics of *The Scarlet Letter*," 247-48.
10. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 256.
11. See Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization*.
12. Arac, "Politics of *The Scarlet Letter*," 254.

11. Conclusion (pp. 159-168)

1. Seattle, "The Indians' Night Promises to be Dark," in Vanderwerth, *Indian Oratory*, 118-22.
2. Kaiser, "A Fifth Gospel," 509.
3. *Ibid.*, 516.
4. *Ibid.*, 512.
5. *Ibid.*, 522.
6. See Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures*, 56-57.
7. Bataille and Sands, *American Indian Women*; Brumble, *American Indian Autobiography*; Arnold Krupat, *For Those Who Come After*.
8. Silko, *Ceremony*, 14-15. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
9. Rand, "Surviving What Haunts You," 24.
10. Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures*, 78.
11. Jahner, "A Critical Approach," 218.
12. Ruoff, *American Indian Literatures*, 78.
13. Brodeur, *Restitution*, 107, 108.
14. *Ibid.*, 134.
15. King, *Pet Semetary*, 411. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.
16. Brodeur, *Restitution*, 134.
17. Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*, 522. Subsequent citations will be included parenthetically in the text.

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