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**Jennifer M. Nader**

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*Candidate*

**Department of English Language and Literature**

---

*Department*

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Gary F. Scharnhorst, Chairperson

---

Jesse Alemán, Co-Chairperson

---

Feroza Jussawalla

---

Gerald Vizenor

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**NARRATIVES OF HOSTILITY AND SURVIVANCE IN MULTIETHNIC  
AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1850-1903**

**BY**

**JENNIFER M. NADER**

B.A. English, St. Thomas Aquinas College, 1999  
M.A. English, Stony Brook University, 2002

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**English Literature**

The University of New Mexico  
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## **ABSTRACT**

In *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, Mary Louise Pratt coined the term "contact zones," which she defined as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination-like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (4). The United States of America has a dismal history of racially violent encounters between Anglos and indigenous populations, with other settlers, and those who immigrated there. Many of America's practices, policies, and historical events provide evidence of acts spurred by racism against non-Anglo groups, but evidence of this also exists throughout US media sources. Specifically, from the middle of the nineteenth century to its close, the majority of mass print media written by and controlled by the Anglo American population reveals an excess of discussion and debate regarding non-Anglo races, their places in Anglo society, and how to answer the race "question" of each non-Anglo group. Yet, while violent rhetoric encouraging racially charged mass murder from newspapers and novels dominated the Anglo publishing industry, several non-Anglo American authors used the Anglo publishing industry during the latter half of the nineteenth century to resist the dominant narratives

of the time. In effect, these authors challenge what Gerald Vizenor refers to in *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance* as the “literature of dominance” (3).

This dissertation considers minority author use of the Anglo publishing industry to respond to the lies and misrepresentations of minorities, racially charged events, and violent encounters printed regularly in newspapers, novels, and other forms of US print media, locally and nationally, with the aim of exposing and excoriating racially charged mass murders of minority groups. These authors achieved this goal both through newspaper articles and through the inclusion of newspaper articles in their literary texts in order to debunk the falsehoods perpetuated by the numerous Anglo publishers at the time, but also through the re-telling of events as minority groups saw and experienced them. In turn, I argue each text works to challenge Anglo readers’ apathy and willing acceptance of such misinformation by enacting various forms of survivance in order to repudiate the victimry that popular Anglo novels of the time depicted in order to perpetuate societal norms and expectations. This includes works by Charles Chesnutt, S. Alice Callahan, and John Rollin Ridge.

Finally, I look at Chinese American responses to calls for their extermination and forced deportation/exclusion throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. Chinese Americans went directly to Anglo-dominant yet friendly newspapers to refute the numerous fabrications many American newspapers printed. These include responses from Norman Asing (Sang Yuen), and Hab Wa and Tong A-chick, as they set the precedent for Chinese American response, as well as Kwang Chang Ling, Yan Phou Lee, and Lee Chew, several of whom wrote in response to Dennis Kearney’s extreme anti-Chinese movement in California.

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## **Introduction: Fighting the History of Hostility in Practice and Narrative**

The United States has a sordid past regarding racially charged mass murder, though there are few willing to acknowledge it.<sup>1</sup> When people do recognize racially charged violence in America, conversations transpire in hushed tones; if people are vocal, the result includes a largely disinterested, apathetic public.<sup>2</sup> Yet, America's racially violent encounters originate in initial encounters between Anglos with both indigenous non-Anglo peoples and other already present populations, including Mexicans in what is now California. These negative encounters traverse each contact zone within the United States and involve Anglo and non-Anglo people, and soon encompassed Anglo contact with newer groups who immigrated to America.<sup>3</sup> In many ways, the issue continues to persist in different forms today via institutionalized racism, hate crimes, hate speech, and racially charged violence. Many of America's practices, policies, and historical events provide evidence of acts spurred by racism against non-Anglo groups, but blatant evidence of this also exists throughout US media sources, from speeches to political cartoons, novels, pamphlets, films, and newspapers. Specifically, from the middle of the nineteenth century to its close, the majority of mass print media written by and controlled by the Anglo American population reveals a plethora of discussion and debate regarding non-Anglo races, their places in Anglo society, and how to answer the race "question" of each non-Anglo group. Considerable aspects of this discussion and debate are unpleasantly horrific at best, and helped not only reify racist ideology then (which continues now), but also justified and rationalized racially charged mass murder of minority groups during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

While some nineteenth century Anglo authors, like Helen Hunt Jackson, believed they approached these “questions” seriously and offered solutions and/or ideas via literature, a profuse amount of stereotypical, racially charged rhetoric designed to induce and perpetuate hatred, racism, and fear of minority individuals and groups exists in American print media sources. As this rhetoric found its way into the mass media, many Anglo dominant media sources, especially newspapers, sensationalized events involving violent clashes between Anglo and non-Anglo groups with the intention of making a profit. Additionally, the use of violent and hateful rhetoric from newspapers also found its way into numerous novels of the latter half of the nineteenth century. As a result, many Anglo American authors also included journalistic moments within their literary texts to portray minority groups negatively. These texts often justified the racially charged mass murder of a group, while many authors also included both real and fabricated newspaper clips to reinforce public attitudes on the group in question. Yet, while violent rhetoric from newspapers and novels dominated the Anglo publishing industry, several non-Anglo American authors used the Anglo publishing industry during the latter half of the nineteenth century to resist the dominant narratives of the time, in effect challenging what Gerald Vizenor refers to in *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance* as the “literature of dominance” (3). This is the argument with which I initiate my dissertation.

In this dissertation, I consider how minority authors used the Anglo publishing industry to respond to the deceptions and misrepresentations of minorities, racially charged events, and violent encounters printed regularly in newspapers, novels, and other forms of US print media, locally and nationally, with the aim of exposing and excoriating

racially charged mass murders of minority groups. I show how these authors achieved this goal both through newspaper articles and through the inclusion of newspaper articles in their literary texts in order to debunk the dishonesties perpetuated by numerous Anglo publishers at the time, but also through the re-telling of events as minority groups saw and experienced them. In turn, I argue each text works to challenge Anglo readers' apathy and willing acceptance of such misinformation by enacting various forms of survivance in order to repudiate the victimry that popular Anglo novels of the time depicted in order to perpetuate societal norms and expectations. This includes Charles Chesnutt's *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), a retelling of the events in Wilmington, North Carolina; S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema, a Child of the Forest* (1891), which includes a section on the events at Wounded Knee; and John Rollin Ridge's *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta: the Celebrated California Bandit* (1854), which considers Anglo violence against Mexicans in California. Finally, I look at Chinese American responses to calls for their extermination and forced deportation/exclusion throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, which differs from the other authors included in this dissertation. Instead of publishing novels (however problematic that term may be), Chinese Americans went directly to Anglo-dominant yet friendly newspapers to refute the numerous falsehoods many American newspapers printed. To show the Chinese American response, I look at several Chinese American newspaper pieces that span the latter half of the nineteenth century that were later included in anthologies or published as pamphlets and books. These include responses from Norman Asing (Sang Yuen), and Hab Wa and Tong A-chick<sup>4</sup> (1852), as they set the precedent for Chinese American response, as well as Kwang Chang Ling (1878), Yan Phou Lee (1887), and Lee

Chew (1903), several of whom wrote in response to Dennis Kearney's extreme anti-Chinese movement in California. Yan Phou Lee's memoir *When I was a Boy in China* (1887) not only provides Anglo readers with Chinese American representation, but also attempts to explain Chinese culture and its similarities to American culture for Anglo readers. I also show how Chinese Americans used newspapers to attempt pleas for tolerance and acceptance and never stopped fighting for this, even after they began publishing memoirs in the 1880s. *When I Was a Boy in China* (1887) exemplifies this, but also provides an intimate look into life in China, and its similarities and differences to America life, from social practices including birthdays, ghost stories, to parental love for children, as well as gender preferences in children and gender norms for women.

Just as the majority of scholars have largely neglected to comment on racially charged violence in America, even fewer have looked at the use of Anglo newspapers in general or within novels by multi-ethnic writers, or the connection of newspaper coverage and the incorporation of racially charged violence in the form of mass murder into novels. I argue that publishing via the dominant Anglo press allowed for minority space and presence, as well as a different representation than what Anglo authors would offer for readers. Thus, my dissertation offers an alternative but concurrent history for each act of racially charged violence and a counter-narrative to that of the Anglo perceptions of events.

As violent rhetoric stirred fear and hatred against non-Anglo peoples, Anglo violence against minority groups peaked. Repeatedly, Anglo media outlets rationalized these events as inevitable, justified, acceptable, and deserved. Literary texts were not exempt from this form of institutionalized racism and frequently perpetuated it. Many

literary texts reflect the often planned or organized violence incited by (but not limited to) an Anglo group whose intent was to devastate a minority group physically, economically, or culturally. In turn, violence came to minority groups via mass murder, terrorization, and vigilante justice. While these events found their way into Anglo newspapers and novels, several non-Anglo authors also worked to include real life events and the newspaper coverage the events received into the texts they wrote to reflect the violent acts these minority groups experienced to combat the oppression they faced and to provide presence in traditionally Anglo dominant space.

At the same time traditionally canonical novels by Anglo authors depicted the plight of a group but then depicted minority deaths as a necessary event for the good of the republic and a nuisance for the Anglo, a resistance of minority authors arose in opposition to the fabrications perpetrated by some members of the Anglo press and publishing industry. The texts I look at in this dissertation thus become equally as important as the traditionally canonical and popular texts: just as Anglo authors used newspaper accounts to make arguments in their novels, minority authors worked to contradict the narratives of hostility perpetrated by the Anglo presses in the novels they published. Thus, I argue each author in this dissertation offers non-Anglo groups voice and presence and in doing so enacts survivance while publicly condemning racially charged violence against minority groups.

While some authors used Anglo presses to fight back, others attempted to engage communities via the flourishing minority presses of the time in order to spread their messages and outcries against Anglo violence.<sup>5</sup> However, Charles Chesnutt, S. Alice Callahan, John Rollin Ridge, Norman Asing, Hab Wa and Tong A-chick, Kwang Chang

Ling, Lee Chew, and Yan Phou Lee differ from their colleagues here: in using the Anglo presses to fight back, they were able to reach a community they would not have otherwise reached had they employed the minority presses—the Anglo community. Thus, these minority authors offered counter-narratives of survivance after racially charged mass murder, presence instead of absence, and representation rather than a silenced or imagined one in spaces traditionally reserved for Anglo authors. The only difference in these authors and their stories is that while the newspaper references are historical, their novels do not necessarily include direct eyewitness testimony, and are not generally firsthand experiences. However, S. Alice Callahan’s inclusion of Old Masse Hadjo’s newspaper article is actually the testimony of a living Native American, and the Chinese American responses to maltreatment by Anglos reflect eyewitness testimony and firsthand experiences. I argue each author engaged in active agency by using the space of Anglo dominant newspapers directly or within texts to recreate accounts of the terror and horror each group faced due to extreme racism that led to racially charged mass murder to give representation for the minority group where there had been none before.

No geographical locale in the United States was free from explosive rhetoric in Anglo print media, but Anglo newspapers were most volatile in the west. Since many racially charged mass murders in the latter half of the nineteenth century occurred in the west, and because the news of what was going on came from the west via the telegraph, these newspapers and their articles become especially interesting when considering racial violence and the media coverage they received. In *Red Blood and Black Ink: Journalism in the Old West* David Dary avers, “[T]here was no clear separation between news and opinion in the early American west” (63). Dary also notes a select few editors or

journalists who often controlled what was printed (66). Even east coast newspapers, which shifted towards reporting factual events after Benjamin Henry Day, owner of the New York *Sun*, came to the realization that “his readers were more interested in factual news than in opinion” (Dary 66), still included opinion/editorial sections.<sup>6</sup> Many US media outlets printed propaganda and sensationalized tales in newspapers and pamphlets, which then found their way into novels, encouraging fear and hatred of non-Anglo peoples across the country, while simultaneously portraying non-Anglos as violent, malevolent, animalistic, and criminal, particularly in the latter half of the nineteenth century. While eastern newspapers shifted towards editorial sections for opinion, John M. Myers notes that “it didn’t matter to Western editors whether they owned a paper or not. If they were at the controls, they printed what they felt like writing” (*Print in a Wild Land* 4). As a result, untrue and misinformation regarding minority groups and individuals repeatedly found a way into newspapers there, as well as across the country, and racism strengthened as well as became more institutionalized.

### **Fighting Back: Minority Voices, Survivance, and Mass Print Media**

The role of print and mass media in mirroring or fostering public opinion across America during the nineteenth century is evident, as violent rhetoric in newspapers and novels regularly justified hatred and violence against non-Anglo groups of people. Furthermore, Gerald Baldasty notes the impact of newspapers was significant: “The metropolitan newspaper emerged as a force in American journalism during the nineteenth century” (*The Commercialization of the News in the Nineteenth Century* 49). Yet, more important than the use of media for negative purposes, with the circulation of newspapers in urban centers, and throughout the American frontier, rural areas, and small towns, is

the fact that a diverse group of Anglo and non-Anglo authors worked to disprove, challenge, and repudiate the prevalent Anglo representations of non-Anglos in print media.

Some championed specific causes, such as abolishing the convict labor system, while others worked to expose the mistreatment of minorities in general. Some Anglo integrationists, including Albion Tourgée, included numerous journalistic references to the mistreatment of African Americans in the South after the Civil War in his novels, especially *A Fool's Errand* (1879). Tourgée references specific journalistic “reports” of African Americans acting in allegedly criminal manners in order to expose the hypocrisy and propaganda of southern newspapers, culture, and illegal practices, but there are problems with the text. Tourgée was an Anglo attempting to represent non-Anglos to other Anglo readers, and the text is paternalistic, condescending, and includes racial stereotypes, even if this was not Tourgée’s intention.<sup>7</sup>

Minority authors also fought against Anglo narratives of hostility. Like Tourgée’s use of journalistic moments to portray the biases of some Anglo newspapers, Ida B. Wells repeatedly called attention to the issue of Anglo newspapers fostering hatred against African Americans by their publications of falsehoods. As one of the few who sought to expose the dominant Anglo papers for printing fabrications, Wells looked at the issue of lynching and boldly noted, “The Afro-American papers are the only ones which will print the truth” (*Southern Horrors* 70). Wells worked to expose what she referred to as “the Malicious and Untruthful White Press” (*Southern Horrors* 70), and she specifically referenced Memphis newspapers, the *Evening Scimitar* and the *Daily Commercial*, which published an excess of falsehoods regarding African Americans.



While focusing on lynching, Wells also disparaged Anglo newspapers for printing prevarications about race riots.

Alleged “race riots,” according to Wells, were an instrument Anglo newspapers used to place blame on African Americans regularly for something, anything, gone awry:

from 1865 to 1872, hundreds of colored men and women were mercilessly murdered... [for] being alleged participants in an insurrection or riot.

But... [no] insurrection ever materialized; no Negro rioter was ever apprehended and proven guilty, and no dynamite ever recorded the black man’s protest against oppression and wrong. (76)

Accusations of violent non-Anglos did not abate during or after the Reconstruction.

According to Wells, “Brutality still continued; Negroes were whipped, scourged, exiled, shot and hung whenever and wherever it pleased the white man so to treat them” (*A Red Record* 76), an event that would be replicated across the United States by Anglos towards non-Anglo Americans for decades to come. While Tourgée offers a horrified but condescendingly sympathetic, paternalistic Anglo depiction that includes journalistic references to lynching from Anglo newspapers in *A Fool’s Errand*, Wells offers a powerfully realistic African American outcry against lynching. Wells’ articles worked not only to disprove “the old threadbare lie that Negro men assault[ed] white women” (*Southern Horrors* 52), but also challenged the narratives of hostility most Anglo newspapers offered readers regarding African Americans. As an African American woman who witnessed events and experienced them first hand as well, Wells offers readers a different portrayal of events and a *widely published* perspective (she was well known throughout America and Britain), as lynching peaked across the United States.

There is a reason Wells attempted to use the Anglo presses: she acknowledged that African American newspapers often “lacked the means to employ agents and detectives to get at the facts” (*Southern Horrors* 70), which left African Americans without the same representation they might have otherwise had. I would add to Wells’ argument here, noting that using the Anglo dominant presses would allow her to gain access to an Anglo audience.

An Anglo audience did dominate the newspaper market at this point, though Baldasty argues the nineteenth century saw journalism “transform” (46). At this point, many newspapers claimed to have switched from being overtly political to holding a more neutral stance, yet Anglo papers still published pieces that specifically sensationalized events and vilified minority groups.<sup>8</sup> While many newspaper owners and editors of “yellow newspapers” like those of W. R. Hearst claimed that newspaper publication was just a matter of business, their goals included making a profit, and as Wells points out in several places, editors regularly invented sensational stories about African Americans to sell newspapers. Additionally, many Anglo “yellow” papers, including the New York *Journal and American*, the Chicago *American*, the San Francisco *Examiner*, and the New York *World*, claimed to be reporting the news and not politics. However, Baldasty notes that while editors printed their own biases, they also printed the whims of their newspaper’s owners, investors, readers, and advertisers, all of whom held political beliefs of their own, as well as biases, racial or otherwise (7).<sup>9</sup>

Anglo newspapers were not the only place authors sought to fight against fabricated narratives of hostilities against minorities. Like Ida B. Wells’ work and publications, Charles Chesnut’s novel *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901) also worked to

expose the perjuries perpetrated by Anglo newspaper editors. Focusing on the Wilmington “race riot,” and employing only minor changes to the events, such as reducing the number of people involved for the sake of simplicity, Chesnutt worked to tell the story from the perspective of those who experienced it. Chesnutt used genuine journalistic references to represent African Americans in Wilmington who faced discrimination, segregation, racism, forced removal, and racially charged mass murder in a town where Anglos singled out African Americans due to their race, economic success, and political power—but also due to Anglo fears of African American masculinity and sexuality.

Additionally, as many novelists in the late-nineteenth century began professional careers as reporters—including Frank Norris, Stephen Crane, Mark Twain, Theodore Dreiser, Willa Cather, W. D. Howells, and Bret Harte—Charles Chesnutt, John Rollin Ridge, and S. Alice Callahan followed suit and included journalistic references to what each observed in the novels they later wrote. They detailed the gross mistreatment of groups of non-Anglo groups, from terror to lynching and mass murder, specifically Mexican Americans in Ridge’s text and Native Americans (the Lakota) in Callahan’s. Chinese American responses to mass murder included the use of newspapers exclusively until Yan Phou Lee wrote his memoir, and even then, his memoir did not include anything negative about the treatment of Chinese Americans and rather sought to explain Chinese culture to Americans. In other words, Yan Phou Lee’s memoir was one that pleaded for tolerance and acceptance while showing how similar two seemingly disparate cultures could be.

The hard work of each of these authors did not always lead to stellar critical or commercial success or the correction of falsified news. More often than not, nothing changed in how the stories were told and retold, and they persist in their falsified forms even today. Dolen Perkins avers that fictive re-creations of events in such novels as *The Marrow of Tradition* can be very useful in that they challenge “official” records of events, but argues Americans do not tend to find counter-narratives as trustworthy as newspapers or historical records (38). Perkins may be correct in his assessment. Instead of looking as to whether or not a challenge of the “official” records of events will be effective, however (as it may well be a lost cause in America), I argue that considering the use of literature to provide accounts of events from the minority point of view offers a very different story. It is an ironic turn of events when considering people turn to newspapers for truthful representation of events and to novels to depict fiction and fictitious events, as literary authors have literary license to create the stories they desire. In turn, each of these texts offers a counter history that challenges the dominant narratives that continue even today.

Each of the authors covered in this dissertation published works either directly in newspapers, or via texts that included journalistic moments where they refer to newspaper articles, editorials, and letters. These journalistic moments tie into to then-current debates about each minority group while offering counter narratives to repudiate the dominant Anglo misrepresentations and stereotypes. In turn, I argue that each of these minority authors illustrates a form of survivance for the group they focus on, rather than victimry. I also argue these pieces and their journalistic moments provide presence in dominant Anglo space to groups who experienced silencing through violence, and that

publishing through the dominant Anglo press allowed minority authors to infiltrate from the peripheries of dominant Anglo American society.

### **Narratives of Survivance**

Survivance, as Gerald Vizenor coined the term in *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence*, is “more than survival, more than endurance or mere response; stories of survivance are an act of presence...[survivance] is an active repudiation of dominance, tragedy, and victimry” (15). Each text in this dissertation acts as a narrative of survivance that employs journalistic moments not only to portray acts of racially charged mass murder realistically, but also to present their experiences as each minority group experienced them, which often exists in direct contrast to what many Anglo media outlets published. Along with giving agency to those who experienced racially charged violence and mass murder, I argue these texts also work as a force fighting against the various journalistic narratives of hostility aimed in demeaning and silencing racial groups. In “The War Cry of the Trickster,” Alan Velie argues that the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee is an “important story in victimist Indian histories” (149), but I argue that the texts in this dissertation help to work against this theory by giving representation and agency to groups that “repudiate[s] victimry.” *Wynema*, for example, works to memorialize the events at Wounded Knee and helps expose what those who faced mass murder experienced, thus illustrate a form of survivance. This text, as well as the others in this dissertation, brings to the forefront new concepts of survival and survivance after racially charged mass murder while offering counter narratives to dominant Anglo perspectives. *Wynema* also gives attention to the problems the Lakota faced, as it includes journalistic moments to strengthen the reality of

life for the Lakota within its text, but also works to counteract the dominant narratives of propaganda printed in newspapers across the country while depicting survivance through Wynema's character. Though Callahan's focus in *Wynema* deals with the Lakota, land allotment, the breaking of treaties, and mass murder at Wounded Knee, and is generally known about, the record of events surrounding Wilmington, Eureka, and across California, as well as Chinese and Mexican American experiences in California, are still obscure for most people today. Still, each of the texts I discuss helps to provide agency while giving voice and presence in an imagined Anglo space to those who experienced racially charged violence. Each text's outcry thus acts as a form of survivance: viewing each text simply as one of victimry ignores or deemphasizes the fact that these texts offer representation in dominant Anglo space where they would otherwise face disregard.

### **Mass Murder, Journalistic Moments, and Novels of Hostility**

In the nineteenth century, while various Anglo American groups, state governments, and the United States government committed racially charged mass murder against non-Anglo peoples, the dominant American print/mass media market consisted largely of white readers who read various texts written by Anglo American authors. Often, these authors chose to write about events and non-Anglo peoples in a stereotypical or condescending manner, even if the author's ultimate goal was sympathy towards the group under discussion. In turn, these authors purposefully or inadvertently solidified and perpetuated these sentiments. Such is the case in many canonical and popular novels—Anglo dominant pieces of literature from the time, such as *Ramona* (1884), and *Hope Leslie* (1827). In these novels, the minority protagonists are sympathetic to Anglo audiences, and are even heroic, but either die, vanish, or suffer other horrible fates. Anglo

audiences both expected this and experienced a form of catharsis from the events, as the fictional fates of these characters reflected and even justified or explained reality.

Heroes, Terrence Des Pres tells us, often die in literature. In fact, the frequency is such that “the pattern is so honored and familiar that a connection between heroism and death seems natural” (5). In Western literature, Des Pres notes that the “highest reverence and highest praise for action which culminates in death...[while] the struggle to survive, on the other hand, is felt to be suspect” (5). Such is the normal expectation of the majority of novels dealing with race issues in the nineteenth century, especially when the text is written by an Anglo author and the protagonist is non-Anglo. Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* is a prime example. Alessandro, a Native American and the projected hero of the story, leads a good, virtuous, honest life, but dies after he is accused of horse theft—what he thinks is a simple misunderstanding. To allow him to survive would not only be suspect, but it would be symbolic of the survival of Native American groups. Though Jackson claimed to be sympathetic towards Native Americans, her portrayal of Native Americans is an imaginary one that ultimately lead to the further silencing and stereotyping of Native American groups. Though this was a popular literary occurrence in the nineteenth century, each text in this dissertation works *against* the idea of absence and a lack of representation and instead provides it along with presence in traditionally Anglo space.

Many novels contributed to this portrayal of non-Anglo peoples in the fashion of yellow journalism, but novels also included race debates, journalistic references, and depicted violent events.<sup>10</sup> Often portrayed as instigators of violence in print media, authors also depicted minority individuals and groups as deserving of the punishment of

death. Most famously, Anglo authors portrayed Native Americans in novels in this manner: James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* (1827-1841), Robert Montgomery Bird's *Nick of the Woods* (1837), Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie* (1827), and the Franklin County Historical Society's *The Passing of the Redman* (1917), all portray Native Americans accordingly. Bret Harte's highly contested "Plain Language from Truthful James" (1868) considers Chinese Americans sympathetically, but it was read as an anti-Chinese text that portrayed Ah Sin as a perpetual trickster, liar, cheater, and gambler. Other, forgotten texts, such as P. W. Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic* (1879), Robert Wolter's *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of Oregon and California* (1882), and Atwell Whitney's *Almond-Eyed: the Great Agitator: A Story of the Day* (1878), consider the "Chinese Question." Thomas Dixon's Reconstruction novels *The Clansman* (1905) and *The Leopard's Spots* (1903), along with Thomas Nelson Page's *Red Rock* (1904) and Tourgée's *A Fool's Errand* (1880), consider the "Negro Question," though unlike Page and Dixon, Tourgée presumed to be sympathetic to African Americans.<sup>11</sup> Texts like Harrison's short story "The Thrilling, Startling, and Wonderful Narrative of Lt. Harrison" (1848), many pieces in *The Democratic Review*, and various gold rush literary pieces consider the "Mexican Question." Although these Anglo texts (and numerous others) comment on race relations and racial issues in the United States, they offer a dominant, Anglo perspective and do not give presence to minority groups. Rather, these mainstream Anglo pieces offer stereotypical representations of minority figures who are vanishing or already gone, who face justified oppression because they are uncivilized, or worse, forced removal, relocation, or mass murder because of the necessity and desire for expansion, and economic repression. Very



few texts from this short survey of literature, perhaps only Harte's "Plain Language," Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* and *Ramona* (1881), and Tourgée's *A Fool's Errand* even remotely make the case for portraying minority groups positively, and even these are highly and easily disputed texts. Even more problematically, these texts express an imagined minority existence that is either romanticized or stereotyped both through the presentations of minority characters and the use of journalistic references from Anglo newspapers. Although one might argue that some of these texts give a form of presence to minority groups who would otherwise be absent, the portrayal is always already problematic as many based their ideas on racial stereotypes and nineteenth century pseudo-science. Moreover, none of these texts enacts survivance after a group experienced mass murder, and none offers actual realistic representation for the group of focus.

### **Historical Context**

The texts I consider for this project span various types of mass Anglo print media: newspapers, literary magazines, and fiction/historical fiction pertaining to racial violence from the middle of the nineteenth century until the earliest years of the twentieth. *The Marrow of Tradition* (1902) refers to the Wilmington "Race Riot" in November 1898 when white southern Democrats, who had lost to Republicans and Fusionists, strategically planned to "retake" the city in the next election. Between impassioned articles and speeches full of violent, fearful rhetoric and propaganda, the white supremacist Democrats succeeded in taking over politically in Wilmington and instilling white supremacist domain. At the same time, however, a bitter feud erupted between Anglo newspaper editors and Alexander Manly (the editor of the African American

newspaper the *Wilmington Record*), a feud that developed as a result of Manly's editorials in favor of interracial harmony. In "Lynching Coverage and the American Reporter-Novelist," Jean M. Lutes argues that articles of racial violence were rare in American journalism, noting, "Print culture in the US has a long tradition of suppressing the news of racial violence" (460), but I argue that Chesnut's novel (among others) helps to work against America's bleached history.

The day after the Democrats "won" the election in Wilmington, they worked to pass legislation that would require all prominent African Americans, including Manly, to leave the city. The Wilmington Democrats also aimed to shut down his newspaper, since he reported news that challenged the dominant Anglo point of view. In a planned effort, Wilmington Democrats then forced Anglo Republicans and African Americans out of the city by staging a riot. In "Charles Chesnut and the Epistemology of Racial Violence," Brian Wagner argues that the events at Wilmington were more in response to the growing and rising African American middle class that threatened white hegemony, which is a viable argument, but I will demonstrate how the cause is far more multi-faceted. Wagner also argues that Chesnut exposed the fact that the violence in Wilmington occurred to re-establish white supremacy, but I will also take this argument further. I will show that Wilmington's Democrats planned the riot not only to re-establish white supremacy, but drive African Americans, especially successful African Americans, *out* of the city permanently, through either forced relocation or murder, and disfranchise countless African Americans, simply because they were not white. Anglos murdered mass numbers of African Americans while they forcible relocated those allowed to live. Wilmington's Democrats especially targeted prominent or economically successful

African Americans and white Republicans in order to instate white supremacy and rule there. They targeted any African American who challenged Wilmington's white supremacy or leadership and if not murdered, forced to leave the city permanently. This happened especially to those with voting privileges. While it is clear Wilmington's Democrats strategically planned this racially charged act to re-establish white supremacy, the actual numbers of those who were murdered and forced out is unknown due to a lack of records. Yet the number is significant no matter if it was ten thousand, a thousand, or several hundred: in a small city, a group in power targeted another specific group of people who had no power.

S. Alice Callahan published *Wynema* in 1891, soon after the events at Wounded Knee. In *The Native Voice*, Michael Moreland refers to the events at Wounded Knee as a "media circus," as "in the months before and after the December 29, 1890, massacre at Wounded Knee, some 25 reporters from 18 newspapers and magazines filed stories from Pine Ridge Agency" (3). Moreland's description of events is correct, but what went on at Wounded Knee was much more than a media circus. While some papers did report accurately, many more Anglo dominant newspapers twisted the stories they printed up to the time of the "battle" at Wounded Knee, to spur fear, hatred, and violence against the Lakota, ultimately helping to perpetrate an extreme instance of racially charged mass murder against a Native American group. Moreover, several Anglo-run newspapers went out of their way to print propaganda portraying Anglos as victims of Native Americans, whom the newspapers portrayed as violent, religiously fanatical, and malevolent towards Anglos. As a result, the United States government sent out a military faction to surround

the Lakota and brutally gun down the group of several hundred young and older men, women, and children alike, including those who were unarmed and trying to run away.

Later, the United States government would refer to the events at Wounded Knee as an “act of war.” While Frederic Remington’s art in *Harper’s Weekly* reflects the beginning of the battle as the US soldiers recalled it, *Wynema* tells the story from an assimilated Native American point of view, offering commentary on the events and newspaper coverage. *Wynema*’s assimilation does not detach her from her Native American customs and culture completely, however. Instead, Callahan’s novel focuses on the theft of land, the forced famines, broken treaties, and brutal mistreatment of the Lakota to the point of mass murder. Yet, through all this destruction, *Wynema* and several others survive, marry, and carry on with their lives. While the text is problematic in many ways, Callahan not only includes Native Americans who survive, but she also directly includes an actual newspaper clip from Old Masse Hadjo, whose anger and frustration at Anglo America is readily apparent. Hadjo’s piece also attempts to explain to Anglo newspaper readers *why* relations between Natives and Anglos became so problematic in the first place. This inclusion is essential in offering a counter-narrative to the dominant pieces of the time.

John Rollin Ridge’s *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta: The Celebrated California Bandit* (1854) focuses on the regular lynching of Mexican Americans, as well as the violence, economic repression, and the general lawlessness that led to the regular vigilante practice of lynching in mid-nineteenth century California. According to William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb, the issue of Mexican lynching was not only grossly under-reported, but also purposefully omitted from newspapers. Yet, Ridge

makes mention of several newspaper accounts of both lynching and “reports” of the folk hero Joaquín Murieta as well as the violence done to Mexican Americans throughout California. Thus, Ridge offers a narrative of survivance and folk heroism for Mexican Americans who were the victims of Anglo hatred, vigilante “justice,” violence, and mass murder.

Carrigan and Webb also discuss definitional issues with the word lynching and assert that the lynching of Mexicans played a large part of western expansion/manifest destiny and conquest. I would add to his point by noting that Mexican Americans were the second most lynched group in America, a fact that is often unacknowledged or unrecognized. The main reasons for their lynching included their economic success, and the desire of Anglo groups to obtain more land through westward expansion and annexation. Mexican Americans in California lived in routine fear of Anglo vigilante practice, and as a result, they were unable to live comfortably. Then, when California became a state, Anglo vigilante mob violence not only continued, but Anglo American politicians worked to pass laws designed to drive Mexicans out of California and to steal their land from them.

While Murieta’s exploits are for personal and national revenge, the newspaper coverage and violence done to Mexican Americans by Anglo Americans shadow Joaquín’s movements and explains how and why he becomes the famous bandit. Joaquín’s (or the many Joaquíns, since there are at least five who have been solidly “identified”) exploits not only show a desire to fight back, but also display the desire for a physical response to their mistreatment, violent as it is. While many critics read Ridge’s text as a trickster text really written about Native Americans, I would posit that

one could make the same argument both groups. Both were grossly mistreated by Anglos, experienced regular, racially charged violence and murder, and were made to suffer physically and mentally because of the US government broke its treaties with Native American groups and Mexicans. Both groups sought representation, but were routinely absent from, misrepresented in, and ignored by the majority of Anglo print media pieces. In reality, both groups also faced racially charged mass murder. Ridge worked solidly to illustrate what these groups experienced using dominant Anglo literary space to achieve this goal.

Finally, also across California, especially in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a growing anti-Chinese American movement included Anglo mobs that drove many of Chinese Americans out of cities by force, fear, and mass murder for several decades until the Chinese were excluded from immigrating to America. In the 1850s, California's governor John Bigler sought to incite hatred of the Chinese. This hatred continued into the 1860s and 70s. In the 1870s, in Eureka, California, Dennis Kearney ran an infamous anti-Chinese campaign rooted in racism and fear carried over from the mines and California's early statehood days. Kearney's campaign ultimately led to the mass murder of Chinese Americans. Official records are sketchy, though together they reveal large numbers of Chinese Americans who were beaten, shot, and sometimes murdered, even if they agreed to forced relocation, and especially if they were economically successful. The novel *Almond Eyed: The Great Agitator, A Story of the Day* (1878) by Atwell Whitney echoes Kearney's calls for the extermination of the "job stealing Chinese" and anti-Chinese stance, though both Kearney and Whitney's "solution" to the "Chinese Question" claimed to be non-violent.

Initially employing friendly newspapers and later having pieces republished in pamphlets and books, Chinese Americans were able to reach a larger audience, one that was dominantly Anglo American. These writers included Norman Asing, Hab Wa, Tong A-chick, Kwang Chang Ling, Yan Phou Lee, and Lee Chew. Each worked to fight the messages of hatred, violence, and false information that plagued Chinese Americans in dominant Anglo print media. These pieces surround the debate of the Chinese in America (literary and otherwise) and offer a Chinese American perspective, refer to journalistic moments within newspapers and novels alike, and depict survivance while pleading for tolerance, acceptance, and peace within America's space. Like Mexican Americans in California, Chinese Americans, especially those who were economically successful, faced daily harassment, violence, and lived in constant fear of murder. The Workingmen's Party of California's slogan, "The Chinese Must Go!," clearly indicates a problematic stance, but it was not new when they adopted it: anti-Chinese sentiments began in California as soon as the Chinese arrived and continued for decades until they were legally excluded. Though this ostracism has since faded, the shunning Chinese Americans faced was especially intense in California.

### **Organization of Dissertation**

Chapter 1, "Voices from Within Wilmington: *The Marrow of Tradition*, Hostile Newspapers, and Charles Chesnut's Response," will look at Chesnut's *The Marrow of Tradition* as it offers a minority perspective in dominant Anglo space that functions as a counter-narrative to the dominant Anglo portrayals of minorities found in the majority of Anglo newspapers. *The Marrow of Tradition* is a historical retelling of the events at Wilmington in 1898 based on Chesnut's research and tells of the events at Wilmington.

This involved the use of newspapers to foster hatred, a near lynching, the terrorizing of African Americans by the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), known as the Big Three in Chesnut's novel, political assassination because of race, and racially charged mass murder of innocent African Americans simply because of their race and economic success. I also look at the use of the violent, racially charged rhetoric in the Anglo newspapers against Alexander Manly, the editor of the local African-American newspaper, *The Wilmington Daily Record*, and Manly's response to the harassment.

Chapter 2, "The Building of the Republic: Expansion at the Expense of the Indigenous Population and S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema, a Child of the Forest*," considers the 1890 mass murder at Wounded Knee, aimed at annihilating the Lakota with the idea of succeeding in a "land grab" for Anglo-American settlement. Surrounding this event was a journalistic media "circus" especially used to foster hatred via newspaper articles, though S. Alice Callahan's novel *Wynema, a Child of the Forest* works to undermine the narratives of hostility published in several frontier newspapers (and telegraphed to larger, metropolitan papers). *Wynema* is also a text of survivance, offering representation as it surrounds the events at Wounded Knee and refers to journalistic moments. I argue that what makes the text successful despite its many issues is that Callahan used dominant Anglo space to communicate her message.

Chapter 3, "The Borderlands of California: *Joaquín Murieta* and the Fight against 'Gringo Justice,'" considers the violence against Mexicans, their economic repression, and the general lawlessness of Anglo Americans under the guise of law in California. This led to the regular practice of lynching innocent Mexican Americans after the U.S.-Mexico war in the gold mines and throughout the state. I consider the



repercussions of these lynchings, especially the economic suppression of Mexican Americans. John Rollin Ridge's novel *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta: The Celebrated California Bandit* (1854) considers the problems Mexicans in America faced before and after the US-Mexico war, as Mexican Americans were the second most lynched group in America. Ridge makes mention of several newspaper accounts of the folk hero Murieta and the violence done to Mexican Americans throughout California through Joaquín's character, thus offering a narrative of survivance and folk heroism for Mexican Americans who were the victims of Anglo hatred and violence. Ridge's novel also displays a very different reaction to racially charged mass murder: unlike other groups who faced mass murder, the Mexican American response is violent, angry, and even sarcastic and mocking at times.

Chapter 4, "'The Yellow Peril': Chinese American Responses to Mass Murder throughout California" looks at the start of what became the "We have no Chinese" movement in early California. I consider the use of propaganda, misinformation, and nativism that led to a need for Chinese American responses. Chinese American responses included the use of newspapers and later books to plead for tolerance, acceptance, and non-violence. I use the works of Norman Asing, Hab Wa, and Tong A-chick to establish this argument. Then, in the 1870s, I consider how Kwang Chang Ling continued the fight against the same issues for Chinese Americans in Eureka, California, where Dennis Kearney's (in)famous anti-Chinese campaign threatened and enacted planned acts of violence against Chinese Americans. Lee Chew's experiences offer eyewitness testimony to the gross mistreatment of Chinese Americans by Anglo-Americans. Yan Phou Lee's "The Chinese Must Stay" as well as his "Graduating

Address” given at Yale College in 1887 not only surround the continuing debate of the Chinese in America, but also offer a Chinese American perspective, refer to journalistic moments, but also depict a stubborn but civil appeal to be a part of America, and in turn, enacts survivance.

## Chapter 1

### Voices from Within Wilmington: *The Marrow of Tradition*, Hostile Newspapers, and Charles Chesnutt's Response

"I say lynch a thousand a week *if it becomes necessary.*"  
Rebecca Latimer Felton to the *Atlanta Constitution*

"Go to the polls tomorrow, and if you find the Negro out voting, tell him to leave the polls, and if he refuses, kill him."  
Alfred Moore Waddell to North Carolina Democrats

Charles Waddell Chesnutt's novel *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901) retells the carefully orchestrated plot by North Carolina Democrats to steal political power from state Republicans and Fusionists in the rigged election of 1898 and of the racially charged violence toward African Americans that ensued. Yet *The Marrow of Tradition* does more: in it, Chesnutt accurately exposes the North Carolina Democrats' historically accurate strategic plan to *rid* the town of Wilmington's African American community through racially charged mass murder, especially those African Americans who were economically successful and politically powerful. Chesnutt renders the harsh reality of vigilante "justice," simultaneously exposing the problems that arise from sensational newspapers that embrace racist viewpoints propagated by Anglo authors, and depicts the growing issue of African American disfranchisement.<sup>12</sup> While many nineteenth-century literary texts focus on Anglo perspectives and actively participate in the erasure of the African American community, Chesnutt's novel provides African American perspectives offering voice and presence within the traditionally dominant Anglo space of the novel.<sup>13</sup> Concurrently, Chesnutt also works to undermine the narratives of hostility found broadly

across the country's dominantly Anglo newspapers and literary pieces regarding racially charged mass murder, the problem of lynching, and efforts to disfranchise the African American population.<sup>14</sup>

In choosing to illustrate the issues African Americans faced throughout the United States, Chesnutt could have set his tale in several other places. Efforts to disfranchise African Americans were rampant throughout the south, lynching was a national shame, and race riots continued to occur across the country.<sup>15</sup> Yet Chesnutt chose for his novel Wilmington, North Carolina, a recent hotbed of racially charged violence, and christened it Wellington. However, readers were familiar with the events and easily recognized the thinly veiled allusion. As he based the novel on historical events, Chesnutt elected to simplify the narrative for readers, and reduced the number of those involved in plotting disfranchisement and engaging in racially charged mass murder and lynching from nine to three.<sup>16</sup>

Chesnutt's novel works realistically to show how for a prolonged period these men encouraged violence and disfranchisement using propaganda planted in Democratic newspapers. Their use of media led to the incitement of fear, hatred, and ultimately fatal racially charged violence aimed against African Americans in Wilmington. In portraying events to Anglo readers, Chesnutt provides readers with several African American perspectives through the characters Dr. Miller, Watson, Sandy, and Josh Green, illustrating the fear and horror they experience in the face of mass murder, disfranchisement, and the threat of lynching before and during a planned political coup d'état. Though Green dies in the novel, readers feel the anxiety he and the African American community experience pertaining to the constant threat of lynching. Watson

survives but faces banishment from the city, and readers feel his bitter anguish at the forced banishment. While Miller survives and is allowed to remain in Wellington, readers experience each harrowing moment of his intense worry for his family and his own life, his reactions to seeing dead or dying innocent people, and his later guilt for having survived when so many others died. In doing this, Chesnut challenges the dominant narratives by publishing contradictory information to what countless Anglo newspapers published pertaining to racially charged mass murder in Wilmington, presented in the guise of a race riot, the national issue of lynching, and the disfranchisement of the African American community.

Preceded by a stolen election and a political coup, the Wilmington race riot of November 10, 1898, consisted of several events, including the encouragement of Anglos to engage in racially charged mass murder against African Americans—all inspired by the spin of the Democratic press and the Secret Nine (Big Three) in North Carolina. Ultimately, and most importantly, and unlike many authors of the time, Chesnut uses the literary space of *The Marrow of Tradition* to give voice, presence, and space to the African American community in Wilmington, which he juxtaposes with Anglo voice, presence, and space. While many local and national newspapers portrayed the events in Wilmington (and elsewhere) as justified, deserved, and inevitable, readers would not have had a reason to question what they read.<sup>17</sup> Chesnut undermines these narratives of hostility in *The Marrow of Tradition*. What makes Chesnut's work so important for this dissertation is that he not only was far advanced in displaying American issues of race realistically, but that he worked to give voice, presence, and space to African Americans in traditionally dominant Anglo space, and fought against regular Anglo violence against

the African American community. He also destabilized the countless negative Anglo narratives that depicted race relations and the events that took place in Wilmington. Indeed, this caused Chesnutt problems as an author, and specifically as a realist, even though Howells's cry for realism included fiction that did not "lie about life" and that realism should "portray men and women as they are, actuated by the motives and the passions in the measure we all know... [or] put on fine literary airs...[and that realism should] speak the dialect, the language, that most Americans know—the language of unaffected people everywhere" (*Criticism and Fiction* 244).<sup>18</sup>

Joyce Pettis asserts that Chesnutt's goal was to "effect a difference" (38), as well as to "illustrate the pain, loss, and grief that profound racial discord occasions" (44). However, as Chesnutt regarded these issues as "barrier[s] to the moral progress of the American people" (Brodhead 139-40), I argue Chesnutt's additional goals included bringing Anglo recognition to the horrors African Americans routinely faced. I also argue his aim was to expose and denounce sensational newspapers and the racially charged violence that African Americans regularly experienced at the hands of Anglos, from mass murder to lynching—an uncommon approach at the time. Jean M. Lutes notes that historically the topic of lynching found coverage by the "reporter novelist... extending from Mark Twain to Ernest Hemingway... comprise[d] almost exclusively of white men" (456). In covering the topics of racially charged mass murder and lynching, Chesnutt successfully crossed another set of boundaries, if inadvertently. Because he published *The Marrow of Tradition* through Anglo dominant Houghton, Mifflin & Co., many readers believed Chesnutt was an Anglo writer.<sup>19</sup> Chesnutt clearly knew he was crossing the color line by publishing with Houghton, Mifflin & Co and therefore knew

that he was using the dominant Anglo press to voice the horrors of lynching for the African American community as an African American.<sup>20</sup> An important factor resonates here: Ida B. Wells experienced vicious slander because of her race, but the public visibly viewed Chesnutt differently because he initially passed as an Anglo.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, as Lutes points out, “When emotion found its way into lynching reports, the horror was most often inspired not by the mob murder, but by the crime the victim was accused of committing” (459). However, Chesnutt’s inclusion of a near lynching is more emotionally charged because of Josh Green’s impending doom and an emphasis on his innocence—a break away from common portrayals and discussions of lynching. Chesnutt’s passionate, helpless, and tragic depiction of events reflects W. E. B. DuBois’ idea that “one could not be a calm, cool, and detached...while Negroes were lynched, murdered, and starved” (*Dusk of Dawn* 67), but Chesnutt still remained true to the tenants of realism. It seems fair that Chesnutt wanted his Anglo audience to have the same reaction. It is not a stretch to imagine readers sitting on the edges of their chairs dreading that not only would they have to read a ghastly description of a gruesome lynching, but also that it would be of an innocent, poor, uneducated but loyal servant. Ultimately, Chesnutt’s portrayal of events leaves his Anglo readers not feeling unlike the African American community felt at the hands of Anglo accusations that could lead to lynching: horror, terror, helplessness, and known innocence that makes no difference.<sup>22</sup> Regardless of geographical location, and regardless of racial views, Chesnutt’s book presents the race issue realistically and powerfully for all his readers.

Chesnutt was outraged after the events in the Wilmington. On November 10, 1898, he wrote to Walter Hines Page, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, that the events in

Wilmington were the result of “an outbreak of pure, malignant and altogether indefensible race prejudice, which makes me feel personally humiliated, and ashamed for the country and the State” (*Charles Waddell Chesnutt: Pioneer of the Color Line* 104). Chesnutt had expressed for years the desire to be a full-time author, and though he had been writing professionally part-time, he now had the opportunity to inform his readers and show them that problematic race relations were a loss for Anglos and African Americans alike. However, the results of the events in Wellington suggest that for as much as Anglos lose, African Americans lose far more. In the novel (and historically), white supremacists working through North Carolina’s Democratic Party murder and drive out Wellington’s economically successful African American community, while they murder countless other innocent African Americans in the streets and in their homes. The white supremacists allow a small population of uneducated African Americans to remain as long as they remain subservient to the Anglo population and as long as they agree to permanent disfranchisement. As a result, those African Americans who are not murdered or forced out of Wilmington face mandatory silence and an absent presence. Historically, this tore Wilmington’s bustling African American community asunder. Chesnutt displays this in Wellington’s events but then also uses the next generation to make an even stronger point. The young Dodie Carteret faces a life-threatening illness but lives, while Miller’s son dies because of the day’s events. In other words, the next generation of Anglos survives while the successful, educated, independent rising middle-class African American population in Wellington will be lifeless—erased from existence, as it were, and a lower, uneducated, voiceless, subservient servant class remains.



In his novel, Chesnut also contests what the majority of North Carolina newspapers printed, revealing a desire to discuss race issues in America at the time from a perspective other than a dominant Anglo one. This had been on Chesnut's mind for decades: twenty years earlier, in 1880, Chesnut had railed against "the unjust spirit of caste [in America] which is so insidious as to pervade a whole nation, and... a whole race" (Brodhead 139). Subsequent to the events in Wilmington, Chesnut had the seeds of a book that could exhibit this national problem, in that he could realistically portray the events in Wilmington; that is, he would recreate an actual historical event using the genre of realism to achieve his goal.<sup>23</sup> While he illustrates the rise of white supremacy through the Big Three, Chesnut also depicts the injustice of Jim Crow laws and the fragility of African American economic and political success. Chesnut also works to show how delicate African American life became when Anglos felt threatened. Additionally, Chesnut demonstrates how swiftly and easily white supremacists undermined successful African Americans and turned Anglos against them in a vicious example of racially charged mass murder. In referring to the conspiracy of the Big Three/Secret Nine to scapegoat the African American elite of the city and to murder, relocate, or banish them, Chesnut depicted how African Americans were at a clear disadvantage in Wilmington—something the majority of Anglo newspapers neglected to report and a topic often disregarded in dominant Anglo history and literature.

On March 16, 1880, Chesnut wrote in his journal of his ambitions to write a book of immense impact and popularity akin to Tourgeé's *A Fool's Errand* (1879) and Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852):

If Judge Tourgee, with his necessarily limited intercourse with colored people, and with his limited stay in the South, can write such interesting descriptions, such vivid pictures of Southern life and character as to make himself rich and famous, why could not a colored man, who has lived among colored people all his life; who is familiar with their habits, their ruling passions, their prejudices; their whole moral and social condition; their public and private ambitions; their religious tendencies and habits;—*why could not a colored man who knew all this, and who, besides, had possessed such opportunities for observation and conversation with the better class of white men in the south as to understand their modes of thinking*; who was familiar with the political history of the country, and especially with all the phases of the slavery question; —why could not such a man, if he possessed the same ability, write a far better book about the South than Judge Tourgee or Mrs. Stowe has written? Answer who can! But the man is yet to make his appearance; and if I can't be the man *I shall be the first to rejoice at his début* and give God speed! to his work. (Brodhead 125 emphasis mine)

Wilmington's events gave Chesnut the opportunity to achieve this goal—but more than this, he could achieve this goal as a minority writer *through* the dominant Anglo press. In writing *The Marrow of Tradition*, Chesnut could move beyond Tourgeé's paternalism, which Hardwig notes reflects the insidious nature of problematic texts that “attempt to resituate the way the white community defines and controls justice” (7). Hardwig's assertion, then, that though many scholars believe Chesnut wanted to emulate Tourgeé's (and Stowe's) writing, Chesnut “challenges the very tenets upon which Tourgeé's political and literary convictions rest” (6) holds true. Chesnut reveals power struggles

and race relations between the two communities, and he works to show that “as long as justice is handled by the white community, it will remain connected to white forms of power” (Hardwig 7). The results of the election and the racially charged mass murders in Wellington clearly reflect this issue, which Chesnutt uses to show his readers the need for change.

*The Marrow of Tradition* received mixed reviews upon publication—an issue I would argue is directly related to racism, both direct and institutionalized, that may serve as a partial explanation for the book’s low sales. Several reviews, in fact, likened *The Marrow of Tradition* to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a success for Houghton, Mifflin & Co., who had advertised the book as such.<sup>24</sup> Some took the book further than this: on November 3, 1901, *The Illustrated Buffalo Express* referred to the book as “an ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin’ under modern conditions—the conditions that have led to the cry of ‘no negro domination,’ to disfranchisement of the black man, to mob murder and race riot” (16).<sup>25</sup> However, reviews were split—often along American geographical lines as racial lines, though other times, reviewers found the book to be too shocking.

Some papers concentrated on the content but still praised the book, including the Boston *Sunday Herald*, whose reviewer wrote:

[T]he colored people have an advocate of their cause as it is presented in the southern section of the country today among the newer novelists developed in the present era of literature in the form of fiction. He is Mr. Charles W. Chesnutt, and he writes well... He has now attacked the race question directly as it operates socially and politically at the South in a story having the name, “The Marrow of Tradition.” *This appears to be based considerably upon what has transpired in*

*North Carolina, but it comprehends the social ostracism of the blacks in its general phases, and makes a strong showing of the wrongs and the dangers of the lynching practices of the South.* (16, emphasis mine).

While this reviewer regarded the book positively, he chastised Chesnut's blunt portrayal of race issues, noting, "[T]he effect of Mr. Chesnut's book would have been strengthened if he had been fairer to the representatives of the white race whom he selects to bring about the wrong wrought in his story" ("The Race Question in Fiction" 16). Indeed, Chesnut's white supremacists were too blunt for many whites. Even Howells acknowledged this feeling, as evidenced in his letter to Henry Blake Fuller when he wrote, "Good Lord! How such a negro must hate us!" (*Selected Letters of W. D. Howells* 274). Ultimately, the novel was so "bitter," according to Howells, that he could not fully endorse it fully and wrote a review to which many (including Chesnut) took issue. However, Howells' reaction does not display a supreme dislike for the book, as his sympathies for the African American community still show, even if his institutionally racist ideals prevailed (especially his ideas regarding how African Americans should write). Howells wrote in "A Psychological Counter-current" that Chesnut's work was in fact, bitter, bitter. There is no reason in history why it should not be so, if wrong is to be repaid with hate, and yet it would be better if it was not so bitter. I am not saying that he is so inartistic as to play the advocate; whatever his minor foibles may be, he is an artist whom his stepbrother Americans may well be proud of; but while he recognizes pretty well all the facts in the case, he is too clearly of a judgment that is made up. One cannot blame him for that; what would one be one's self? *If the tables could once be turned, and it could be that it was the black*

*race which violently and lastingly triumphed in the bloody revolution at Wilmington, North Carolina, a few years ago, what would not we excuse to the white man who made the atrocity the argument of his fiction?* (882, emphasis mine)

The idea of Anglos as stepbrothers reflects paternalism and racism, and is both present in the novels of Dixon and Page, but also the works of abolitionists including Stowe, Tourgeé, and Howells' own works. This is clearly problematic when considered and especially upsetting when Howells considered himself a champion of African American literature and writers.

As a result of Chesnutt's bluntly truthful representation of events in his text, many outright critiqued that he focused on issues of race. *The Country Gentleman* averred:

[W]e have to confess that we are disappointed. His workmanship, which was at least negatively good before, here seems to become positively bad; we were annoyed in almost every chapter by extraneous paragraphs, in which Mr. Chesnutt was evidently concerned rather to further the interests of his race than those of his story. One might almost fancy it a lot of clippings from editorials on the negro questions strung together by a few illustrative incidents and characters; so that one has all along a sense of having been trapped into reading a tract in the guise of a novel. (228)

Other critics were intimidated, unsettled, and anxious. The New Orleans *Daily States* claimed, "Charles W. Chesnutt has written a novel of undoubted intensity and of marked felicity of narrative, but it is a book utterly repellant to Southern sentiment, and one calculated to do infinite harm if, unfortunately, it should win favor among and impress

conviction upon Northern readers” (16 emphasis mine). The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* also reviewed the book negatively and called it “a distinct disappointment.” This reviewer noted:

[T]he author has taken rather a bad lot of white folks and a very good lot of colored folks and put them in situations in which the superior high-mindedness, generosity and nobility of the colored race are spectacularly pre-eminent. Nobody would deny for an instant that two such groups of people might be selected, in which the preponderance of virtues might well be on the side of the darker skins. The failure of the book lies in the fact that the writer’s so preoccupied with the ethical object that he utterly forgets both nature and art. All the characters, black and white alike, are mere puppets, marionettes, moved to one end. There is no vitality in them. . . It is conceivable that a race problem novel might be written which should be illuminating and convincing. It is very evident from “The Marrow of Tradition” that Mr. Chesnutt is far from being a big enough man to write it. It requires a big brain, and big heart and a vast amount of insight, as well as all the qualities of a novelist. (31)

Although Chesnutt had noted years before that his “writings would be [dedicated] not so much [to] the elevation of the colored people as the elevation of the whites” (Brodhead 140), editors and reviewers evidently did not understand Chesnutt’s goals, ideas, or portrayals of people. Ultimately, the reviews display a disjointed reaction to the book, especially as a work of realism.<sup>26</sup>

However, not all felt this way. Some, such as the Rev. Charles Alexander, who wrote for the Indianapolis *Freeman*, argued, “Few authors have dealt with the Negro

problem in such a fearless manner, and none have taken the pains to present all sides of the questions involved and in terms so emphatic” (2). Through numerous reviews, the book gained national attention and certainly encouraged a lively debate regarding race issues in the United States. More than this, though, Chesnutt spoke freely and truthfully about the state of race relations in the United States and offered Anglo readers perspectives from African Americans, who generally faced misrepresentation to Anglo audiences if not disregard, erasure, or complete silence. This in and of itself makes Chesnutt’s novel groundbreaking.

### **Narratives of Hostility in Wilmington and Wellington**

Just as Alexander argued that Chesnutt’s depiction of events in 1901 was fearless, Southern apologists made excuses, offered rationalizations, and argued that what happened in Wilmington was unavoidable, justified, long overdue, and even deserved.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, much of the literature and media sources written by Anglo authors reflects these sentiments. Yet throughout *The Marrow of Tradition*, Chesnutt resists these beliefs to show his Anglo audience the reality in Wilmington and across the United States. Several other race riots had taken place since the one in Wilmington, and countless other brutal lynchings across the country had occurred as well. While newspapers printed fabrications and justifications for violence and lynching, or avoided the subject whenever possible, Chesnutt’s work informed the Anglo reading public of the dangers and results of racial hatred, media baiting, and sensational journalism. He also illustrates or portrays how the North Carolina Democrats used media to steal an election, fostering violence to the point that Anglo citizens of Wilmington willingly participated in racially charged

mass murder, and then provides readers with African American perspectives of that experience.

Chesnutt especially endeavors to show the extreme, polarized Anglo viewpoint in Wellington through the crass and outspoken McBane, who without a second thought endorses brutal, cruel violence against African Americans. His reaction to situations involving any possible infraction on the part of an African American is to lynch or burn, regardless of innocence or guilt. This is the case with his reaction to Old Delamere's servant Sandy and his alleged murder of Polly Ochiltree as well as to Barber's editorial, an historical reference to Alexander Manly's editorial in Wilmington's only African American newspaper, *The Daily Record*. McBane tells Carteret, "Burn the nigger [Sandy]. We seem to have the right nigger, but whether we have or not, burn *a* nigger...[T]he example would be all the more powerful if we got the wrong one" (Chesnutt 182 original emphasis). McBane also suggests burning down Barber's office because of his infamous editorial, just as Alfred Moore Waddell had in fact suggested torching Alexander Manly's office.

Historically, Waddell began the "official" events in Wilmington by leading a mob to burn Manly's newspaper office to the ground because of Manly's progressive views on interracial relationships.<sup>28</sup> Manly's office was also especially symbolic in Wilmington as one of the apexes of African American success. Instead of burning down Barber's office (as Manly's was in the actual riot), however, Chesnutt has the "Big Three" burn down Miller's hospital, the pinnacle of African American success (and therefore of the African American middle class) in Wellington. Chesnutt expressed grave concern over Manly's situation on November 11, 1898, to Page (*To be an Author* 116) but did not make



Manly's office the pinnacle of success in Wellington. This leads to two reasonable conclusions: that Chesnutt was not writing a piece to attempt to gain sympathy for Manly, but rather wanted to show the extent to which white supremacists would go to secure Anglo dominance via racially charged mass murder, and that readers would be more concerned and horrified over the burning of a hospital than a newspaper office.

Although generally considered the real start of the events in Wilmington, the burning of Manly's office resulted from part of a long-planned act by the North Carolina Democrats in direct response to newspaper propaganda and careful planning. Already poised to retake the state politically, the Secret Nine jumped at the opportunity to use newspapers to solidify their plan. Newspaper editors began publishing articles and editorials designed to induce fears of "Negro domination," by printing headlines such as "Nigger! Nigger! Nigger!" (from the *Kinston Free Press*), and "Unbridled Lawlessness on the Streets" (from the *Raleigh News and Observer*). These papers worked not only to stir Anglo fears of "Negro domination" but also to propagate the myth of malicious African American men who threatened Anglo women's sexual purity, a subject Chesnutt directly attacks in his novel through Barber's (Manly's) character.

Historically, the center of this hostile newspaper propaganda campaign involved Rebecca Latimer, a Christian white supremacist speaker, and Manly, the editor of Wilmington's only African American newspaper, *The Daily Record*. In 1897, in Tybee, Georgia, Felton fueled racially charged violence against African Americans by claiming, "[I]f it takes lynching to protect women's dearest possession from drunken, ravaging human beasts—then I say lynch a thousand a week..." (411).<sup>29</sup> Following Latimer's call to lynch African Americans because they (allegedly) threatened white women's purity,

Manly responded through his editorial that African American men did not rape white women but rather had consensual relationships with them. He also confronted stereotypes of African American men by writing:

Every negro lynched is called a Big Burly Black Brute, when in fact, many of those who have been dealt with had white men for their fathers, and were not only not black and burly, but were sufficiently attractive for white girls of culture and refinement to fall in love with them, as is very well known to all. (1)

In *The Marrow of Tradition*, McBane's reaction to Manly's response here is one of heated anger, fueled with a desire to injure African American men physically. He wants others to participate in hurting Barber as well as other African Americans.<sup>30</sup>

In August 1898, the Wilmington *Morning Star*, a Democratic paper that defended white supremacy, reprinted Manly's editorial in an edited format. The paper's editor used Manly's editorial to evoke intense ire and indignation among Anglo readers in Wilmington. North Carolina Democrats printed carefully selected and heavily edited other parts of Manly's article to portray him as a "burly black brute" who not only believed racially mixed relationships were acceptable but who encouraged African American men to rape white women. While Manly did support interracial relationships, he clearly did not encourage rape. Chesnut made sure to reference the movement to discredit Sandy and the African American community as a whole, noting, "all over the United States, the Associated Press had flashed the report of another dastardly outrage by a *burly black brute*,—*all black brutes it seems are burly*,—and of the impending lynching [of Sandy] with its prospective horrors" (233). Chesnut neither directly quotes or nor mentions Felton's speech; he neither quotes nor reprints her speech as North Carolina

Democrats did in North Carolina newspapers, and he does not reprint Manly's response to Felton, though he refers in part to Manly's editorial directly and with purpose. As Chesnutt's readers and characters were already familiar with this newspaper battle, there was no need to reprint Felton's speech; just the hint to it within the text demonstrates it was already an ongoing conversation in Anglo communities.

Moreover, by the time Chesnutt published *The Marrow of Tradition*, reviewers and readers recognized the references to Wilmington's events, the campaign, and the racially charged violence that ensued. In replotting the events, Chesnutt accurately depicts the ideas of the Secret Nine/Big Three to use Manly's article to plant the seeds of anger, fear, and violence in white Wilmington /Wellington citizens. Belmont tells Carteret, editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, "You...represent the Associated Press. Through your hands passes all the news of the state. What more powerful medium for the propagation of an idea?" (82).<sup>31</sup> A composite of Josephus Daniels, editor of the *Raleigh News and Observer*, Thomas Clawson, editor of the *Wilmington Messenger*, and Henry Grady, editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, Carteret's character is most willing to oblige Belmont in his request.<sup>32</sup> Without the use and manipulation of newspaper outlets at the local and national levels, North Carolina Democrats never could have made such a strong or organized campaign against African Americans. In *The Marrow of Tradition*, it is Carteret, the Associated Press representative, who is responsible for planting the idea "of another dastardly outrage by a burly black brute" (Chesnutt 233), which is the ultimate catalyst for racially charged mass murder later masked as a race riot.

Because Manly's article was so explosive in the minds of North Carolina Democrats and shaped the behavior of the Secret Nine/Big Three, it is worth citing

Manly's original editorial from the *Wilmington Record* to see how Chesnut used it to give voice and depict the insidious nature of the conspiracy. Comparing Manly's editorial to what the North Carolina Democrats printed exposes the unethical practices of cherry picking, rewriting, and abuse of journalistic ethics. On August 18, 1898, Manly wrote, "A Mrs. Felton from Georgia, makes a speech before the Agricultural Society, at Tybee, Ga., in which she advocates lynching as an extreme measure. This woman makes a strong plea for womanhood and if the alleged crimes of rape were half so frequent as is oftentimes reported, her plea would be worthy of consideration" (1). While Manly attempts to note that rape is not the most frequent result of interracial relationships and that Mrs. Felton is mistaken in her viewpoints, he takes his argument to familiar territory: the accusation of Christians acting unlike Christ—an old but accurate argument regarding race issues and Christianity in America. Manly avers:

Mrs. Felton, like many other so-called Christians, loses sight of the basic principle of the religion of Christ in her plea for one class of people as against another. If a missionary spirit is essential for the uplifting of the poor white girls, why is it? The morals of the poor white people are on a par with their colored neighbors of like conditions and if one doubts that statement let him visit among them. The whole lump needs to be leavened by those who profess so much religion and showing them that the presence of virtue is an essential for the life of any people.

(1)

What Manly does next, however, is highlight the plight of African American women, who are at regular risk from white men. He argues:

Mrs. Felton begins well for she admits that education will better protect the girls on the farm from the assaulter. This we admit and it should not be confined to the white any more than to the colored girls. The papers are filled often with reports of rapes of white women and the subsequent lynchings of the alleged rapists. The editors pour forth volumes of aspersions against all Negroes because of the few who may be guilty. If the papers and speakers of the other race would condemn the commission of the crime because it is a crime and not try to make it appear that the Negroes were the only criminals, they would find their strongest allies in the intelligent Negroes themselves; and together the whites and blacks would root the evil out of both races. (1)

Manly's suggestion here is one of having both African and Anglos work together to root out any rapist, regardless of his race.

However, Manly's suggestion angered the Anglo community at large, especially when he wrote this:

We suggest that the whites guard their women more closely, as Mrs. Felton says, thus giving no opportunity for the human fiend, be he white or black. You leave your goods out of doors and then complain because they are taken away. Poor white men are careless in the matter of protecting their women, especially on the farms. They are careless of their conduct toward them and our experience teaches us that the women of that race are not any more particular in the matter of clandestine meetings with colored men than are the white men with colored women. (1)

While Manly suggests that all parties are guilty, his words would be used against him, cherry-picked, and incorrectly quoted purposely by the Big Three (and the Secret Nine). Though his words are misogynistic, what he wrote was also simply too intense for Wilmington's Anglo readers, especially after Manly averred that interracial sexual relationships not only were inevitable but consensual. Manly then moved to bring to light the results of these relationships—brutal lynching:

Meetings of this kind go on for some time until the woman's infatuation, or the man's boldness, bring attention to them, and the man is lynched for rape. Every Negro lynched is called a "big burly, black brute," when in fact many of those who have thus been dealt with had white men for their fathers, and were not only not "black" and "burly" but were sufficiently attractive for white girls of culture and refinement to fall in love with them as is very well known to all. (1)

After suggesting that Anglo women could and did enjoy relationships with African American men, he pleaded:

Mrs. Felton must begin at the fountainhead if she wishes to purify the stream. Teach your men purity. Let virtue be something more than an excuse for them to intimidate and torture a helpless people. Tell your men that it is no worse for a black man to be intimate with a white woman than for the white man to be intimate with a colored woman. (1)

Manly then railed against male Anglo sexual practices:

You set yourselves down as a lot of carping hypocrites in fact you cry aloud for the virtue of your women while you seek to destroy the morality of ours. Don't

ever think that your women will remain pure while you are debauching ours. You sow the seed—the harvest will come in due time. (1)

The lynching of African Americans did not need any encouragement, but Manly's response to Felton, though eloquently argued in parts, served as perfect fodder for North Carolina Democrats' plans to perpetuate fears of sexually violent African American men. Chesnutt was well aware of this and included references to the editorial throughout *The Marrow of Tradition* to ensure his readers recognized how much these editorials fueled racially charged mass murder in Wilmington and the call for white supremacy.

Chesnutt's inclusion of references to Manly's articles is significant because the Big Three use Manly's articles to fuel their campaign, just as the Secret Nine did as well. They selectively edited Manly's article, publishing only a small portion of his response to Felton, to perpetuate and encourage fear, hatred, and racially charged mass murder against African Americans. This is exactly what newspapers did historically. Though a single or even small republication of Manly's article might have incited only some readers, the Secret Nine/Big Three work to republish a skewed version of Manly's article numerous times before the election and events of November 10, 1898. This ensured that Anglo audiences saw and read it several times before the election. The *Wilmington Star* and *Raleigh News and Observer* were the first to print a cherry-picked and heavily edited version of Manly's article five days after it initially appeared in the *Record*. "Vile and Villainous: Outrageous Attack on White Women by a Negro Paper Published in Wilmington," ran the headline. The editors only included a small, cherry picked portion:

We suggest that the whites guard their women more closely, as Mrs. Felton says, thus giving no opportunity for the human fiend, be he white or black. You leave

your goods out of doors and then complain because they are taken away. Poor white men are careless in the matter of protecting their women, especially on farms. They are careless of their conduct toward them and our experiences among poor white people in the country teaches us that the women of that race are not any more particular in the matter of clandestine meetings with colored men, than are the white men with colored women. Meetings of this kind go on for some time until the woman's infatuation or the man's boldness, bring attention to them and the man is lynched for rape. Every negro lynched is called a 'big, burly, black brute' when in fact many of those who have been dealt with had white men for their fathers, and were not only not 'black' and 'burly,' but were sufficiently attractive for white girls of culture and refinement to fall in love with them as is well known to all. (3)

As this article represents a clear twisting and revision of Manly's editorial, Chesnut's Big Three act likewise when they reprint it with the goal of fueling anxieties about African American male sexual appetites.

Depicting African American men as rapists was pure propaganda. Glenda Gilmore argues that "available crime statistics show no appreciable increase in either rapes or 'assaults with the intent to rape' in either 1897 or 1898" (75), and Eric Sundquist notes that the myth of rape was "detached from...reality" (410), yet North Carolina newspapers were successful in perpetuating this myth to their Anglo audiences. Chesnut knew this, stating in *The Marrow of Tradition*, "Statistics of crime, ingeniously manipulated, were made to present a fearful showing against the negro" (238). As Chesnut further acknowledges, "Constant lynchings [have] emphasized [the African



American male's] impotence, and bred everywhere a growing contempt for his rights” (238), a statement I would argue he makes to display just how tense the situation is for his Anglo readers. While a fear of African American men existed in the minds of Anglos, Chesnutt works to show it is an imagined fear. However, the Secret Nine/Big Three and North Carolina Democratic Party worked hard to make people believe the threat was not only real but also implacable.<sup>33</sup>

Several local and national newspapers, including the *Raleigh News and Observer*, *Wilmington Messenger*, *Atlanta Constitution*, *New York Herald*, *Washington Post*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Richmond Times*, and the *Charlotte Daily Observer*, also printed cartoons and editorials against Manly, swiftly making him an infamous figure. Historically, Furnifold Simmons (one of the Secret Nine) bragged to Colonel Walker Taylor that Manly's article would make for an easy Democratic victory in North Carolina (qtd. in Umlfeet 64). Umlfeet notes that “Democrats made effective use of the article, with its implications of miscegenation and threats to white men's control over white women, black women, and black men” (65). Indeed, Chesnutt's Belmont and McBane agree with Carteret, that “the local negro paper [the *Afro American Banner*] is quite outspoken” and that Barber's editorial is “impudent” (85). They conclude, “[W]e must keep track of that; it may furnish us some good campaign material” (85), displaying how the Big Three put Barber's (Manly's) editorial to very successful use, just as the Secret Nine did.

Like Carteret in the novel, Daniels, Grady, and Clawson, along with the other members of the Secret Nine, succeeded in terrifying Wilmington's Anglo residents and encouraged the disfranchisement of African Americans.<sup>34</sup> On October 15, 1898, the *Wilmington Star* reprinted the article again with the headline, “A Horrid Slander: The

Most Infamous That Ever Appeared in This State.” The *Star* also made sure to have several Wilmington businessmen swear that the manipulated text was original and unaltered. Carteret declares Manly’s/Barber’s article is “Infamous—infamous!” (85), while McBane’s reaction is somewhat mild for his character. Instead of immediately calling for burning or lynching Barber, McBane argues, “The impudent nigger should be horsewhipped and run out of town” (85).<sup>35</sup> His obtuse nature and penchant for violence lead him to later conclude that the men should “lynch the nigger, break up the press [the *Daily Record* historically; the *Afro-American Banner* in Chesnutt’s work], and burn down the newspaper office” (86). Here, McBane plays out Waddell’s historical desired plans and calculated actions. Carteret, the “spokesmen of the campaign” (239), tells McBane and Belmont to delay reprinting Manly’s editorial, saying, “Gentlemen, I believe we can find a more effective use for this article” (85), which they should “reserve...until it is most effective” (88). When the Big Three finally reprint the article, just as the Secret Nine did historically, Chesnutt notes that the reprint

took immediate effect. It touched the Southern white man in his most sensitive spot. To him such an article was an insult to white womanhood, and must be resented by some active steps—mere words would be no answer at all. To meet words with words upon such a subject would be to acknowledge the equality of the negro and his right to discuss or criticise [sic] the conduct of the white people. (248)

In contrast to what the Democratic press printed in North Carolina, Chesnutt’s description of Manly’s editorial offers a voice of support for Manly—and the opposite of

Manly's misrepresentation within the dominant Anglo presses. Chesnutt also explains the reaction in North Carolina. Manly's article, Chesnutt points out, was

a frank and somewhat bold discussion of lynching at its causes. It denied that most lynchings were for the offense most generally charged as their justification, and declared that, even of those seemingly traced to this cause, many were not for crimes at all, but for voluntary acts which might naturally be expected to follow from the miscegenation laws by which it was sought, in all Southern States, to destroy liberty of contract, and, for the purpose of maintaining a fanciful purity of race, to make crimes of marriages to which neither nature nor religion nor the laws of other states interposed any insurmountable barrier. (85)

Chesnutt also explains to his predominantly Anglo northern readers the cause of such a heated reaction to Manly's article within the Anglo Southern community:

Such an article in a Northern newspaper would have attracted no special attention, and might merely have furnished food to an occasional reader for serious thought upon a subject not exactly agreeable; but coming from a colored man, in a Southern city, it was an indictment of the laws and social system of the South that could not fail of creating a profound sensation. (85)

Chesnutt's message is clear. He indicates that there are dangerous, life-threatening consequences for African Americans who become physical pawns in the butchered reprinting(s) of Manly's editorial. Not surprisingly, on November 5, 1898, the *Wilmington Messenger* reported that "some [Anglos] would welcome a little 'unpleasantness,'" because Anglos were now "prepared for it" (qtd. in Umfleet 58), a point Chesnutt does not fail to voice, as he notes the African American community's

“alarm at the murmurings of the whites, which seemed to presage a coming storm” (248). Here readers begin to realize the severity of the situation. When an African American male exercises the use of his voice, especially by means of written text, he is subject to the wrath of the Anglo community. It is of no matter that the action taken may not be an infraction, or how small the “transgression” he commits may be: if it angers the Anglo community, retribution is not only swift, but is unjust and terrible.

Just as Chesnut’s Big Three use newspapers to manipulate readers, North Carolina Democrats also used both local and national newspapers to fuel this campaign of hatred and encourage violence against African Americans. While the New York *Herald* claimed to be an objective, politically neutral paper by this point, it still published opinion pieces and editorials. On November 14, 1898, the *Herald* maintained that political corruption and abuse of power justified the events in Wilmington, which they argued was “outrageous” and a result of “black domination.” The Atlanta *Constitution* and Washington *Post* employed correspondents who were sympathetic to the Democratic Party’s position. As a result, readers of these papers would not have known the information presented was questionable, which makes *The Marrow of Tradition* all the more influential in shifting the conversation regarding race issues in America. At the local level, however, North Carolina Democrats owned most of the newspapers in the state and used them, including the Wilmington *Messenger* and the Charlotte *Observer*, to perpetuate hatred and encourage violence. Republicans, on the other hand, owned only a handful of newspaper outlets, and Alexander Manly’s *Daily Record* was the only African American newspaper in the state. While papers such as Manly’s were accurate in the information they provided, they simply did not have the circulation of other papers.<sup>36</sup>

In promoting the notion of “Negro Domination,” North Carolina Democrats continued to print numerous editorials, false articles, and racist political cartoons in service to the idea and practice of white supremacy. Prather writes that Daniels also published false stories of “corrupt and brutal black police officers” (“Centennial” 21), but the newspapers did not stop there. Some, such as the *New Bern Journal*, also printed tales of African American women who assaulted Anglo women simply because they could, with their freedom from slavery, economic success, and their belief that they were equal to Anglos. Gilmore confirms this, noting, “Local correspondents sent in reports of street altercations, of sassy black women pummeling innocent white women with umbrellas” (75), which Chesnutt refers to in the very first conversation the Big Three have. Belmont tells his co-conspirators in an incredulous tone, “Last night a group of white young ladies, going along the street quietly arm-in-arm, were forced off the sidewalk by a crowd of Negro girls” (33). While these events seem questionable at best, this kind of propaganda convinced white North Carolinians that there was room for fear, hatred, and justified racially charged violence against African Americans. Indeed, Carteret experiences a “thrilled...emotion” (33) at the news, knowing he can use his newspaper to manipulate events further.

Other newspapers, such as the *Raleigh News and Observer*, owned and edited by Josephus Daniels, fueled fears regarding the inevitability of racial clashes and violence with headlines such as “Is a Race Clash Unavoidable?” Republican and Fusionist papers fought back by publishing that a Democratic win in North Carolina would disfranchise African American voters. However, the *Wilmington Messenger* published this response: “The lie is so stupid that it could not have been started and repeated for the profound

ignorance of the niggers generally” (1). Though obvious propaganda, other papers, such as the Goldsboro *Daily Argus*, quoted this idea, which began a chain reaction in the southern Anglo community. People knew the introduction of literacy tests and other restrictions would effectively (and did) disfranchise African American voters, Democratic papers denied the plan’s existence. Daniels, according to Gilmore, “was perfectly willing to publish fabrications of ‘Negro atrocities’ on a daily basis” (75) and regularly did so to help fuel fear, hatred, and calls for disfranchisement. Beyond this, Gilmore writes, “Local correspondents sent in reports of street altercations” while “[Furnifold] Simmons and Daniels concentrated on stories about the eastern black-majority counties” (75), an occurrence Chesnutt notes in *The Marrow of Tradition*:

[They] provid[ed] various restrictions of the suffrage, based upon education, character, and property, which it was deemed would in effect disfranchise the colored race, an exception was made in favor of all citizens whose fathers or grandfathers had been entitled to vote prior to 1867. Since none but white men could vote prior to 1867, this exception obviously took in the poor and ignorant whites, while the same class of negroes was excluded. It was ingenious, but it was not fair. (240)

Chesnutt also faithfully reports the shift in power to the Democrats, and how “many white Republicans, deluded with the hope that by the elimination of the negro vote their party might receive accessions from the Democratic ranks, went over to the white party” (240). Most importantly, though, Chesnutt alerts his Anglo readers that Southern Democrats forced the grandfather clause into law by “fraud in one place, terrorism in another, and everywhere by the resistless moral force of the united whites, the negroes

were reduced to the apathy of despair” (240). For some Anglo audiences, this information might come as a shock, while for others it might be considered the status quo. Either way, Chesnutt works to inform and even correct misinformation regarding events in Wilmington for Anglo readers and depicts the despair they feel. In this manner, Chesnutt not only gives voice and presence to the African American community at large, but also works to undermine the narratives of hostility found throughout U.S. print media sources.

Beginning in August 1890, Daniels also hired the cartoonist Norman Jennett, who began a visual campaign fueling fears of “Negro Supremacy” that ran until Election Day. Jennett’s political cartoons included depictions of white men trampled by African Americans, as well as depictions of African Americans as devilish vampires who lurked over the city of Wilmington, ready and waiting to prey on white women. Prather observes that:

By the end of August, every available Democrat who could write was writing; every Democrat who could speak was on the stump; every Democrat who could ride was riding. They fanned out in all directions, riding the circuit day and night...through the news media, Chairman Simmons kept the public informed.

(59)

Chesnutt depicts this plan with the Big Three in order to illustrate how white supremacists viewed the campaign as “a righteous one” (82), as McBane refers to it. This effectively displays how the Big Three fall right into the historical story line. Carteret declares, “We must be armed at all points and prepared for defense as well as for attack—we must make our campaign a national one” (85), though when Carteret moves

to print the article, Belmont advises him, "Save it awhile longer" (135). The novel progresses into the subplots of several characters here, and all seems quiet until Sandy is accused of robbing and murdering Polly Ochiltree, a respected, if not well liked, elderly and wealthy Anglo citizen of Wellington.

While Chesnutt depicts the campaign to show "Negro domination" in full swing within the novel, he draws on the campaign to broaden his subplots of love and family but also works to expose the then-regular practice of lynching through the character of Sandy. In this subplot of the novel, Chesnutt works to point out the manufactured fears of African American men attacking white women and the African American experience of being falsely accused but indicted and declared guilty. Charged with robbing and murdering Ochiltree, Sandy faces an angry lynch mob, whose hatred and fear has been nurtured and encouraged through the *Morning Chronicle's* editorials and articles. Even when Old Delamere pleads for Sandy's life, he adamantly argues Sandy's innocence and avers Sandy needs "a fair hearing and an opportunity to prove his innocence" (212), Carteret asks him, "How can I do that?" (212). When Delamere tells Carteret, "You are the editor of the Morning Chronicle. The Morning Chronicle is the leading newspaper of the city. This morning's issue practically suggested the mob; the same means will stop it" (212), Carteret denies he can save Sandy from the public's judgment of him. This response depicts Carteret's true insidious nature toward African Americans. This interaction refers to an earlier conversation between the two where Carteret denies he is an enemy of African Americans, just as Waddell did (and later Thomas Dixon would do both in his speeches and in his pro Ku Klux Klan novels). Carteret tells Delamere, "You are mistaken in imagining me hostile to the negro. On the contrary, I am friendly to his



best interests.... I merely object to being governed by an inferior and servile race” (25). McBane argues, “All niggers are alike.... [T]he only way to keep them from stealing is not to give them the chance. A nigger will steal a cent off a dead man’s eye. He has assaulted and murdered a white woman,—and an example should be made of him” (181). Carteret merely believes “the whole race [i]s morally undeveloped, and only held within bounds by the restraining influence of the white people” (181). He concludes:

Under Mr. Delamere’s thumb this Sandy had been a model servant,—faithful, docile, respectful, and self-respecting; but Mr. Delamere had grown old, and had probably lost in a measure his moral influence over his servant. Left to his own degraded ancestral instincts, Sandy had begun to deteriorate, and a rapid decline had culminated in this robbery and murder,—and who knew what other horror? The criminal was a negro, the victim a white woman;—it was only reasonable to expect the worst. (181-82)

In responding to Delamere’s pleas for Sandy’s life, Carteret questions, “But where is the evidence [of Sandy’s innocence]?” (212).

After Delamere leaves, the conversation between the Big Three is revealing. McBane wants to lynch Sandy, but Carteret wants more. Pondering the situation, he notes:

This is something more than an ordinary crime, to be dealt with by the ordinary process of law. It is a murderous and fatal assault upon a woman of our race,—upon our race in the person of its womanhood, its crown and flower. If such crimes are not punished with swift and terrible directness, the whole white womanhood of the South is in danger.... Neither is this a mere sporadic crime. It

is symptomatic; it is the logical and inevitable result of the conditions which have prevailed in this town for the past year. It is the last straw. (182)

The Big Three conclude that this spectacle and possible lynching will be rewarding if reported in their newspaper. Belmont observes, “The crime itself will give you text enough for a four-volume work” (185). Carteret knows that he is fueling hatred and mistrust of African Americans. The Big Three misuse the press to convict Sandy without a trial. This is not unlike the Secret Nine’s use of newspapers to make Manly a villain to Anglo women, or, rather, another example of a “burly black brute.” After the events in Wilmington, Clawson later recalled that “For a period of six to twelve months prior to November 10, the white citizens of Wilmington prepared quietly but effectively for the day when action would be necessary” (qtd. in McKoy 63). Waddell also stoked the fires of angst in the *Wilmington Messenger*, noting, “The time for smooth words has gone by, the extremest [sic] limit of forbearance has been reached” (1).

Chesnutt does not ultimately allow Sandy to be lynched, despite Belmont’s assurances to the other members of the Big Three that Sandy “will swing for it” (182). Instead, he vindicates Sandy from the accusation of killing Ochiltree, a decision I would argue Chesnutt cleverly uses to achieve several outcomes. First, Chesnutt depicts the Anglo community in a nonhomogenous manner; that is, not everyone believes Sandy has committed the crime and therefore not all Anglos are depraved or immoral people to African Americans. This is an astute choice on Chesnutt’s part, as essentializing all his Anglo characters would alienate his Anglo readers. Second, Chesnutt shows that not all Anglos react the same way to the idea of lynching, and he shows there is hope for relations between the two groups. Third, by allowing Sandy to live, Chesnutt does not

horrify his readers, who might be appalled by a violent, gruesome, horrifying lynching, especially of an innocent man. This idea runs counter to many other texts from the same time period, where lynchings were popularly included and highly sensationalized—even some of Chesnut's writings include these types of scenes. Historically, lynchings were newsworthy. When advertised, people flocked to them, and reporters and photographers further encouraged spectacle sensationalism. Chesnut's depiction of events regarding Sandy is also a subtle suggestion for people not to rush toward mobs or practice vigilante justice because this type of lawless revenge is neither appropriate nor productive—that ultimately it is the work of uncivilized people. The Big Three do not agree, but Chesnut uses them to make this point apparent to readers.

Just as Sandy, to the relief of the reader, escapes lynching, Belmont asks Carteret, “What became of that editorial in the nigger paper? It lost some of its point back there, when we came near lynching that nigger; but now that that has blown over why *would n't it be a good thing to bring into play at the present juncture?* Let's read it over again” (242 emphasis mine). McBane concurs, exclaiming, “The time is ripe! *In a month we can have the niggers so scared that they won't dare stick their heads out of doors on 'lection day'*” (243 emphasis mine). McBane's plans here clearly reflect the historical October 15 reprint of Manly's article, as well as the Secret Nine/Big Three's plans to stage a coup d'état. Chesnut does not hesitate to make use of what the Secret Nine planned, noting the news was “highly sensational in its character, [and] had been displayed in large black type on the front pages of the daily papers” (233). In working to expose the hypocrisy of newspapers willing to print dishonesties, Chesnut shows his audience just how far white supremacists will go to attain power and insult democratic

voting rights in America and that newspapers support these endeavors via a lack of fact-checking. Chesnutt also points to the willingness of Anglos to ignore truth in favor of sensationalized news and to ignore African American presence and rights in favor of silence, erasure, or misrepresentation.

Upon the public announcement of Ochiltree's "murder at the hands of some person unknown, while engaged in the commission of a burglary" (178), the narrator notes that, "Suspicion was at once directed toward the negroes, as it always is when an unexplained crime is committed in a Southern community" (178). Chesnutt is careful not to denounce this reaction so as not to offend his Southern readers. Old Delamere also acts as a white northern reader might, and though Chesnutt portrays Old Delamere as an old Southern gentleman, he is not anything like the other Southerners in the story, such as Carteret. Chesnutt depicts Old Delamere as almost naïve in the matter of Sandy's accusation. He can neither understand why his word will not serve as an alibi for Sandy, nor can he believe the white Wellington citizens will not be moved to save Sandy. Old Delamere's reactions are much like the reactions many Anglo northern readers might have, and so it is essential that Miller explain what Old Delamere (and possibly Northern readers) should already know. Miller tells Old Delamere, "The case is prejudged. A crime has been committed. Sandy is charged with it. *He is black, and therefore he is guilty*" (199 emphasis mine). Sandy, jailed and petrified, tells Old Delamere he has not committed any crime, and Delamere pledges to have Sandy out of jail as quickly as possible. Saved from the impending doom of lynching, Sandy reflects an act I would argue Chesnutt includes specifically to make his Anglo readers feel better, or to show

them an alternative to lynching without questioning and without trial. The reality is that, historically, Sandy would have been lynched.

### **Novels and Narratives of Survivance from Wilmington and Wellington**

While the Anglo community speculates on what will become of Sandy, Chesnutt also depicts the tortured feelings of Miller, Watson, and Green, who offer commentary on African American experiences in Wellington.<sup>37</sup> While historically newspapers simply sensationalized the information if they even included it, or would simply falsify the information, Chesnutt's African American characters offer a unique perspective for Anglo readers in that they offer three African American voices, presences, and perspectives in dominant Anglo space. Initially, they present mundane information, but things change after Miller learns of Sandy's predicament. Miller's wife, Janet, is the catalyst for this change when she tells him "Old Mrs. Polly Ochiltree was robbed and murdered last night, and Sandy Campbell has been arrested for the crime,—and they are going to lynch him!" (187). Watson, Wellington's prominent African American lawyer, already knows about Sandy's precarious situation and brings Miller up to date on what is going on by showing him the evidence against Sandy published in *The Morning Chronicle* (187-8). Carteret's

[e]xtra edition...[gave] details of the crime, which was characterized as an atrocious assault upon a defenseless old lady, whose age and sex would have protected her from harm at the hands of anyone but a brute in the lowest human form. The event, the Chronicle suggested, had only confirmed the opinion...that

drastic efforts were necessary to protect the white women of the South against brutal, lascivious, and murderous assaults at the hands of negro men. (185)

While the two are discussing things, Josh Green comes and proclaims Sandy's innocence, telling Miller and Watson, "[Sandy] never done it, an' dey ought n' ter be 'lowed ter lynch 'im" (188), to which Miller responds in a bluntly political statement, "They ought not to lynch him, even if he committed the crime" (188). While Green can provide an alibi for Sandy, he tells Miller and Watson, "Dere ain' gwine ter be no chance ter prove nothin,' 'less we kin do it mighty quick" (188). Green's conclusion here is one that grips the reader and persuades the reader that Sandy is innocent but that his innocence does not matter. In effect, Chesnutt makes Anglo readers aware of the problem of vigilante mobs and the lack of fair trials that led to racially charged acts of violence and mass murder.

Though Miller believes the three should go and talk to "the principal white people in the town...so Sandy can have a hearing" (189), Watson knows the reality of the situation, and just as in real life, explains to Miller and Green (and Anglo readers), "It would n't do any good" (189). The conversation continues and highlights the plight of accused African Americans who were subject to Anglo lynch law. While Miller and Watson do not think they can save Sandy, Green's reaction is to fight the Anglo system. However, Watson quickly points out that fighting Anglo dominance and rule would lead to a "clash...and instead of one dead negro, there'd be fifty" (189). When Watson informs Miller, the *Morning Chronicle* "suggests a further" intention of rape on Sandy's part, Miller asks "is there anything to that suggestion?" (190). Watson's response allows Chesnutt to point out the issue with lynch law and alleged rapes of Anglo women by African American men. He coolly tells Miller, "it doesn't matter whether there is or not.

Merely to suggest it proves it” (190). Watson also presents the issues that African Americans face via sensationalized newspaper stories. He tells Miller, “*Nothing was said about this feature until the paper came out,—and even its statement is vague and indefinite,—but now the claim is in every mouth...a Negro has been arrested on suspicion,—the entire race is condemned on general principles*” (190, emphasis mine). Watson’s final comments are the most telling, as his remark displays the seriousness of the situation. He declares, “One of our race, accused of certain acts, is about to be put to death without a judge or jury, ostensibly because he is a negro, for *if he were white, he would not be lynched. It is thus made a race issue*, on the one side as well as on the other. What can we do to protect him?” (191, emphasis mine). After much discussion, the three conclude that Anglo laws will never favor African Americans, from the sheriff, to the “general government” or even the “President” (192). Watson, who knows law well, acknowledges “*the whole negro population of the South might be slaughtered before the necessary red tape could be spun out to inform the President that a state of anarchy prevailed*” (192, emphasis mine). Watson’s conclusion reflects what happened after the events in Wilmington, when there were calls for investigations. Gilmore confirms this, noting that C. M. Bernard, then U.S. attorney, was “‘not only ready and willing, but anxious to bring the perpetrators to trial’ but there was ‘no information reliable from any witnesses except from newspapers reports’ and Bunting and Melton’s letters” (87). Chesnut’s inclusion of this issue further helps him to portray the African American experience to Anglo readers and depicts the feelings of helplessness so many members of the African American community felt.

In a last-ditch effort to help Sandy, Watson attempts to sway Judge Everton, allowing Chesnutt to portray the dire situation of African Americans accused of crimes:

Judge Everton, who had always seemed to be fair...admitted that lynching was, as a rule, unjustifiable, but maintained that there were exceptions to all rules,—that laws were made...to express the will of the people in regards to the ordinary administration of justice, but that in emergency the sovereign people might assert itself and take the law into its own hands. (193)

Laughing at the suggestion of Sandy's innocence, Judge Everton tells Miller, "prejudice [for Sandy] has warped your judgment. The proof is overwhelming that he robbed this old lady, laid violent hands upon her, and left her dead. If he did no more, he has violated the written and *unwritten* law of the Southern States" (194, emphasis mine).

Miller laments, "There is seemingly not one white man in Wellington who will speak a word for law, order, decency, or humanity. Those who do not participate will stand idly by and see an untried man deliberately and brutally murdered. *Race prejudice is the devil unchained*" (194, emphasis mine).

In this subplot of *The Marrow of Tradition*, Chesnutt successfully depicts the plight African Americans faced when accused of crimes in the South. He also shows that just as the Anglo community jumps to act, the African American community also attempts to act, but their options were fewer, and any action taken is downright dangerous for all those involved. The history of the lynching of African Americans has been told repeatedly in recent years. However, Chesnutt, like Ida B. Wells, voiced the lynching problem to Anglo American readers at the turn of the twentieth century and thus served



as a voice for an embattled African American community—but he differed from Wells in that he used the dominant Anglo press to achieve his goal.

### **Plans for Violence in Wilmington and Wellington**

While Sandy is almost lynched, he is vindicated at the last moment. Nevertheless, the Big Three finalize their final plans to “wrest” the Wellington “government from the Republicans and their negro allies” (250), just as the Secret Nine did in Wilmington. Although the Big Three do not initially agree on how this will happen, violence and banishment of African Americans from Wellington is one solution they agree to, and each African American character faces different situations and has different reactions. Carteret avers he is adamantly opposed to any “premeditated murder” (250). McBane reassures him that “there will be no niggers hurt unless they strain themselves running” (250), while Belmont asserts that “in Central and South America, none are hurt except those who get in the way” (250). McBane even offers to pay to bury those who are killed. After the group concurs on action, however, Belmont’s words become chilling as they allude to racial cleansing. Belmont says, “While we are *cleansing the Augean stables, we may as well remove the cause as the effect. There are several negroes too many in this town, which will be much the better without them*” (250, emphasis mine).

This leads the Big Three to take final steps in planning mass murder in Wellington—like the Secret Nine did, the men list several other successful African Americans to target. Their list includes the lawyer Watson, whom they accuse of being “mouthy” and stealing business from Anglo lawyers, and an unnamed real estate agent (Chesnutt 251). The Big Three haggle over an unnamed port collector but finally decide, “We better not touch him” (Chesnutt 251).<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Wilmington was a major port city,

and an interruption in port business could affect Anglo businesses as well as African American businesses; the Big Three are well aware of this, just as the Secret Nine were. They also discuss plans to replace Wellington's Republican mayor and decide that, "Every white Republican office-holder *ought to be made to go*" also (251 emphasis mine). Historically, the Republican mayor of Wilmington was forcibly banished from the city with Waddell becoming the new mayor of the new Anglo-dominated Wilmington. While the Big Three readily agree that Barber is an abysmal man and must be forced out of Wilmington, they do not agree about Miller. Carteret, while he admittedly does not particularly like Miller, believes they should leave him alone, but McBane cries, "What's the use of all this hypocrisy, gentlemen?...We'll never get a better chance to have things our way. If this nigger doctor annoys the major, *we'll run him out with the rest*" (252, emphasis mine).

When the appointed day finally comes, Carteret tells his wife, "If you have any business down town to-day, transact it this forenoon. Under no circumstances must you or Clara or the baby leave the house after midday" (Chesnutt 273). This clearly shows that Carteret knows there will be violence in the town, and though he claims he does not want any violence to ensue, he neither can nor will not stop it. Either way, Carteret's passive-aggressive behavior is at its fullest in this scene in the novel. While Chesnutt changed the unraveling of events for dramatic effect, the events in *The Marrow of Tradition* clearly reflect the goals of the Secret Nine in Wilmington and include premeditated violence, racially charged mass murder, disfranchisement, and the banishment of a specific racial group—African Americans—forcibly from Wellington.

Chesnutt writes, at “three o’clock sharp the streets were filled with white men...[and] every passing colored man was ordered, by the first white man he met, to throw up his hands. If he complied, he was searched...for firearms, and then warned to get off the street” (274). Chesnutt notes that if

[h]e resisted any demand of those who halted him—But the records of that day are historical; they may be found in the newspapers of the following date, but they are more firmly engraved upon the hearts and memories of the people of Wellington. For many months there were negro families in the town whose families screamed with fear and ran to their mothers for protection at the mere sight of a white man. (274)

The day before the election, Waddell told a group of white Wilmington citizens, “Go to the polls tomorrow, and if you find the negro out voting, tell him to leave the polls, and if he refuses, kill him.” On the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup>, when Alfred Moore Waddell led a crowd of Anglo men to the offices of the *Daily Record*, it was to enact the set plan to set the office on fire and either lynch or run Manly out of town. In *The Marrow of Tradition*, Chesnutt notes that “the editor of the Afro-American Banner, whose office had quietly been garrisoned for several nights by armed negroes, became frightened, and disappeared from the town between the two suns” (249). Manly did escape, but this did not stop the crowd from burning down his office to make a statement. A crowd of two thousand angry white men ready to avenge white women because of Manly’s editorial needed little prompting, and shortly after burning Manly’s office, racially motivated mass killings began.

By the end of the afternoon that day in Wilmington, countless African Americans had been brutally gunned down or forced out of the city, and Waddell secured his position as the new mayor of Wilmington. Later, in Waddell's memoirs, he would note that J. Alan Taylor and George Rountree, both participants in the events, bragged that nearly a hundred African Americans were killed. Waddell, however, was certain that only a handful of African Americans had been murdered—he claimed in his memoir that “twenty African Americans had died” (243). Umfleet cites the number of deaths from Hayden's list “published decades after the riot,” but notes that some of Hayden's references were officially listed while others were not (119). Most importantly, however, Umfleet notes that “Walker Taylor reported 11 deaths but later estimated the murder at 20, [and] *that others contended that more than 100 were killed because the bodies were tossed into the river or buried in secret, and that additional claims ranged as high as 250 deaths*” (119, emphasis mine). It is telling, then, that Waddell suggested the Anglo community should “choke the Cape Fear River with carcasses.” Newspapers reported various low numbers. For instance, on November 11, 1898, the *New York Times* alleged that nine African American deaths resulted from Wilmington's race riot while the *Wilmington Morning Star* reported only seven deaths. The actual number of those killed in the events, however, is unknown, but it is plausible that a larger number of African American men, women, and children were shot and killed on November 10, 1898. According to Umfleet's research from newspaper reporting mostly within the *Wilmington Messenger*, the *Star*, and the *Dispatch*, officially, thirty-one African Americans were wounded and either died or their fate has been labeled as “unknown” (117-19). Official records were not diligently kept, however, and therefore are

untrustworthy and indicative of the assumption that many Anglos viewed African Americans as unimportant.

As for the number officially banished, Umfleet's research shows twenty-one people, but Prather notes, "Immediately after Waddell became mayor, a member of the Secret Nine gave Taylor a list of prominent Republicans to be *permanently banished* from Wilmington" (139). As these numbers do offer solid evidence of the banishments from Wilmington, they reflect a concerted effort of Anglos to relocate yet another racial group forcefully from one area to another. Watson, the prominent African American lawyer in the novel, explains to Miller:

The White People are up in arms. They have disarmed the colored people, killing a half a dozen in the process, and wounding as many more. They have forced the mayor and aldermen to resign, have formed a provisional city government *à la française*, and have ordered me and half a dozen other fellows to leave town in forty-eight hours, under pain of sudden death. As they seem to mean it, I shall not stay long. Fortunately, my wife and children are away. (279)

Watson further laments the specifically race-based situation in Wellington, noting, "Yesterday I had a hundred white friends in the town, or thought I had,—men who spoke pleasantly to me on the street, and sometimes gave me their hand to shake. Not one of them said to me today: 'Watson, stay at home this afternoon...'" When the race cry is started in this neck of the woods, friendship, religion, humanity, reason, all shrivel up like dry leaves in a raging furnace" (280).

After Waddell became the new mayor in Wilmington, the situation further deteriorated for African Americans living there. As an anonymous African American

woman wrote President McKinley, “the man who promises the Negro protection now as the mayor is the one who in his speech...said the Cape Fear should be strewn with carcasses.” From here, the African American characters in *The Marrow of Tradition* reflect the horror, fear, and helplessness that others felt in reality. Watson sarcastically tells Miller, “A committee are to call in the morning to escort me to the train. I am to be dismissed from the community with public honors” (280). While Green wants to fight against the Anglos who are “killin’ de niggers...like dogs” (281), Watson gives up. He asks them, “What is the use? The odds are too heavy. I’ve been ordered out of town; *if I stayed, I’d be shot on sight*” (281, emphasis mine). In the same anonymous letter, the woman told President McKinley, “*They tried to slay us all,*” and begged for help. She wrote, “The outside world knows one side of the trouble here, there is no paper to tell the truth about the Negro here or in any other Southern state...[P]lease send relief as soon as possible or we will perish...I cannot sign my name and live. But every word of this is true.”

While Watson’s family is safe and Green does not have a family to protect, Chesnutt depicts in the case of Miller the fear of being hunted down and killed. Miller’s search for Janet is agonizing; he knows the white supremacists are ransacking houses and killing African Americans, but he cannot find Janet or his son. Miller also knows that to show his face in town could lead to his being shot on sight. While searching for them, he meets Sally, who is hiding “under the kitchen sink” (286) and is so petrified she asks Miller if he is not “some w’ite man come ter bu’n down de house an’ kill all de niggers?” (286). Her panic is not dissimilar to Jane Murphy Cronly’s recollection of events, where she wrote of the Wilmington Light Infantry, who “searched every house in the

neighborhood. When they reached Hasley's, his poor little child ran in and begged her father to get up and run...*[T]he poor creature jumped up and ran to the back door in frantic terror to be shot down like a dog by armed soldiers ostensibly sent to preserve the peace*" ("An Account of the Race Riot in Wilmington, N.C., in 1898," emphasis mine).

The Wilmington Light Infantry was so awful in its presence and actions that Leon Prather notes, "Benito Mussolini had his Blackshirts, Adolph Hitler had his Brownshirts, and the North Carolina Democrats had their Redshirts" (Prather 83). It is not a mistake that Prather compares these men to fascists who engaged in derailing democracy in several ways. Miller's experience reflects this well as he is subject to searches several times and harassed by Chesnut's version of Wilmington's Light Infantry. While Miller believes the white supremacists will not hurt women or children, he eventually comes "upon the body of a woman lying upon the sidewalk.... [I]t was a fearful portent, however, of what [his wife's] fate might be. The 'war' had reached the women and children" (296). Miller's terror is evident, but he struggles onward in the hopes of finding his family.

Miller searches for several more hours and eventually finds his family, but he feels constantly burdened and plagued with the horrors of the events. Before he finds his family, he sees "the dead body of a negro, lying huddled up in the collapse which marks sudden death" (287). This causes him to "shudder, not so much at the thought of death...as the suggestion of what it signified" (287). He sees "the body of another man with the red blood oozing from a ghastly wound in the forehead" (287), and observes, "the negroes seemed to have been killed...at the street intersections, where the example would be most effective" (287). It is then that Anglos stop, search, and threaten him,

finally letting go, but not without warning him, “keep them out of the streets when you find them; and keep your hands out of this affair, if you wish to live in this town, which from now on will be a white man’s town” (288). When Miller comes upon a “groaning body” (289), he knows it is too dangerous to stop, so he keeps moving, though other search parties stop and harass him several more times. When he is almost home, “his eyes fell upon a group beneath a lamp-post, at the sight of which he turned pale with horror, and rushed forward with a terrible cry” (297). Like a survivor of trauma, Miller is “sick at heart” (291) over the events. Chesnutt writes of Miller’s horror at what he has seen: “never will the picture of that ride fade from his memory. In his dreams he repeats it night after night, and sees the sight that wounded his eyes, and feels the thoughts—the haunting spirits of the thoughts—that tore his heart as he rode through hell to find those whom he was seeking” (286).

The situation in Wilmington did not immediately calm down after Waddell and the “Secret Nine” successfully seized the city government, murdered countless African Americans, and forcefully relocated thousands more. Rather, things remained tense and dangerous for African Americans as the new white supremacist Democratic government took over. Chesnutt chose to end his story of Wellington/Wilmington with hope of a sort, though. Janet Miller advises her husband to go and help the Carterets (again) despite their despicable treatment of both Dr. and Mrs. Miller. Unlike the first time Dodie is in need of a doctor, when Miller is initially invited to help and then is rejected because of his race, the Carterets need and welcome Miller’s expertise this time to save their son. Mrs. Carteret begs Miller, “Pardon my husband’s sins” (325), and though he feels “deeply moved,” Miller acknowledges he has been more “deeply injured” (325) by the



events in Wellington. Miller initially wants to reject Mrs. Carteret's cries for help, but Janet implores him to go and help the Carterets, and when he arrives, they welcome the doctor into their home. In doing so, readers can see that despite the horrific treatment African Americans received in Wellington/Wilmington at the hands of Anglos, Chesnutt and African Americans are still not without hope for tolerance, acceptance, and fair treatment. While Miller's son, the symbol of the new African American generation, is not allowed to live, Dodie, the symbol of the new Anglo generation, survives with the help of the African American population. This event might provide readers with some optimism in that both races must work together to survive. However, it also works to show unsuspecting or naïve Anglo readers what has happened to the African American community in Wilmington and the United States.

While Chesnutt's book ends on a somewhat hopeful note, the aftermath of events in Wilmington were far less optimistic. The forced relocation of African Americans, the takeover of Wilmington by white supremacists, and the rise of segregation in a newer, harsher form, all ensued. This new form of segregation was immediately recognizable, and many condemned the events, though no major call for change was made. Ernest Lyon, a minister from Baltimore, published an editorial in the *Washington Bee* on December 10, 1898, where he argued, "No language could describe the barbarism of whites in Wilmington" (4). J. F. Click, the editor of *The Times-Mercury*, a Hickory, North Carolina, newspaper, also condemned events in Wilmington, noting, "God weighs men by what is in their hearts...not the party which they belong to" and that the Democratic campaign had "dishonored the church and damn[ed] men's souls."

According to Umfleet, local African American churches “looked for answers while white congregations rejoiced” (133).

Several scholars have commented on how things progressed after the racially charged violence of the “riot” subsided. According to Prather, “After the riot, they gave the middleclass blacks throughout the city twelve hours to get out of town” (148). Bentley and Gunning note that “in the weeks that followed, *fourteen hundred African Americans left Wilmington, many at gun point*” (398, emphasis mine). Gilmore avers that “six months later, prosperous African Americans were still departing by the scores in special rented cars attached to regular passenger trains going north and west” (86). John Hayle maintains that after Wilmington’s revolution, “Blacks could appear in public only with white escorts. Their persons and property would be subject to arbitrary searches, and they would be banished from the city if deemed undesirable by the new government” (208). He also notes that “The Reverend J. Allen Kirk, pastor of the Central Baptist Church, fled Wilmington on November 13 and later recalled that the white insurrectionists ‘intended to remove all the able leaders of the colored race, stating that to do so would leave them better and obedient servants among the Negroes’” (Haley 208). Waddell’s “White Man’s Constitution,” or “White Declaration of Independence” as it is sometimes referred to, announced to the citizens of Wilmington on November 10, 1898, that no African American person could ever be involved in politics again. Effectively disfranchised at this point, African Americans now had no power politically or economically, whereas before the election of 1898 they had been successful in these exercising these rights.

The Wilmington press also spread a clear message to the white Republicans who had been forcibly removed from office: “If they returned home to collect their belongings or settle their affairs, they would be killed” (qtd. in Gilmore 86). Magazines helped fuel white supremacy and published false accounts and retellings. *Collier’s Weekly* claimed that “ignorant as Hottentots...[African Americans in North Carolina had returned] back into the murderous moods of barbaric Africa.” Waddell claimed in the same issue of *Collier’s Weekly* that the Democratic election was the result of a revolution. He then further maintained, “There was not a flaw in the legality of our government. It was the result of revolution, but the forms of law were strictly complied with. There was no intimidation used in the establishment of the present city government” (5).<sup>39</sup> Waddell endeavored to circulate an account of events that portrayed the Southern democrats as orderly defenders of African Americans. In referring to the burning of Manly’s office, Waddell also published the following statement in his *Collier’s Weekly* interview:

We wrecked the house. I believe that the fire which occurred was purely accidental; it certainly was unintentional on our part. I saw smoke issuing from the top story. Someone said the house was afire. I could not believe it....

Immediately there were shouts when the fire occurred. “Stop that fire! Put it out!

This won’t do at all!” (5)

A statement of pure propaganda, designed to whitewash the events and to perform damage control for the Democratic Party in North Carolina, this statement works to debunk Waddell’s claims of innocence, chiefly through the character of Carteret. His passive-aggressive involvement to retake the state politically clashes with the reality. As Umfleet notes, William E. Henderson was “an African American attorney...[who]

recounted his experiences in the riot for the *Freeman*, an Indianapolis newspaper...[and] challenged claims of Negro domination of municipal offices and suggested that the reason for violence was Democratic lust for absolute power” (136). While Chesnutt does not physically describe Watson’s exile from Wellington, Henderson “was told to leave within hours” (136), just as Watson’s character experiences.

A number of scholars refer to the events in Wilmington as mass murder, while several others refer to it as political maneuvering. Many use the term “massacre” or “race riot,” and Prather argues a “racial element” (11) was present. Timothy Tyson and David S. Cecelski contend, “In recent years scholars have begun to lean away from [the phrase] ‘race riot’” (6). Bentley and Gunning rightly refer to the events in Wilmington as an “act of racial terrorism and political usurpation” (398) that was “not some freak event” (4). However, my position is that what happened in Wilmington is not satisfactorily described by any of these phrases. What happened in Wilmington was deliberate. It was a strategically planned coup involving racially charged mass murder by white supremacist politicians, with a media circus surrounding the events designed to spread fear among Anglo men of a racial “boogie monster” in Wilmington. The ultimate goal of Southern Democrats in North Carolina was to establish white supremacy by rule and law and to disfranchise African American voters but also to rid the city of the middle-class African American population by death or banishment. Though the number of African Americans remained high after the events in Wilmington, the African Americans allowed to remain were exceptionally poor and uneducated and therefore unable to rise up against the Anglo government there. As a result, Wilmington’s remaining African American community suffered extreme racism, segregation, lower pay or a lack of jobs, and a lack of rights for

years after, condemning them to a social and economic class comprised largely of servants and blue-collar workers.

In “Literature in Its Relation to Life,” Chesnutt noted that, “literature may be viewed in two aspects—as an expression of life...and as a force directly affecting the conduct of life....History is instructive, and may warm or admonish.” He then went on to add that “literature adds the faculty of persuasion, by which men’s hearts are reached, the springs of action touched, and the currents of life directed” (*Essays and Speeches* 114). He achieved this goal with *The Marrow of Tradition*. What makes Chesnutt’s novel so important then and now is his use of history to facilitate the discussion of racially charged acts of mass murder in American history. Not only did he faithfully retell the events of Wilmington but he exposed how North Carolina Democrats controlled the media and planned the act. Furthermore, he exposed the North Carolina Democrats’ premeditated plan to disfranchise African American voters and rig the election of 1898. However, just as he exposed the premeditated plans of North Carolina’s Secret Nine, Chesnutt does something Stowe, Tourgée, and others had tried but failed to do. He offers a predominantly Anglo audience and publishing industry an authentic African American voice and gives his Anglo audience a taste of the African American perspective and reaction to the events in Wilmington. Chesnutt challenged the dominant narratives of hostility found across the nation in print media and offered Anglo readers a perspective of those who experienced either murder or terror at the hands of white supremacists. He also offered a voice for those who faced banishment from Wilmington/Wellington forcefully by violence and the threat of murder.

## Chapter 2

### **The Building of the Republic: Expansion at the Expense of the Indigenous Population and S. Alice Callahan's *Wynema: A Child of the Forest***

“What did it mean to...bear the horrors of the moment...?” *Gerald Vizenor, Manifest Manners* (51)

In June 1890, the United States Census concluded that the population distribution showed there was no longer an apparent frontier border.<sup>40</sup> While those who supported goals of westward expansion and Manifest Destiny championed this as American progress, a lack of a discernible frontier border meant that little remained—only the space of government-sanctioned reservation land—to separate Anglos from Native Americans. A further result was that a lack of land now existed for Anglos to claim, which led to a demand for the release of reservation land for Anglo settlement. Congress' post-civil war creation of Native American (Indian) Reservations—communal lands given to groups or tribes of Native Americans as “partial compensation for lands ceded during earlier stages of westward movement of [Anglo] population” (Carlson 3)—was no longer a feasible option, as land was in high demand from Anglo Americans. Carlson notes that because by 1881 “Indian land under federal protection totaled more than 156 million acres,” that a “push of white settlers into previously unoccupied territory led to the demands that the relatively unoccupied Indian reservations be opened to white settlement” (3). As a result, Native American groups faced further land reduction through various methods, most famously the Dawes Act.

In 1887, Congressman Henry Dawes introduced the Dawes Act (also known as the General Allotment Act and/ or the Homestead Act) to Congress as a solution to the

lack of land available to Anglo settlers. The act allowed for the forced dividing of communal reservations into individual lots—one for each family—of 160-acres each, while “open[ing] remaining lands to white settlers” (Carlson 3). Dawes argued the act was to “civilize” Native Americans and teach them Anglo farming techniques forcing them to assimilate to individualized Anglo culture. Instead, the Dawes Act caused irreparable harm to countless Native Americans throughout the United States culturally, economically, and socially. Native Americans lost major portions of land even into the twentieth-century because of the Dawes Act. Just as the U.S. government had been largely responsible for the creation of reservations, they would now be responsible for the further dwindling of reservation land. Almost from the moment of reservation land creation, Anglo Americans and the United States government stole, redistributed, and acutely shrank reservation lands from Native American groups through various methods of fraud, legislation, intimidation, and racially charged mass murder.

This especially affected the land of the Lakota Sioux, whose people suffered staggering land loss due to the Dawes Act, even as Dawes argued allotment would help Native Americans at large.<sup>41</sup> According to Mary Johnson, as early as 1899 “the Commissioner of Indian Affairs reported to the Secretary [of the Interior] that the Indians of the Sioux reservation” wanted “their land surveyed so they could receive allotments” (qtd in Carlson 65) because the Sioux feared land seizure and forced relocation from unsanctioned Anglo settlement. Johnson notes that the Sioux knew once their land became “open to white settlers,” the settlers “would not respect their rights and would force them off their lands” (qtd in Carlson 65). In considering the events leading up to Wounded Knee, it is clear that racially charged mass murder ultimately took place—but it

is also clear that the events allowed for a final successful land grab of highly desirable land in an era when land was largely unavailable and in high demand. The Burke Act of 1906 solidified this, as it legalized what had already been happening for decades. The Burke Act led to “immense reductions in reservations boundaries...[at] Pine Ridge” so much so “that by 1910 the Sioux ‘cedings’ had caused transfers of entire counties, and wholesale intrusion of whites as land-owners” (Fenelon 224).

Though the Great Sioux reservation experienced division into several smaller reservations, including the Pine Ridge reservation, historical events at the Great Sioux reservation reveal a prolonged process of land theft, forced relocation, starvation, broken treaties, and promises to gain desirable Native American lands. Through this period, the Lakota faced decades of deliberate mistreatment, intentional starvation, forced relocations, continually shrinking lands, and then racially charged mass murder that decimated the Lakota Sioux population at Wounded Knee and opened up land for Anglo taking. The Lakota experienced starvation through non-delivery and theft of rations as well as through the supply of rations designed to keep the Lakota hungry. The Lakota were then forced to remain under penalty of law within borders of reservation land that the U.S. government allotted them. Finally, after years of heated debate and legal actions designed to devastate the population, the Lakota were surrounded by and then brutally gunned down by U.S. government troops. After Wounded Knee, the few Lakota who remained could not stop Anglo expansion onto their rightful lands. This racially charged mass murder assured that the United States could reclaim the lost reservation land as its own, ensuring that expansion could take place without further hindrances or difficulties at the expense of the indigenous population.



The myriad newspaper articles circulating in the Anglo press, however, reveal to readers a drastically different picture of the Lakota. The most prevalent messages presented to readers characterized the Lakota as violent, aggressive, angry, uncooperative, heavily armed, and ready to fight Anglos to the death for the most minor infractions. Nothing could have been further from the truth, and yet media outlets persisted in publishing these myths and succeeded in perpetuating and institutionalizing the racism that led to the killings at Wounded Knee. To combat the falsehoods regularly published regarding Native American culture, and those that helped foster the hatred that led to the events before, during, and after Wounded Knee, S. Alice Callahan began writing *Wynema: a Child of the Forest* (1891) to portray events in a very different voice. As she wrote of issues Native American communities faced, newspapers portrayed hostilities flaring between the Lakota Sioux and Anglo settlers, and then Wounded Knee happened.

By January 1891, however, many newspaper readers had been told a story radically different from reality regarding allotment and Wounded Knee, and Callahan recognized this. To combat the falsehoods regarding what led to Wounded Knee, Callahan added the final section of *Wynema* during the months just after Wounded Knee, which focus on the slaughter of innocent Lakota at the Pine Ridge reservation. Callahan wrote the novel to bring light to the situation many Native American groups faced as well as to give voice and presence to the Lakota in the space of dominant Anglo literature. Callahan saw *Wynema* as a tool to educate her audience about the atrocities committed by the U.S. government against all Native groups, especially the Lakota and Creek/Muscogee. This makes Callahan's text another example of a non-Anglo author

using a dominant Anglo press to give voice, presence, and space to a group whose history includes a dearth of all three.

Callahan, as a Creek/Muscogee Native American, the editor of *Our Brother in Red*, a Methodist journal, and a teacher in Muskogee, Oklahoma, was familiar with the issues faced by several groups of Native Americans.<sup>42</sup> Given her characters, plot, and heavy Christian overtones, it is likely that Callahan wrote *Wynema* for a female Anglo Christian audience to plead for sympathy, tolerance, and understanding toward Native Americans in general, if not specifically for the Lakota Sioux or the Creek/ Muscogee.<sup>43</sup> However, with her inclusion of Muscogee cultural traditions and practices, it seems likely Callahan wanted to enlighten her Anglo audience regarding cultural practices such as the Busk dance. More than this, though, it is likely she wanted to correct her Anglo readers' notions regarding Native American groups and cultures, which she achieves through Genevieve's character. Additionally, the presence of well-meaning and well-behaving Christians indicates the author may have written the book as a manual explaining how Christians should act toward Native groups in their attempts to convert them. These actions clearly included the correcting of racist ideas, institutionalized or not, and encouraged understanding and tolerance to combat the racism and intolerance regularly present within U.S. print media sources. In the end, it is acceptance and respect for other cultures and customs that Callahan's book calls for.

Callahan dedicated the book "to the Indian tribes of North America who...felt the wrongs and oppression of their pale-faced brothers" (Ruoff V) and was successful in relaying her message, if only for a short period. Annette Van Dyke notes that Callahan's father recalled *Wynema* "had a great run for a year or so, after it was placed on the

market” (123). Though A. LaVonne Ruoff notes “newspapers in Oklahoma and Chicago...ignored the book” (xvii), in December 1891, the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* recommended it, and in 1894, Ohio’s *The Bookseller’s Friend*, New York’s *Publisher’s Weekly* and the *Annual American Catalogue* mentioned it. Additionally, the book received international recognition, as Australia’s *Torch and Colonial Book Circular* mentioned *Wynema* upon publication.<sup>44</sup> Yet the book’s lack of popularity is not necessarily surprising. H. J. Smith and Co. was a small publishing house with a limited advertising budget. It also is possible many readers were not interested or did not know about the book, even though the book received notice in several east coast publications well after its initial publication.

Most media outlets could easily ignore the book: Callahan was a non-Anglo, unknown female author with no previous publishing history. It is possible that readership of *Wynema* was diminished by Helen Hunt Jackson’s success with *Ramona*, a similar story published seven years earlier. It is conceivable that Anglo readers had tired of the topic or were disinterested in Callahan’s use of fiction to depict current events. Dolen Perkins has argued that fictive re-creations of events can be useful in that they challenge “official” records of events, which *Wynema* clearly does in several areas, but Perkins also declares that, ironically, Americans do not tend to find counter-narratives as trustworthy as newspapers or historical records (39). All of these factors might not have been enough to keep readers interested. In any event, the text lapsed from print for a century. Nevertheless, in considering the text and how its readers would have perceived it in 1891, Callahan’s inclusion of Anglo newspapers helps to make *Wynema* a powerful outcry against untruthful or fabricated newspaper articles and historical acts, from allotment to

Wounded Knee. Beyond this, *Wynema* challenges dominant Anglo texts and U.S. print sources pertaining to the subject of Native Americans at large and undermines the narratives of hostility they perpetuated that led to racially charged mass murder on more than one occasion.

Callahan's highly romantic and sentimental text features two protagonists: Wynema Harjo, a young Creek/Muscogee woman who assimilates to Anglo Christian life as a child, and Genevieve Weir, an Anglo Methodist who first is Wynema's teacher, later her friend, and finally her sister-in-law. The book follows their lives, and while Wynema is the titular character, Genevieve is the more prominent figure than Wynema is, as Callahan's projected Methodist female audience would have expected an Anglo protagonist with whom they could easily identify. The text covers the span of Wynema's life, from adolescence to adulthood, with Genevieve present throughout. In historical terms, *Wynema* begins in the 1870s with the debate over allotment and the Dawes Act of 1887 and ends after the events at Wounded Knee in December 1890. This makes Callahan's use of Genevieve and Wynema as foils to express what she really wanted to write about: the wrongdoings of the U.S. government and its Indian agents to the Muscogee and Lakota as well as the violent outcomes of institutionalized racism and hatred. Wounded Knee's events reveal racially charged mass murder, and while the bulk of the public largely did not react negatively to the events, and in some cases applauded them, in *Wynema*, Callahan worked to show the viewpoints and reactions of the Lakota and Muscogee.

The text is not without serious flaws that make it difficult for modern readers. Siobhan Senier's descriptions of Genevieve's shortcomings as a character are numerous.

Senier describes Genevieve as the classic Anglo woman who “makes Indigenous customs seem repugnant” (423). However, I argue that in aiming to influence readers, Callahan depicts Genevieve just as many Anglo women from the nineteenth century would have been: callow, unworldly, racist (both overtly and subtly), and ethnocentric.<sup>45</sup> In other words, Genevieve is initially a woman who inadvertently suffers from blindly following and perpetuating institutionalized racism that results from Anglo ethnocentrism. Moreover, Genevieve comes from the American South, stereotypically a racially problematic environment where non-Anglos and their customs would be considered “repugnant” by many.

Yet, if she is not a likable character, Genevieve is a forgivable one. Even if she makes readers wince today, she likely did not make readers recoil in 1891. Genevieve learns and amends her beliefs and practices, and she matures into a racially and culturally tolerant role model and surrogate for Callahan’s naïve Anglo readers. As Genevieve encounters foreign traditions and customs, the charismatic and gentle Gerald Keithly corrects her misconceptions, and as Genevieve learns about Muscogee customs and culture, so do Callahan’s Anglo women readers.<sup>46</sup> Beyond this, as Genevieve learns and modifies her behavior and beliefs, Native Americans gain voice and presence in Anglo spaces, which destabilizes the existing institutionalized stereotypes all Native American groups faced in the nineteenth century.

While sentimental and romantic on the surface, the text also recounts the suffering of the Creek/Muscogee and the Lakota. Callahan depicts this by including discussions of land allotment as well as broken treaties, which Genevieve notes is inevitable. “The question” of allotment, Genevieve tells Gerald, “will be settled in but one way.” When

Gerald asks what she means, Genevieve tells him, “the land will be divided... There is no doubt of it.... There are so many white people in here now that they will urge the measure until it is passed” (Ruoff 66). She also considers the deliberate smuggling of whiskey into towns by Anglos. Wynema informs Robin, “the whisky is brought into our country and sold to our people” (Ruoff 44). Callahan also works to depict Anglo persecution of the Ghost Dancers, and finally the murders of the Lakota at Wounded Knee. By including all of these details within her text, Callahan offers a searing counter-narrative to the dominant Anglo voice of which readers of novels and newspapers were familiar. Callahan achieves this essentially and most strongly through newspaper accounts (both fictional and non-fictional) that dispute the dominant narratives of hostility published across America. By doing so, she offers voice and presence for the Creek/Muscogee and Lakota, as well as space within dominant Anglo print media to challenge the numerous falsehoods regularly printed.

Recovered by A. LaVonne Ruoff and republished in 1997, *Wynema* is, according to Carolyn Thomas Foreman, the “first novel written in Oklahoma” (306).<sup>47</sup> *Wynema* may have an even more interesting claim: Ruoff notes that many scholars deem the text as the “first known novel written by an American Indian woman” (xii). While the exact publication date of *Wynema* is unknown, H. J. Smith and Co. of Chicago published it shortly after the events at Wounded Knee, sometime in early 1891. The publisher’s preface dates the text as April 1, 1891, which does indicate a swift printing and release after the events in December 1890 but does not necessarily support the circulating theory that the book is disjointed because Callahan rushed it into publication. Ruoff argues that the last section of the book, “on Sioux hostilities, the murder of Sitting Bull, and the

massacre at Wounded Knee, is such an abrupt departure from the earlier romance plot that it was probably added to an almost completed novel” (xxvi). While this is certainly an apt observation, as the plot changes tone and shifts away from Genevieve, Gerald, Wynema, and Robin to Carl Peterson, Wildfire, Miscona, and Chikena, if Callahan’s goal was to trace events historically to reflect history and offer a different narrative of events, as I argue it is, the shift is not sudden or awkward.

Additionally, considering the historical ties between the Creek/Muscogee and Lakota Sioux extends to a reading that will support this idea. Ruoff notes, “Callahan’s sudden shift from Muscogee to Lakota Sioux issues reflects current events and her tribe’s earlier connection with the Lakota” (xxxix). This explanation may assuage those scholars who find Callahan’s swift plot change to be muddled. By tracing the newspaper articles Callahan cites, a time line of its composition may be constructed that includes the events at Pine Ridge and Wounded Knee. In November 1890, conflict suddenly began to flare regarding the Ghost Dance at the Pine Ridge reservation. Very shortly after, hostilities concerning weapons and Sitting Bull arose, though Sitting Bull and his followers were cooperative, had very few weapons, and posed little threat. Beyond this, Callahan’s inclusion of Old Masse Hadjo’s article pinpoints a date of authorship in Chapter 18, “Turmoil with the Indians,” as Hadjo’s derisive critique appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* on December 5, 1890, a fact scholars have hitherto missed.<sup>48</sup> This puts *Wynema* on par with the timeline of events and suggests the novel was mostly complete by the time the events at Wounded Knee occurred, thus making the text neither disjointed nor rushed, but rather an attempt to incorporate the myriad problems Native American groups faced. A final idea might be Callahan’s sense of urgency in portraying to the

public the horrors the Lakota faced: so many other groups had been decimated by racially charged mass murder in the past, but the Lakota faced racially charged mass murder *then*, or at least recently. For a new and inexperienced author, this is a clever break from the American tradition of using past situations to comment on current issues.

### **Narratives of Hostility in *Wynema* Regarding Wounded Knee**

In challenging many of the narratives of hostility circulating in the dominant Anglo press, Callahan uses the characters of Carl Peterson, a Christian missionary, and Wildfire, a Lakota Sioux. Though the section where Peterson and Wildfire decide to fight back is factually inaccurate and romanticized, Callahan illustrated in this section some of the many injustices against Native American groups, specifically the Lakota. She shows that their decision to fight back is not because of Lakota angst toward Anglo Americans. Rather, the Lakota have no choice but to fight back against Anglo Americans who oppress them, equating their fight as one against tyrannical leadership, an ideal alive and well in the American imagination. She also describes Peterson as a model of good Christian behavior, as he sympathizes and identifies with the Lakota and refers to them as “my people” (Ruoff 74), though he desires no war to be waged. He tells Wynema, “I want to go among these troubled people and do all I can for them” (Ruoff 74). Peterson uses his faith to explain his need to go to the Sioux “in peace, to try to effect a peaceful adjustment of these troubles” (Ruoff 75), and he assures Wynema that the “Army of the Heavenly General” (Ruoff 75) will protect him. When he tells the Weirs that “the Sioux are about to go on the war-path” (Ruoff 74) (which is historically inaccurate), he offers a logical explanation of this turn of events (which is partially accurate). He says:



I see they are being driven to it by the treatment of the United States Government and their own agents, who have leagued together to starve and slaughter this defenseless people. Did you see this account of troops being sent out to quell the riot, which larger rations would have rendered unnecessary and impossible?

(Ruoff 74)

Ultimately, Callahan presents Peterson as a counter character to the more belligerent and hostile Anglo Americans who appear in dominant Anglo texts of the period. Though deeply idealized and atypical, Callahan's Anglo Methodist Peterson also offers readers a counter narrative to the outcries against unchristian events and actions.

Wildfire, Callahan's stereotypical Lakota, is a highly romanticized, problematic, fictionalized, flat character, but he is central to Callahan's plot to show what happens when a group of people faces oppression. It is not simply out of anger that Wildfire fights as media outlets would have Anglo readers believe regarding the Lakota. Rather, Callahan shows that Wildfire fights for his family and for the same justice others would fight for to ensure their families' safety and freedom from a tyrannical government. Because of this, Wildfire remains a central character in the final section of the book and offers Anglo readers a possible explanation of why Native Americans might be justified in their anger, just as Anglo readers would have felt. Though Callahan's depiction of events at Wounded Knee is also erroneous (for instance, the Lakota never went to war with the U.S. government), Wildfire is hell-bent on going to war, a reaction Callahan used to show justified anger. Though Peterson, the passionate but pacifist Christian, does his best to deter Wildfire from leaving, it is to no avail. Wildfire passionately relays his

real feelings regarding the U.S. government and its wrongful practices regarding Native Americans, ultimately giving voice to the Lakota.

Callahan's presentation of Wildfire is problematic to readers today as he is determined to go to war. However, Wildfire's character serves a purpose in displaying his indignation at the treatment of Native Americans by Anglos and the U.S. government. Wildfire, even in his stereotypical name, reflects the nineteenth-century stereotypes perpetuated by George Combe and other phrenologists that Indians were "savage, destructive, severe, harsh, angry, cruel, fierce, ferocious, savage, brutal, barbarous, [and] atrocious" (175). However, Callahan portrays him as justified, fearless, and a devoted, loving, heroic father. Wildfire fights because he is horrified by the atrocities he has experienced and seen but even more so because he does not want his children to experience what which he has, another idea Callahan's readers could easily identify with.

Ultimately, however problematic Wildfire's character is, Callahan uses him to bestow the Native American voice, opinion, and reaction to Anglo hostilities. Callahan presents Wildfire as a strong, masculine family man, whose main concern is freedom for his children. Though he is a Lakota, much of Wildfire's dialogue could fit several groups' experiences, and much of what he says is true. Speaking of his family, Wildfire tells Carl, "It is for [my children] I resist, for them I shall battle, and for them I shall die, if need be—that my sons may not grow up oppressed" (Ruoff 84). Wildfire's true feelings come out when he asks Carl "Is it right for one nation to drive another off and usurp their land... [and] their liberty?" (Ruoff 84). To explain things in a different manner to Carl, who at first clearly cannot understand Wildfire's position, he explains, "You have never been oppressed" (Ruoff 84), much as Callahan's Anglo readers had

never been oppressed. Peterson tries to gull Wildfire's rage but is ultimately unsuccessful, even when he asks Wildfire if he wants to "see [the Lakota] slaughtered as Few Tails and his band were" (Ruoff 84). There are no words Peterson can use to assuage Wildfire, however, and he leaves to fight for his children.

Factually, the information Wildfire suggests is simply wrong (there was no "warpath" on the part of the Lakota, as Wildfire suggests), but what Callahan does here is show the lack of understanding Anglos have for the situation Native American groups had suffered for centuries—from the moment of contact between Indigenous people and European explorers and settlers. Callahan also attempts to explain the reactions of Native American groups, especially the Lakota, to the constant theft of their land, forced starvation, oppression, and racially charged violence. While the Lakota never wanted violence to be a result of the issues they had with the U.S. government, many expressed outrage at the events that came before Wounded Knee. Readers, whether or not they agreed with Wildfire's actions initially, eventually may have come to agree with him, or at least to sympathize for Wildfire and his family.

However, when the U.S. commander gives his soldiers orders, he tells them, "No quarter! Kill them every one!" (Ruoff 90), Callahan writes truthfully. After reading Wildfire's desperate explanation about needing to take care of his children, reading the commander's orders shows readers the harsh reality for the Lakota during the events at Wounded Knee. In the closing of her section on Wounded Knee, Callahan again includes historically accurate information, telling her readers she will not write of the "brave (?) deeds of the white soldier" (Ruoff 92), as "they have already flashed over the world by electricity; great writers have burned the midnight oil telling *their story* to the world"

(Ruoff 92, emphasis mine). Take for example, the article published on November 22, 1890, in the *Buffalo Echo Extra*, a Wyoming newspaper. “The Massacre Begun!” the author claimed, and then wrote, “The Sioux have gone on the warpath...def[y]ing the agency authorities in Pine Ridge” (1). In an act of “savage devilment,” the author then claimed that the “Sioux Indians had swept down on settlers...and massacred thirty-four [Anglo] men, women, and children” (1). The subheading of the headline further sensationalized the incident, claiming, “Ranchmen and their families [are] fleeing in terror from religion-crazed redskins.” Yet, by the time the *Buffalo Echo Extra* article appeared, the Lakota had been slowly starving and dying in alarming numbers for decades and were in no condition to raid ranches.

This situation became worse when the U.S. government took more of the Lakota’s land and continued to break its treaties. Additionally, Anglo expansionists had all but decimated the buffalo, a staple of the Lakota diet. Once the Lakota were forced to live on a reservation and promised rations, Indian agents greedily stole already dwindling rations from the Lakota.<sup>49</sup> Buffalo Bird Woman, though a Hidatsa, recalled, “[T]he buffaloes and black-tail deer are gone, and our Indian ways are almost gone” (Nabokov 182) due to the Anglo demand for furs and meat. Peter Nabokov explains the demands placed on groups of Natives by Anglos, noting, “Whites expected them to hunt predominantly those animals whose furs were desired in faraway markets, thereby altering their traditional cycles of hunting, foraging, fishing, or gardening” (xxiii). The Lakota were not free from these issues and had slowly been starving for decades. With the earlier obliteration of food sources, Sitting Bull told a commission in August 1883, “I want to tell you that our rations have been reduced to almost nothing, and many of the people have starved to

death (qtd. in Coleman 16). Yet no one listened, especially Congress. This extended into the next decade, even when some newspapers accurately reported Sitting Bull's claims. By 1890, conditions had not improved for the Lakota, as they were still starving, sick, dying, and unable to leave their reservation without permission.

In *Wynema*, Chikena recalls that "there was a time when my people had plenty of land, plenty of cattle, and plenty of everything; but after a while, the pale-faces came along, and by partly buying, partly seizing our lands by force, drove us very far away from our fertile country" (Ruoff 95). This reflects Genevieve's earlier sentiment that "for years the U.S. Senators [sic] and citizens have been trying to devise ways and means by which to divide the Indians' country" (Ruoff 50). The claim also works against the many narratives of hostility published in so many American newspapers. Shortly after the events at Wounded Knee, on January 2, 1891, in her editorial in the Omaha *World-Herald*, Suzette La Flesche wrote, "The Sioux firmly believe it [the killings] has been brought about because their land was wanted. If the white people want their land and must have it, they can go about it some other way than by forcing it from them by starving them or provoking them to war and sacrificing the lives of innocent women and children" (1). With so few supplies, starving people, and limited land to live on, as well as "rules" disallowing the Lakota to leave their lands without permission, it is hardly possible to believe what many newspapers frequently published, especially regarding Native American violence and marauding, but Anglo dominant newspapers regularly published misinformation.

In *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance*, Gerald Vizenor notes, "No other nation has so grandly negotiated hundreds of treaties with indigenous

tribes, and, at the same time, rent, reprov'd, or abrogated every treaty" (137). Still, the U.S. government and many newspapers worked to show the exact opposite. Again, Callahan's goal was to expose this situation through her inclusion of articles and discussions between her characters, and in doing so, she offers readers a Native American perspective that challenges what was printed across the United States in newspapers. She also notes, moreover, that the Lakota's reservation lands and their rations were continually shrinking because of "agreements" with the U.S. government: The Lakota lost land during the Agreement of 1876 and again in the Agreement of 1889—and would continue to lose land well into the twentieth-century. Simultaneously, they experienced a reduction of their regular rations, even though the government-supplied rations were supposed to have been payment for the land the Lakota sold to the United States.<sup>50</sup>

Frivolous fights and arguments broke out regularly, fostered by the U.S. government to maintain hostilities so that many would view government and civilian actions as justified, even racially charged mass murder. As time progressed and treaties were broken, the Lakota's land progressively shrank, and friendly talks between the groups became dissipated. Eventually, the situation progressed to an extreme, and the Lakota at Wounded Knee were surrounded by the U.S. military and then brutally gunned down—men, women, and children, of all ages, even those who were unarmed and were running from the slaughter.

Callahan offers commentary from the Native American perspective on this situation through Chikena, the historical memory of the Native people whose monologue reflects the situation and portrays her reaction to the events. Chikena, a fictional elderly Lakota, begins her monologue like Buffalo Bird Woman. While Buffalo Bird Woman's

testimony accurately laments the loss of her people and culture, Chikena's testimony reflects the emotions of someone experiencing the events right then: She is angry, accusatory, and grieving but also is historically accurate. Chikena identifies distinctly as "Indian," and though she lives with Wynema and Robin after Wounded Knee and until her death, she clings to her culture and heritage.

### **The Ghost Dance: Broken Treaties, Forced Famines, and Hostilities**

Chikena is older and can relate the history and practice of the U.S. government's practice of promising rations and then denying them, as her son almost dies from starvation. As a mother her character is one many female readers could easily identify with, as the fear of a child starving is horrific. She also informs her audience of the promise of rations for land and the breaking of treaties, all of which is historically accurate and shows Callahan's use of Chikena as one of serious purpose. Chikena recalls:

The Government [sic] promised us to support us with bountiful rations, in return for our lands it had taken. It was the treaty with us. But one day the agent told us the Government was poor, and could not afford to feed us...so he gave us smaller rations than before, and every day the portion of each grew smaller, until we felt we were being starved; for our crops failed and we were entirely dependent on the Government rations. (95)

Chikena then describes the desperation of her people as they "sickened" and died from starvation. They found solace in the Ghost Dance religion, which she concedes did not go well for them. She recalls, "The great Government [sic] heard of our dances, and fearing trouble, sent out troops to stop us" (95). Because they were too sick from starvation to

cause trouble or even to dance, Chikena's information directly contradicts articles such as what the Deseret *Evening News* published on November 21, 1890, where Capt. Norville averred that the Natives in Pierre were "too involved in the Ghost Dance to care about their rations" (1).

Of course, this logic does not follow: If the Lakota were too busy with the Ghost Dance that they did not care about their rations, they were too busy to leave the dance and murder people. Despite the *Evening News*' claims of Native disinterest in rations, it is well known that the men danced the Ghost Dance, and the women, more often than not, stood in exceptionally lengthy lines for hours to receive their small amounts of sub-par rations of coffee, flour, sugar, and bacon.<sup>51</sup> However, Anglo readers of this newspaper would not have known the reality of the situation, and with no reason to question the article, they would not have second-guessed the information the newspapers published. Callahan's representation of the news reports then works to correct the misinformation presented throughout the dominant Anglo press. The article Gerald senior reads from a newspaper in *Wynema* helps to make this point. In a "dispatch from Sisseton, South Dakota" (Ruoff 72), Gerald senior reads this article to Genevieve, Wynema, and Mrs. Weir:

Twelve thousand Indians on the Sisseton and Wahpeton reservations are on the verge of starvation at the opening of winter because of the Government's [sic] failure to furnish subsistence. The Interior Department has authorized the expenditure of \$2,000 for the relief of the red men, but upon this small sum of money over two thousand men, women, and children must live for a period of six months of rigorous weather. Their chiefs and most able-bodied men have



petitioned the Government to send them aid; ‘for,’ they say, ‘if they do not get some help there will be great suffering and actual starvation.’ (Ruoff 72)

Readers would now know that the situation not only was dire, but Callahan also included these pieces to help readers make connections of false articles of warring Native Americans. Callahan’s use of them helped readers understand that Native Americans were starving and in no shape to battle ranchers or other Anglos, though Anglo newspapers would have readers believe otherwise. Such exaggerated claims were designed to reinforce readers’ fears, hatred, and biases against Native Americans in general. As a result of this media circus, more inaccuracies, hatred, and fear of Native Americans, especially of the Lakota, quickly spread across America. Additionally, more Americans believed various groups of Native Americans were violent murderers who had no care or regard for the lives of Anglos—all of which Callahan worked to disprove.

Callahan had to fight a machine designed to perpetuate hatred and racism, however. That same day, in the same newspaper, an article quotes James N. Finley, who claimed some Natives were “crazed with religious fanaticism” while others were “all painted up and acting in a suspicious manner” (1).<sup>52</sup> Besides inciting fear with this statement, Finley said he expected the troops would have orders to “stop the... [ghost] dance,” but he was convinced this act would follow with trouble of some sort from the Natives. Finley also reported the secret gathering “of several hundred” (1) heavily armed Indians, yet the Natives had almost no weapons and were in no condition to fight. Other newspapers, including the Leadville *Evening Chronicle*, worked to portray the Lakota in a more stereotypical manner: This newspaper labeled those who partook in the Ghost Dance as “Insane Indians... [who] think they are animals” (1). Callahan includes this,

and notes, “Another paper says ‘the Indians of the Northwest have the Messiah craze and are dancing themselves to death—dancing the Ghost Dance. They dance all night, and expect to see their Messiah at dawn” (Ruoff 72-3). Before the catastrophic events at Wounded Knee, however, many of the Lakota did participate in the Ghost Dance—a peaceful religion that several media outlets not only began to notice but twisted and sensationalized to the point that numerous readers believed the peaceful religion was violent, dangerous, and a threat to Anglo dominance. The U.S. government then used the Ghost Dance religion as an excuse for violence against the Lakota. Many newspaper editors also worked to portray the Lakota as violent, angry, brutal murderers of non-Native peoples made fanatical through the Ghost Dance. They further manipulated the public into thinking those killed at Wounded Knee received a just punishment for taking part in the Ghost Dance.

However, no relation existed between the Ghost Dance religion and the events at Wounded Knee, a point Callahan makes clear to her readers. Callahan also uses Chikena’s character to discuss the Ghost Dance in a different manner from newspaper narratives, with the goal of explaining to Genevieve and Wynema that she was there and how she did not perceive the Ghost Dance as a threat or danger to anyone. Chikena notes that “many of our men died from dancing, for they had become so weak from fasting they could not stand the exertion” (95). Chikena also tells Genevieve and Wynema that her son, Horda, would have died had she not given him her rations. In using a woman to articulate the harrowing story, Callahan played on the sentiments of her readers by including the tormenting idea of a starving child and mournful mother who sacrifices her own health so that her son may live. This is not to argue that Callahan is merely playing

on the emotions of her readers but that the book is sentimental in nature and that she is using a female character to appeal to her female audience. In this manner, Callahan's relay of information hits readers on a new, deeper level, as children are the ones who suffer at the hands of Anglo racism, fabrications, and broken treaties.

Historically, while Finley and many others portrayed the Ghost Dance as a war dance or something Anglos should fear, the Ghost Dance was a peaceful religion, symbolic of a much-needed hope for the Lakota. In *Wynema* Callahan works to shatter popular Anglo beliefs about the Ghost Dance, though the prophet Wovoka's public letter to the Ghost Dancers had already stressed passive behavior. Wovoka told his followers, "When your friends die you must not cry. You must not hurt anybody or do harm to anyone. You must not fight. Do right always" (Mooney 781). Yet the newspapers reported the "massacre" of "innocent" Anglos by savage, violent Indians as "another" brutal crazed-Indian attack by religious zealots on innocent settlers. The *Aspen Daily Chronicle* also worked to spur fear regarding the Ghost Dance. As this paper reported on December 9, 1890, "There are 4,000 Indians...all daubed with war paint and dancing and screaming in their half-nude condition. Never before...has the aspect of Indian Territory looked so serious" (1).

Yet, in *Wynema*, Callahan works to describe customs and practices as cultural events of significance, where all are welcome and no one is "screaming" as the *Daily Chronicle* would have readers believe. Even if her portrayals of customs were sometimes problematic, Callahan designed them to be educational and non-threatening because the customs *were* non-threatening, despite what the majority of readers believed. Moreover,

when Callahan's portrayals of customs or issues within the Muscogee or Lakota community arise, it is because of an Anglo. L. G. Moses makes a similar point:

When associated with the Ghost Dance, the word "tragedy" conjures repeatedly the image of mangled Sioux at Wounded Knee. But the tragedy of the Ghost Dance encompasses more than the slaughter of Big Foot's band by the Seventh Cavalry's Hotchkiss guns that December morning in 1890. It was the uncompromising indifference, in ways the greater tragedy, of those persons entrusted with the administration of Indian affairs that contributed to a progression of events that ended in armed confrontation. Attitudes of the men who staffed the bureau proved to be...a part of the 'Indian Problem' in the late nineteenth century. (312)

Moses' comments about the attitudes of the men who staffed the bureau mirror what Callahan worked to show readers in *Wynema* well over a century ago. Popular science considered Natives (among other non-Anglos) angry and dangerous. Newspaper publications fueled suspicions of the Ghost Dance and flamed anti-Native feelings along with the belief that the Natives were crazed religious fanatics to be feared. Besides perpetuating fears of the Ghost Dance, newspapers propagated ideas of revenge for previous attacks on Native American groups.

### **Misconceptions and False Connections to Racially Charged Mass Murder**

Historically, paranoid rhetoric concerning the Ghost Dance did not stop there. In fact, it continued. On the one hand, a November 22, 1890, headline in the San Francisco *Morning Call* warned that "a repetition of the Custer Massacre [w]as imminent," that Sitting Bull was "defiant," that the Ghost Dance was uncontrollable, but that

Commissioner Belt “hoped to settle this Indian craze without bloodshed [because] all kinds of rumors [we]re in circulation” (1). This headline worked to foster ideas of revenge on the “violent” Lakota and especially on Sitting Bull, who had been at the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876. On the other hand, readers of this article might conclude that the Lakota were heavily armed, angry, and ready to murder Anglos in cold blood because “the Indian was a White Invention and still remains largely a White image” (Berkhofer 3). The *Morning Call*, among other newspapers, did nothing to allay peoples’ fears. Instead, it profited from the fears of people by selling out editions, nurtured hatred and violence against the Lakota, and incorrectly portrayed the Lakota as perpetrators of violence against Anglos. In *Wynema*, Gerald Keithly works to challenge this myth by teaching Genevieve (and others) about their misconceptions. When Genevieve recognizes she too has portrayed Native American groups incorrectly, Keithly tells her he will forgive her, as she “took the same view of the case that many others of our race have taken” (Ruoff 28). Here, Genevieve and Keithly act as role models for proper behavior, action, and thinking and provide relief for readers who have the same epiphany. Callahan’s aim must have been to have Anglo readers come to the same conclusion as her model Christian characters.

At points in *Wynema*, there is little action and Callahan’s tale is as mundane as a normal romantic/sentimental novel until the ending, which has unsettled many scholars. However, historically, newspapers continued working all winter to kindle more fear and hatred of the Ghost Dance and Natives, something Callahan must have realized, considering all of the newspaper references in *Wynema*. Callahan *must* have seen these reactions in newspapers and written the final section (albeit problematically) to challenge

the falsehoods that arose from Pine Ridge. As Moreland notes, “As fall turned to winter in 1890, the reporters at Pine Ridge were themselves becoming restless. There was little news to cover” (3). Watson points out the journalists at Pine Ridge “were all under considerable pressure from their home offices to send in exciting news. So, they began retailing to their newspapers half-truths and outright lies” (210). It also is noteworthy that slightly later, on December 31, 1890, the *New York World* reported, “there is the strongest kind of prejudice among officers and men on frontier stations against Indians. Like General Sheridan, they believed ‘the only good Indian is a dead Indian’” (qtd. in Vizenor 145).<sup>53</sup>

By November 29, 1890, the situation had further deteriorated, and the Lakota faced another allegation of violence, this time against other Lakota wives. These “Hostile” Natives, according to the *St. Paul Daily Globe*, reportedly “Stole the Wives” of Indian policemen and were accused of making “threats...against whites” and were described by the newspaper as the “Pine Ridge Malcontents.” The newspaper did not include details about the alleged threats, and even if it did, they would be hearsay at best. However, just as a mere threat against an Anglo was enough to get an African American hanged in 1890, it was equally dangerous for Native Americans to make threats. Yet Red Cloud had spoken on November 22 at the Pine Ridge Reservation, saying,

The Great Father’s friends are all my friends. We are all friends of the agent and all friends of the soldiers... [W]e asked for churches and schools...and got them...I send my children to the big schools in the East where they learn something. I don’t want to fight and I don’t want my people to fight... [W]e’ve

got no guns and we can't fight, for we have nothing to eat and are too poor to do anything. (Qtd. in Coleman 96)

Others echoed Red Cloud's thoughts and clearly exhibited no ill will toward Anglos, but the newspaper's portrayals of Natives were generally the opposite of Red Cloud's peaceful, friendly speech. Similarly, Wynema has been educated by Methodists and opposes violence. Yet even the "Friendly Reds" were untrustworthy, according to countless Anglo newspapers.

The editor of the St. Paul *Daily Globe* noted, "It is not anticipated that these Indians [the Friendly Reds] will commit any deeds of violence, but if they should and get away and join the others [in the Ghost Dance], they would undoubtedly act with the majority" (1). By default, the newspapers collapsed the portrayal here of Natives as either friendly or hostile because they argued that no Native could be trustworthy, and though Callahan's Native Americans are problematic characters, she makes clear that Native Americans are trustworthy, loyal, good, and dedicated people. She also makes clear that Wildfire and Miscona are only angry because the backlash they face has reached an extreme. Wildfire wants to fight only because he feels he has no other option. In reality, the situation further declined as newspapers continued to print more negative portrayals of Natives as violent murderers who hated Anglos. On December 7, 1890, the Salt Lake *Herald* reported that a priest, Father Jute, went to talk to the "hostiles" and "was the only white man who might even think of making the trip and living to get back" (1). On the other hand, all of Callahan's Anglo Christian characters take regular trips similar to that of the historical figure of Father Jute, just as many people did in real life and "live[d] to get back" (1) every time. Though there is no evidence Callahan read this

article, it is clear she understood what the newspaper editors were doing and worked against this idea in *Wynema*.

Callahan is far gentler in telling her tale of Lakota oppression than she might otherwise have been, a ploy I believe she used to keep the attention of her readers. Just days before the *Herald's* editorial, the newspaper reported freezing weather conditions and the possibility of heavy snow and the starvation of the friendlies, “the copper heads who have bowed their heads to the government” (1). But the newspaper also described the hostiles as “their rebellious thieving brothers [who] are living on the fat of the land” (1). Clearly, the Lakota were not a threat to anyone, but the newspapers made it appear as such, even during inclement weather when the threat of Indian violence was preposterous. On December 13, 1890, the Fort Worth *Daily Gazette* could not decide what was going on at Pine Ridge—a direct clue of newspaper manipulations of readers by fabricated stories.

In one section, “Fight Confirmed,” the editor told readers that there had been fighting between groups of Natives from the Pine Ridge reservation and that General Brooke had been called for “help to capture Short Bull and his warriors” (1). Yet in another section of the newspaper, “Miles Don’t Believe it,” the paper confirmed, “no battle occurred between the troops and Indians near Pine Ridge Agency as reported” (1). While the Fort Worth *Daily Gazette* published conflicting articles, the fact is that by December 15, Anglos had killed Sitting Bull and his son in a dishonorable fashion. The Lakota, Sitting Bull and his son in particular, had been anything but violent, but the newspapers declared that the Indian police had acted “nobly” and promised “No Ill Effect [Would] Follow” (1) now that Sitting Bull was dead. In other words, the newspapers



acted as if the soldiers had “gotten their man,” but in the spirit of yellow journalism and war reporting, newspapers could not stop the story there and continued to publish articles to foster anger, hatred, and fear of the Lakota, just as the headlines throughout this chapter depict. Here Callahan also worked to revise the dominant narratives.

Her characters contemplate Sitting Bull’s death, along with the newspaper reports surrounding it. When Chikena speaks of him, she refers to Sitting Bull as “our great chief” (Ruoff 96) and laments his death. While many papers attempted to portray Sitting Bull as violent and belligerent, Chikena notes the whole affair ended in “Indian submission... a submission extorted by blood” (Ruoff 98). At this point, Callahan also takes a moment to consider newspapers who reported truthfully. As Wynema and Robin listen to Chikena’s “sufferings” (Ruoff 94) after she tells them about Sitting Bull’s arrest and murder, the three consider newspaper articles and reactions to falsehoods, from a scathing satire that makes Wynema want to “shake the hands” of the unnamed writer because he is “a just, unprejudiced, thinking man” (Ruoff 97). Robin mentions the *Cherokee Telephone* by name, and Wynema concludes the conversation by noting, “I am glad the editors of the newspapers are denouncing the right parties” (Ruoff 98) after Chikena agrees that these papers are printing the truth, though they are few against the many perpetrating fabrications.

An ill effect *did* follow Sitting Bull’s death, though not before the newspapers portrayed the U.S. Army as heroic, willing to negotiate with the “hostiles,” and merciful. On December 16, the Sacramento *Daily Record-Union* published a “final” interview with Sitting Bull by the infamous Indian Agent James McLaughlin, who ostensibly informed Sitting Bull of “what had been done by the [U.S.] government for the Sioux people” (1).

While obviously condescending, McLaughlin's article also serves to perpetuate the myth of the U.S. government "helping" Native Americans who would not fend for themselves. Senator Dawes especially maintained this common myth, according to William S. E. Coleman, and regularly argued that the rations the Lakota received were a form of "welfare" when in fact they were "payment for Native land purchased by the U.S. government" (18). Of course, the payment of "rations" was also designed to keep Indians in a condition of dependency. It was a travesty for civilized Anglos not to feed them, but it would have only slightly less a travesty to have maintained them in a state of beggary. Callahan points this out when Wildfire recalls, "Sitting Bull told us the government would starve us if we remained on the reservation" (Ruoff 96).

Just one day after the Sacramento *Daily Record-Union* published McLaughlin's patronizing interview with Sitting Bull, "General William Tecumseh Sherman told reporters... 'Injins must either work or starve. They never have worked; they won't work now, and they never will work... [W]hy should the government support 260,000 able-bodied campers?'" (1). Wildfire's recollection of what Sitting Bull said reflects this notion. In addition to this misinformation, on December 21, the Salt Lake *Herald* reported that an Anglo rancher had claimed, "Two Kettle Sioux began a wild Ghost Dance... Some of the Bucks when returning home claimed to have seen a white figure on top of a bluff. One of them said it was Sitting Bull... [and] that the Indians accepted this as proof that Sitting Bull is the Messiah" (1). Here, the editor subtly ridicules the Ghost Dance but also is working to stir the emotions and qualms of Anglos. Obviously, so many of these reports were spurious at best, but the hype fostered more terror and hate.

Callahan clearly attempted to challenge the information printed in the dominant Anglo press hoping to re-educate her readers.

### **Wily Reporting: Twisting Events and a Challenge Via Native Voice**

By reversing the roles of the Lakota and Anglos and making the Lakota a murderous band of religious fanatics, Anglo dominant newspapers literally changed public opinion in favor of the U.S. Army. By December 26, newspapers were reporting that Big Foot's band of hostiles posed a threat to the Army. *The Critic*, a Washington, D.C., paper, claimed "The Peace Party Fail[ed]" and that "it is rumored around the camp that Little Wound and other chiefs are indulging in ugly threats" (1). The media spin continued to sensationalize events: The next day, the *Sacramento Daily Record-Union* reported that the "Hostiles [were] Unmanageable," there was "Indian Deceit," and that the "seventh cavalry [would] take the field against the hostiles" (1). The idea of battling the Lakota served not only to portray Natives as violent but to suggest the only way to subdue them and end the Ghost Dance was to intervene militarily. Here, the editors prepared readers for racially charged mass murder—but they employed spin: They manipulated readers into fearing violent Lakota to protect the "real" victims: Anglos. For a month, readers were being prepared for racially charged mass murder at the Pine Ridge Reservation, and it finally occurred on December 29, 1890.

Scholars have lambasted Callahan for her problematic portrayal of Wildfire and of Wounded Knee, but what she correctly portrays in Wildfire is the desire to live freely and to ensure that his children live freely from the threat and oppression of the U.S. government. She also points out the irony of presenting Anglos as victims of the Lakota when the Lakota are clearly victim of Anglos. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, many

Anglo-dominant newspapers were more interested in the “ill-effects” toward the Army that resulted from the massacre at Wounded Knee. On December 30, the San Francisco *Morning Call* and the Omaha *Bee* listed the names of the Army’s wounded and dead but listed none of the Lakota dead, and the Sacramento *Daily Record* reported that General Brooke bragged, “[T]he [remaining] Indians are being hunted up in all directions.” The same newspapers reported that “General Schofield, though deeply regretting the occurrence, was not greatly surprised when he learned the treachery displayed by the Indians in the fight...[H]e ha[d] been on the lookout for treachery all the time. It was almost inevitable, as far as he could see.” Meanwhile, the Sacramento *Daily Record* included a dispatch from the *State Journal*, a Nebraska newspaper that included information on how the Lakota were surrounded by the U.S. Army and called out of their tents for a kind of roll call: The Lakota “came, and sat in a half-circle until counted.” The newspaper, quoting witnesses, averred that the number of Lakota “killed and wounded was at fifty” (1), but it neither mentioned the women and children intentionally gunned down in the fight; nor did the *Evening Bulletin*, a Kentucky newspaper that bore the headline “Not One of Big Foot’s Men Left to Tell the Story” mention the women and children. That would not happen until the next day, when the Sacramento *Daily Record* finally reported, “The women and children broke for the hills when the fighting commenced, and comparatively few of them were hurt and few were brought in. Thirty-nine are here, of which twenty-one are wounded” (1). Even then, the numbers were not accurate and served to perpetuate hatred and racism. In *Wynema*, Wildfire and Miscona die tragically, but Callahan employs Chikena’s character to correct the problems of false information prevalent in so many Anglo-dominant newspapers.

Chikena's lengthy recount of the occurrences leading up to Wounded Knee is not unlike the testimony of someone who has experienced trauma and still grieves or suffers from survivor guilt. She questions why she has survived and reports the sufferings of Native Americans at the hands of Anglos. Her final statement in recounting the events of Wounded Knee that the confrontation ended in "Indian submission...extorted by blood" (96) reflects this sentiment. Before she tells the story as she experienced it, Chikena grieves as one of the last of her people and notes that she is "all alone in the world" because of the death of her people from racially charged mass murder at Wounded Knee. As so many survivors of traumatic events feel, she ponders why she has survived. Weeping, she asks Peterson, "Why did not the Great Father take me too?" (91).

While some consider Chikena's testimony as victimist, her story serves several functions. It is a Native American woman telling her experience of forced relocation and survival; it is also a Native American woman telling, in the Sioux language, another Native American woman (and Anglos) of her experience. Furthermore, Chikena recounts her tale in the Lakota tradition of oral storytelling. That the information comes to readers in English is even more vital because Callahan shares information that her projected Anglo audience now can know and be a part of, as they would not have otherwise known anything other than what most newspapers reported. Beyond this, while the men debate several subjects within the novel, Chikena is a woman speaking to an audience of women in a novel read by an audience of women, much like La Flesche's newspaper accounts of events, which focused on women and children.

In direct opposition to what many newspapers reported, Chikena's testimony also relates how Sitting Bull told her people they had to leave the reservation or face

starvation and death. Though her brief summary of Wounded Knee is factually unreliable, as Callahan could not have had enough information for an accurate retelling of events so soon after they occurred, the other information she relays is factual. Through Chikena, Callahan works to give voice and presence to Native Americans (in this case, the Lakota) who suffered racially charged mass murder at the hands of the U.S. government. The newspaper references regarding the deaths of soldiers confirm her claim. In giving Wildfire voice, along with Chikena and Hadjo, Callahan successfully challenges much of what dominant Anglo newspapers propagated. While the text of *Wynema* is not without serious flaws, Callahan gives her Muscogee and Lakota characters voice and presence, and while there are those who die, such as Wildfire and Miscona, others, including Chikena (if only for a time), the babies, and Wynema survive and live in a manner Chikena ultimately approves of. Wildfire also tells a similar story to Chikena's. He recalls,

We were once a large and powerful nation.... In the old days we were free; we hunted and fished as we pleased, while our squaws tilled the soil. Now we are driven to a small spot, chosen by the pale-faces, where we are watched over and controlled by agents who can starve us to death at their will. (Ruoff 81)

These events are not too different from the information Peterson relays as an Anglo, that "the United States government, and their agents...have leagued together to starve and slaughter this defenseless people" (Ruoff 74). Callahan's text is powerful because she challenges the dominant narratives of the time and because many of her characters share similar experiences.

Callahan's next rhetorical move is to connect Chikena's recounting of events to several newspaper articles, including those in the Cherokee *Telephone* or, as it later was called, the Tahlequah *Telephone*, to bolster Chikena's tale.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Wynema affirms Chikena's narrative by telling Robin, "It is all so" (Ruoff 98). In another use of an atypical newspaper publication, in that it did not feed propaganda to readers, readers learn that:

Congress, the Secretary of the Interior, the Army and the Indian agents have vied with each other in the shameful dealings with these poor creatures of the plains. They buy their lands—for half price—make treaties and compacts with them in regard to pay, provisions, etc., then studiously turn and commence to lay plans to evade their promises and hold back their money to squander, and withhold the provisions agreed to be furnished. The Government has neglected to comply with treaties with these people—hence the war... (Ruoff 98).

In using the newspaper here, as well as using Chikena's voice as a representative Lakota, Callahan successfully confronts the narratives of hostility propagated by so many newspapers of the time. She also provides the Lakota voice and presence within dominant Anglo space and print media.

I do not want to dismiss the issues scholars bring to light, as all of them are correct in their criticisms of *Wynema*. However, in the interests of looking at voice and presence before, during, and after racially charged mass murder, *Wynema* is a text that merits critical reconsideration and a renewed presence in the literary canon. While several of the Native characters in her novel are victims, which is realistic when considering that all of the Lakota Sioux faced racially charged mass murder, Callahan

works to give them both voice and presence. This is something that virtually all other traditionally canonical nineteenth-century texts with Native American characters fail to do. Callahan's creation and use of Chikena and the children she saves reflect this. Chikena has voice and presence, and the children, who do not have direct voice as the story of Wynema and Genevieve ends, are nevertheless alive and successful, living comfortably as Native Americans in Anglo spaces.

Even Genevieve, who initially is condescending toward the Muscogee, voices support for them when Maurice Mauran refers to them as a people "very little superior to the negro" (Ruoff 55). For Genevieve, this is a significant, definitive moment of awakening (if not an ironic one), and for Callahan, Genevieve offers another way to fight the narratives of hostility prevalent in Anglo dominant print media sources. When Genevieve first returns to the South to visit her family, she is "rejoiced to be with [Maurice]" (Ruoff 47), but this feeling quickly turns to acrimony when Maurice reveals his conservative values. He not only desires Genevieve be a true woman but also reveals his stereotypical beliefs regarding Native Americans, saying, "You lived among them; you know them to be idle, trifling, a people whom no amount of cultivation could civilize" (Ruoff 55). In the best way she can, Genevieve tells Maurice, "You say I have disgraced myself by laboring among the ignorant, idle, treacherous Indians; but never in all the years I have dwelt among these savages have I been subjected to the insult your words employ" (Ruoff 55). Though Genevieve ultimately regards the Muscogee in a manner that may turn modern readers' stomachs—even after all her exposure and education—Callahan depicts Genevieve as learning, and more essentially, openly fighting against Maurice's typical stereotypes of Native Americans. Thus, several of



Callahan's characters serve to counter the narratives of hostility that many newspapers published and the institutionalized racism so rampant in American society.

As scholars speculate on the importance of the final chapters, Hadjo's piece in Chapter 18 directly challenges the dominant Anglo attitude of hostility found across the nation. It also offers an important clue to when Callahan wrote the book and whether the final section was rushed, as some scholars claim. The letter Hadjo, or John Daylight, published in the *Chicago Tribune* is an outraged but eloquent and well-argued statement that defies the dominant narratives of hostility of Native Americans at large and the ridicule of the Ghost Dance religion. It also is significant in that the Christians in *Wynema* act nothing like the Christians that Hadjo describes, which supports the argument that Callahan's text serves as a manual of proper Christian behavior. Additionally, Hadjo's piece harshly admonishes and condemns Anglo Christian practices as hypocritical and unchristian. That Hadjo wrote it as the Lakota engaged in the practice of the Ghost Dance religion is especially significant and powerful when considering the prejudice and hostility the Lakota faced.

To understand further what Callahan achieves through her inclusion of Hadjo's editorial in the text, it is imperative to look at Hadjo's narrative and to read it as Callahan's characters do. Published in the mainstream *Chicago Tribune*, Hadjo's editorial offers a Native voice and a more historically accurate portrayal of how many Christians acted toward Native American groups. Beyond this, it is a Native American using the dominant Anglo press to deliver his message in Anglo space, which Callahan subsequently repeats by including Hadjo's historical editorial in her text and then having

both her Native American characters and Anglo readers read and comment on the piece, thus offering Native Americans voice, presence, and agency.<sup>55</sup>

Hadjo begins by referencing an alleged earlier editorial reflecting the common narratives against Ghost Dancers, along with popular narratives portraying Native Americans negatively. He begins, “You say if the United States Army would kill a few thousand or so of the dancing Indians there would be no more trouble” (1). While many Anglos held and embraced this belief Callahan’s Christians are greatly upset—outraged even—at the editor’s stance. Callahan’s narrator describes Genevieve’s reaction as “indignant” (Ruoff 73). The group continues to read Hadjo’s editorial and learns, to their horror, that Hadjo’s opinion of American Christian behavior toward Native Americans is exceptionally critical. This greatly upsets the group, as Hadjo’s description of Christians does not match the Christianity they practice. Callahan’s Christians are sympathetic to the Lakota, and unlike Hadjo’s description, they do not believe they are corrupt or intolerant—much like Callahan’s readers probably perceived their own practices and behaviors.

Yet, Hadjo critiques the situation truthfully, as many missionaries were corrupt, and many displayed a lack of tolerance for non-Christian ways. Hadjo also brings to light for readers the ironic lack of religious freedom allowed within the confines of Christian America. He begins by addressing the writer of the anonymous editorial, saying, “I judge by the above language that you are a Christian and are disposed to do all in your power to advance the cause of Christ...but are unwilling that the Indians should have a Messiah of their own” (Ruoff 73). Hadjo, in his own voice, admonishes American Christians for their unchristian-like behavior and makes clear his belief that “Indians” are more than

capable of being “moral” and of having their own religion. Hadjo advises his Anglo audience, “The Indians have never taken kindly to the Christian religion as preached and practiced by the whites” (1) and in a derisive manner continues by noting their lack of a need for Christianity now that the Ghost Dance religion has formed.

He continues, arguing, “The Good Father of all has given us a better religion—a religion that is all good and no bad—a religion that has adapted to our wants.” Hadjo also is adamant that this religion will not be corrupted, like the Anglo form of Christianity has become. Hadjo systematically breaks down Christian practices and hypocrisy, noting:

If our Messiah does come, we will not try to force you into our belief. We will never burn innocent women at the stake, or pull men to pieces with horses because they refuse to join with us in our ghost dances. You white people had a Messiah, and if history is to be believed, nearly every nation has had one. You had twelve apostles; we have only eleven and some of them are already in the military guard-house. We had also a Virgin Mary, but she is also in the guard-house. You are anxious to get hold of our Messiah so you can put him in irons. This you may do—in fact you may crucify him as you did that other one—but you cannot convert the Indians to the Christian religion until you contaminate them with the blood of the white man. (1)

Hadjo’s critique is manifold; for one, not only is it a Native voice expressing Native opinion, but it is one that undermines nineteenth-century stereotypes about Native Americans and one that speaks up as a Native American to an Anglo Christian audience.

In telling readers that Native Americans never wanted to become Christians and preferred to keep their own beliefs, Hadjo’s editorial is one that displays the true colors of

Anglo Christians who forced Natives to convert to Christianity; it also is one that reflects a Native American perspective. However, Callahan offers a solution through Gerald Keithly, who does not mind how the Muscogee worship while attempting to blend Christianity into their religious practices. Moreover, Keithly is nothing like the Christians Hadjo describes. Hadjo's assessment of Anglo Christian society marks it as a morally corrupt, or even morally empty, one that is "repulsive" to him, as it is a society full of crime and "rogues." In a decisive moment that reveals Anglo hypocrisy regarding race, Hadjo also points out, "We pay no lawyers or preachers, but we have not one-tenth part of the crime that you do" (1). Hadjo's complaint that Anglos put the messiah "in irons" reflects the lack of freedoms that Native Americans exercised, even though Americans fought for and boasted of religious freedom. Though he does not need to say it, Hadjo's comment here not only is indicative of hypocrisy but also serves as a direct criticism of the government, as it violates the U.S. Constitution and critiques government involvement and interference in the lives of Native Americans religiously and otherwise. Callahan's citation of the full editorial shows that she wants Christians to see where they have egregiously erred, how they can fix the errors they have made, and finally how they should emulate her Methodist characters who are tolerant, respectful, and kind to others. That she referenced an actual piece written by a Native American furthers her agenda of giving voice, presence, and agency to Native Americans, even if the piece harshly critiques Christian practices in America.

Womack argues that Hadjo's voice is "compromised" (108) because Keithly reads the editorial to Wynema and Genevieve. However, I argue this piece is vital because it gives a Native American voice that defies Anglo Christian dominance and intolerance. I

argue that Callahan included it to instruct Christians in how they should not act toward Native Americans. Coming from Keithly, perhaps the most flawless Christian in the text, Hadjo's editorial reads much like a traditional hellfire and brimstone sermon addressed to Callahan's Anglo Christian readers. Hadjo concludes his scornful editorial with the traditional threat of hell for those who misbehave and says, "[T]here will be white rogues enough to fill [the white man's hell]" (1). As a result, Hadjo's editorial serves as a warning to Christian Americans: Hadjo tells them that Native American groups have had enough of being told how to live, how to act, and how to think when those who claim to be Christian are morally reprehensible hypocrites and hopes her readers will not act this way.

Callahan also uses Genevieve to serve as a model of how a properly behaved Christian can undercut narratives and practices of hostility toward Native American groups. After Genevieve learns to understand non-Anglo cultural practices, the circle of proper Christian behavior is complete, and all of Callahan's Christians are respectful of Muscogee traditions and cultural practices—yet another way Callahan challenges narratives of hostility. Callahan's Christians not only practice Christian burial rites but also willingly practice Muscogee traditional burial rites. In Chapter 6, "An Indian Burial," after the death of Chineka's husband, Keithly not only performs a Christian burial but "says a few words in their own language concerning the dead, words of praise for his good deeds, and words of sympathy for the sorrowing loved ones" (Ruoff 26). Most significantly, Keithly does not disparage the tradition of throwing water over one's self "to drive away disease or illness" (Ruoff 27), as Wynema explains the custom to Genevieve. Genevieve, who is still learning tolerance and acceptance, asks Keithly,

“Surely...you do not believe in any such ceremony” (Ruoff 27), to which he responds by comparing the Muscogee tradition to the Bible. Keithly explains:

When I am in Rome, I strive to do as Rome does when the doing so does not harm me or anyone else. The Indians believe that the water will keep off the disease, and they have an inkling of the truth. I don't mean to say that I believe the sprinkling of the water, as I did just now, will have any effect, either good or bad on the human system; but it is declared in Holy Writ that “Cleanliness is next to godliness,” and a true clean body is almost proof against disease. (Ruoff 27-28)

Genevieve submits and relents, as she is Callahan's archetype of an unwitting and model Christian who can become the perfect Christian. She also represents a character who counters behavior that Callahan finds reprehensible.

In presenting her readers with alternatives to challenge the many existing narratives of hostility found across the country regarding Native American groups at this time, Callahan presents her Native American characters as loyal, judicious, and trustworthy. Harjo, Wynema's father, represents Callahan's attempt to redirect readers' attitudes toward Native Americans. He is contemplative, wise, and respects Keithly deeply. In fact, their relationship challenges racist stereotypes portraying Native Americans as untrustworthy and unfaithful and also shows readers that mutual respect and wise behavior leads to solid friendships between races. While Hadjo's editorial offers a biting look at many Christians and how they treat Native Americans, Callahan's Natives and Christians work to undermine the objectionable Christian behavior Hadjo's editorial highlights. By endowing her characters with a vastly different mentality, Callahan offers readers Christian characters to emulate: They treat the Native Americans

as they would want to be treated. Moreover, Callahan's Native American characters respond mainly in the opposite manner to what newspapers would have readers believe—and those who do not act as she deems appropriate, such as Wildfire and Miscona, perish, though tragically so.

Callahan's inclusion of Keithly is yet another presence that also allows her to undermine narratives of hostility regarding Native American characters. For one, he is open to working with all Native Americans in the novel, and treats them well, as his friendship with Harjo exemplifies. Beyond this, Keithly's character displays mutual respect and tolerance for others. Keithly's behavior ultimately offers a model of how a good Christian should act (and how a Christian should guide others). He also represents someone who is educated, tolerant and uninfluenced by the dominant Anglo press' messages of hate of Native Americans. Further, that Keithly serves as a mentor to Genevieve reflects how Callahan either believes Christians already behave, or how she wants them to, and Genevieve's submission to him solidifies this idea. Nonetheless, Anglo readers could easily identify with his character and could begin to call into question the countless texts portraying Native Americans in a negative light.

In the conclusion of the book, readers learn that “old Chikena dwelt with [Wynema and Robin] till she died” (103), but before she passes away, she leaves readers on an optimistic note. She explains, “I see the prosperous, happy land of the Indians” (103), which some can read as victimist because she is dying, but Chikena also pleads for “God [to] give us rest and peace” (104). I argue this works against victimry and calls for a peaceful and quiet life that does not involve battle, war, or fighting for those who have survived, specifically the three children rescued after Wounded Knee. Today, many

readers find it repulsive that the survivors must assimilate, but in the 1890s, it was commonly believed this was the proper path for all Native American. Beyond this, Callahan portrays the children as living successful and prosperous lives, especially in that they are not completely cut off from their Native heritage. The narrator explains, “They grew up and prospered in the colleges around them” (Ruoff 104). Miscona, the child of Wildfire and the elder Miscona, becomes a “famous musician and a wise woman” (Ruoff 104), while one of the two boys becomes “an earnest Christian worker,” the other, a doctor/ missionary (Ruoff 104). These are two other aspects of Chikena’s speech that illuminate the strategy of survivance in the novel. First, the next generation is successful, and second, Chikena tells their stories to other female characters within the book, which in turn is read by other female readers.

Callahan not only gives voice to the Muscogee and Lakota Sioux but also shows multiple viewpoints regarding how various Muscogee and Lakota Sioux feel about events, all for Anglo readers to ponder. Though Chikena’s voice is one that is partially a voice of victimry because she dies, Callahan presents her as an important, wise, non-Anglo voice. Beyond this, Chikena tells her story in her own language, and it comes to readers in translation through Wynema. Additionally, her use of Wynema to translate also uses someone with a Native heritage to relay the information to readers. The narrator’s optimism in the closing sentences also is indicative of a kind of survivance. The narrator refers to the “present” as “fair” and refers to “happy families nestling in the villages” (Ruoff 104). For all of its apparent flaws, Callahan’s novel still manages to provide a well-rounded counter-argument to many of the wrongdoings against the Creek/Muscogee and Lakota Sioux, and she still gives voice and presence to a people



facing racially charged mass murder, memorializes those who have died, and offers a narrative that allows the Lakota to survive. By presenting her Anglo, Christian Methodist audience with several newspaper accounts and examples of the situation, Callahan effectively challenges the narratives of hostility found in most newspapers, offers a different perspective on events, and revises the idea that the Ghost Dance triggered the events at Wounded Knee. Though her voice is only one among many, not many other writers worked to make this point in the wake of Wounded Knee.

### **Eyewitness to Racially Charged Mass Murder at Wounded Knee and Survivance**

The Wounded Knee newspaper spectacle of fraud covered up racially charged mass murder at Wounded Knee, and then provided purposeful misinformation, excuses, and justifications for the US Army's actions. Indirectly, the media circus regarding the Lakota allowed the United States Army to kill hundreds of innocent members of the Lakota Sioux with no repercussions, something Callahan works to show her readers. As Hugh J. Reilly notes, "The *Bee* and the Colorado newspapers saw menace in every move of the Indians... [and the *Bee*] made it clear that the Indians were solely to blame for any trouble that might occur" (134). Moreover, according William S. Coleman, "As the Ghost Dance spread, a large contingent of war correspondents settled into Pine Ridge ... [but] rarely ventured into the field. Most stayed close to the telegraph office, seeking news from settlers who came into the agency, or from handouts from the agent and the military" (58). The situation became complicated, though, when these reporters "treated anyone coming into the agency as an expert...[as] these experts 'fed' gullible reporters stories that were patently untrue," which led in turn to the publication of stories "based on events that never happened" (Coleman 58). These reporters and their media outlets, as

Coleman describes it, “created...the Ghost Dance war” (58), promulgating the idea they had nothing to do with one another.

In January 1891, after the slaughter at Wounded Knee, former Pine Ridge Agent Valentine T. McGilicuddy argued, “There has been neither a Sioux outbreak nor war...[N]o citizen of Nebraska or Dakota has been killed, molested, or can show the scratch of a pin and no property has been destroyed off the reservation” (qtd. in Watson 205).<sup>56</sup> Of course, McGilicuddy referred to Anglos here, and not the Lakota, since Indians were not “citizens.” McGilicuddy was purposefully misleading in his interview, so his statement reflects a partial truth, something the many reporters at Wounded Knee also worked to perpetuate. Moreland notes that “in the months before and after the December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee, some 25 reporters from 18 newspapers and magazines filed stories from Pine Ridge Agency” (3). Watson notes that the number of correspondents “was the largest number of correspondents that had ever been sent to cover an Indian War” (210). With numbers such as this, it is impossible to deny Moreland’s idea that there was a “media circus” (3) surrounding the events at Wounded Knee, especially from November 1890 to January 1891, when countless pieces were published in the dominant Anglo press, most of them hostile to the Lakota Sioux. It was also, as Watson notes, “the most photographed Indian war in history.” It also was heavily covered by magazine correspondents, including Frederic Remington, “whose pieces depicted soldiers in battle against the Lakota” (who are all incorrectly portrayed as armed in his depictions) and which were published in *Harper’s Weekly*, and “Warrant K. Moorehead, an archeologist who wrote for the *Illustrated American*” (210).<sup>57</sup>

Yet what occurred at Wounded Knee was much more than a media circus. While some Anglo dominant newspapers did report truthfully, many more newspapers twisted the stories they printed up to the time of the “battle” to spur fear, hatred, and violence against the Lakota. They also worked to portray the Ghost Dance in a negative manner and successfully convinced readers that the Ghost Dance and the events at Wounded Knee were intimately connected, a myth Callahan debunks in *Wynema*. Ultimately, these newspapers created an environment that excused racially charged mass murder. Moreover, several dominant Anglo newspapers purposefully printed propaganda portraying Anglos as victims of Native Americans, when the situation was clearly reversed. Anglo dominant newspapers also purposefully and incorrectly portrayed the Lakota as violent, religiously fanatical, and outright malevolent. The newspapers also regularly published pieces focusing on “hostile” Indian violence against “friendly” Indians, or those who chose to assimilate, especially regarding the Ghost Dance, even though Natives were victims at the hands of the U.S. government and its citizens and even though the Ghost Dance was a desperate act of survival. At other times, newspapers published fabricated stories focusing on “Indian violence” or published stories to manipulate what really happened in favor of perpetuating and perpetrating hatred and fear of Natives. Take, for example, what happened “when camps of Two Strike, Short Bull, Kicking Bear and other ‘hostiles’ moved down Wounded Knee Creek,” as Moreland reports:

It was reported that they’d settled in an impregnable stronghold and were preparing for war. This story was later disproved by reliable witnesses, including

a colonel from the Ninth Cavalry, who described the site as quite open and unfortified. Thus were free Indians made to seem hostile. (3)

Watson avers that the journalism surrounding the events at Wounded Knee is reminiscent of poor reporting practices earlier in the century, which largely consisted of “unverified rumors...presented as ‘reports from reliable sources’ or ‘eyewitness accounts’” (205). Watson further argues that this was an example of how “idle gossip became fact; and once more, a large number of the nation’s newspapers indulged in a field day of exaggeration, distortion, and plain faking” (205).

Callahan also challenged the narratives of hostility printed across the nation regarding the Lakota Sioux by not only including references to printed news stories but by discussing and debating the “issues” through her characters. Especially known for these kind of sensational tactics were newspapers such as the *Omaha Bee*, a “gossipy tabloid” (219), as Elmo Scott Watson described it. The newspaper employed writers such as Will Cressey and later Charles H. Copenharve, both of whom helped to spread hatred and false accounts of what was going on at the Pine Ridge reservation. They were, according to Watson, “reckless with the truth” (219). Similar to the *Omaha Bee* were the *Aspen Weekly Times*, the *Aspen Daily Chronicle*, and the *Buffalo Echo Extra*. These dominant Anglo newspapers engaged in printing what Watson referred to as “rumor-mongering, exaggeration, distortion, and faking” that serve to illustrate the “violation of newspaper principles” (219). Yet these newspapers were popular, readers believed what was printed in them, and racially charged mass murder was excused as a result. Ultimately, Wounded Knee was, according to Watson, “the most media-centered ‘phony war’” (214) ever waged against Natives.

In the wake of the countless false news stories surrounding the Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee, a small number of survivors provided eyewitness testimony. Their intent was to challenge the falsehoods that had appeared in newspapers across the country. Dewey Beard recounted the events as he remembered them:

I was badly wounded and pretty weak too. While I was lying on my back, I looked down the ravine and saw a lot of women coming up and crying. When I saw these women, little girls and boys coming up, I saw soldiers on both sides of the ravine shoot at them until they had killed every one of them. (qtd in Coleman 318)

Beard's first-hand testimony was even more chilling than what Chikena relates in Callahan's novel.

Though not involved directly in the events, Suzette La Flesche in the Omaha *World-Herald* corrected the excess of falsities published in other firsthand accounts of the massacre. Her description is grisly, intense, and brutally realistic, almost reminiscent of a battlefield, though she focuses on the women and children targeted in the brutal attacks. La Flesche also looked at their situation after the events at Wounded Knee, unlike Remington's depictions, which reflected the start of the events at Wounded Knee. "There was a little boy with his throat shot to pieces," La Flesche wrote on January 2, 1891. "When I saw him yesterday afternoon, he looked worse than the day before, and when they feed him now, the food and water come out the side of his neck" (1). Callahan's descriptions are more delicate but make the same point.

Years later, Black Elk's expressed his sorrow for the Lakota women and children who lost their lives. He recalled:

I did not know then how much was ended. When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died in that bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream.... [T]he nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead. (qtd. in Brown 446)

At the 1920 premier of William "Buffalo Bill" Cody's movie regarding Wounded Knee, Chauncey Yellow Robe publicly condemned the film by reminding people, "Women and children and old men of my people, my relatives... were massacred with machine guns by soldiers of this Christian nation" (qtd in Nabokov 278). Again, Callahan's inclusion of what was done to the Lakota, while problematic in parts, contains elements of these events, thus making it a powerful text in challenging and even undermining the dominant Anglo perspective and beliefs regarding Native Americans and Wounded Knee.

While each of these survivors' testimonials is vital in giving voice to the Native experience, some may argue that La Flesche's, Black Elk's, and Beard's testimonies depict the Lakota as victims of Anglo violence and perpetuate the idea of the "vanishing American." However, I argue that their testimonies are exceedingly significant because they give factual voice to the events at Wounded Knee. Unfortunately, Black Elk's and Beard's testimonies were not published in newspapers or elsewhere at that time. With his condemnation of Buffalo Bill's glorification of the massacre, Chauncey Yellow Robe fought the misrepresentation of the events at Wounded Knee, but the movie appeared three decades after Wounded Knee. Because of the almost complete annihilation of the

Lakota, immediate reactions from survivors of Wounded Knee and their firsthand experience are limited. In looking for more immediate reactions to Wounded Knee, imagined or real, there are not many records of events from the Lakota, and even fewer are portrayed in the novels at the turn of the century.

However, Callahan's novel is an exception. She attempts to give voice to the Lakota for a female, Anglo, Christian Methodist audience with the intent of portraying events from the Native perspective. *Wynema*'s publisher argued that *Wynema* represented "The Indians' side of the Indian question told by an Indian born and bred, and told none the less potently because the author has borrowed the garb of fiction to present the case of truth" (Ruoff ix). Beyond this, Callahan's voice, however problematic it ultimately maybe, is one of a Muscogee/Creek Native American. She used an Anglo press to make her point, giving voice and presence to the Lakota, for an audience that would neither be familiar with the Lakota perspective nor with any other perspective other than the dominant Anglo perspective found in newspapers across the country.

In view of America's bloody and sordid past in relations with her Native peoples, the rhetoric from many of the cited newspaper articles is not surprising. While some Anglos fought for Native Americans, and especially the Lakota, such as Senator Voorhees,<sup>58</sup> many believed America had no room for its Natives. They actively used Anglo newspapers to inflame and incite the public and to perpetuate myths and stereotypes, which created an environment in which almost three hundred members of the Lakota nation—innocent men, women, and children—were killed.

As Susan Bernardin notes, "In the early 1890s, Indian nations within Indian Territory had long battled the dramatic erosion of the land base and political sovereignty

by successive forced land cessions either directly imposed or allowed by the federal government” (211). Mass murder at Wounded Knee allowed for another successful land grab at the expense of the indigenous population there. Anglo newspapers helped to foster racially charged mass murder by inciting hatred and fear of the Lakota. Through sham stories and a bogus “war,” newspapers portrayed the Lakota in a false manner that vilified them as murderers. Callahan challenges this mentality in *Wynema*.

The headlines of the *Buffalo Extra*, the *Aspen Daily Chronicle*, the *San Francisco Morning Call*, the *Deseret Evening News*, and many other newspapers, illustrate how the dominant Anglo press continued to inflame and provoke more fear and hatred against Native Americans through propaganda. Additionally, these articles are an example of how many justified violence against Native American groups. However, the real problem lies in the regular and systematic use of newspapers to promulgate hatred and to incite violence to the point of racially charged mass murder. The misuse of media perpetuated fear and hatred against Native Americans. It reached the general U.S. populace, and it reached people in positions of influence and power, including members of the military, Congress, the War Department, and even the White House. Some of these people directly enabled these genocidal acts against the Lakota, though none ever faced legal action.

By the late nineteenth-century, fear and loathing of Native Americans was so deeply ingrained in the Anglo imagination that it would have been difficult to question the authority of the inflammatory articles. Moreover, a majority of newspapers fostered the desires and fears of an imagined community of Indian “haters.” Even the “noble savage” character type, such as Chingachgook in Cooper’s *Leatherstocking* tales, dies



stoically. This stereotype found itself regularly juxtaposed with another stereotype just as problematic and one that further encouraged hatred: the violent, bloodthirsty savage, such as Cooper's Magua or Twain's Injun Joe. Still another stereotype that appeared in literature and newspapers was the "half-breed" who dwelled in a liminal space, neither Anglo nor Indian. *Wynema* contested many of these stereotypes by portraying such characters as Harjo, Wynema, Chikena, and Wildfire.

On December 23, 1890, just one week before the murder of the Lakota at Wounded Knee, the Omaha *Bee* quoted Colonel Sumners: "This *cleans up* the Indians along the Cheyenne" (1, emphasis mine). Now trapped but still seeking peace, the Lakota in Sitting Bull's group had surrendered to the Indian agents and had even "placed a white flag in the center of their camp as an indication of their peaceful intentions and a guarantee of safety." Andrist notes that General Forsyth let the situation spin out of control, and that the general attitude of the soldiers was hard to ignore, as "the soldiers acted like bully-boys" (Andrist 350). Taking this information along with Sumner's words above, which reek of ethnic cleansing and racially charged mass murder, the pieces of the puzzle begin to fit more neatly. A week later the Lakota were strategically surrounded by the U.S. Army and then massacred, gunned down with Hotchkiss guns—simply because they were a non-Anglo group on Land desired by Anglos.

Andrist describes the scene at Wounded Knee, writing that soldiers

fired the Hotchkiss guns, augmented by the weapons of the outer cordon of troops who surrounded the entire camp; they began shooting, killing many Indians who attempted to flee. Within a matter of minutes, some two-hundred Indians...lay dead or wounded, and many of the teepees had

been ripped apart by explosive shells and were burning above helpless wounded. (351)

Andrist's description of the situation is accurate, and more significantly shows the intent to partake in racially charged mass murder—and to kill every single Lakota there.

Even then, the slaughter of so many innocent people raised questions: The *Omaha Bee* also reported on December 23, 1890, that Louisiana Congressman Newton Blanchard was interested in investigating what happened at the Pine Ridge Reservation. In addition to calling for “a committee of five to inquire into the killing of Sitting Bull and the immediate causes leading thereto,” his preamble asserts “that the killing ‘appears to have been accomplished under circumstances recognized neither by the laws of war nor those of peace.’” Blanchard was further interested in having the “committee investigate ‘whether a state of war existed which justified his [Big Foot’s] summary taking off and if not what justification there was for his [Big Foot’s] violent death at the hands of Indian police in the employ of the government.’” Certainly, Wildfire believes there is a war in *Wynema*. Blanchard knew the situation was more than problematic. His actions are commendable, even heroic, in a time and country that did not consider her aboriginal inhabitants citizens or even human. Shortly after Wounded Knee, General Nelson A. Miles relieved General James W. Forsythe of his command, knowing Forsythe had behaved dishonorably on many occasions prior to Wounded Knee. On January 23, 1891, the *Brooklyn Eagle* published a piece quoting Assistant Adjutant General Corbin to the effect that the investigation was almost complete and that so far Colonel Forsythe had been found “unmindful of repeated instructions that had been issued by General Miles against the very things that happened that day” (1).

While it is refreshing to know that some Americans called out Forsythe for his behavior, the reality of the situation is that racially charged mass murder occurred at Wounded Knee and the media helped incite already existing biases, fears, and hatred of Native Americans. The other reality, of course, is what Gerald Vizenor notes in *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance*: “The perpetrators of serious crimes against Native American Indians have seldom been punished” (140). Vizenor’s observation is spot on: Racially charged mass murder of Native Americans occurred from the moment of European contact, and Wounded Knee was no exception. Callahan desperately wanted to show this to her Anglo readers in *Wynema*.

### Chapter 3

#### **The Borderland of California: Joaquín Murieta and the Fight against Print Media's Inspired 'Gringo Justice'**

*Joaquín "leaves behind him the important lesson that there is nothing so dangerous as its consequences as injustice to individuals—whether it arise from prejudice of color or from any other source; that a wrong done to one man is a wrong to society and to the world" -- From The Adventures of Joaquín Murieta by John Rollin Ridge (158).*

The land known today as California may be most popularly romanticized with carefree living, happy people, movie stars, cafés, and countless beaches, but this popular belief masks and revises California's dark, violent history. California's extensive history is replete with countless clashes between the many disparate groups who initially lived there, and those who later settled there. A surfeit number of these clashes have been racially charged in nature, as well as brutally violent. Especially during the nineteenth century, these encounters shared a similar root cause of violence that extends back to the moment of contact with Anglos. Once California became a place of American expansion and settlement, and then a state, many of these clashes occurred directly because of negative Anglo American behavior towards non-Anglos fueled by dominant Anglo print media, from newspapers and literary magazines to literary pieces. Often, these clashes escalated to extreme situations, especially after the U.S.-Mexico war ended in 1848, as well as after Anglo Americans began migrating westward in the frenzy of Manifest Destiny and greed for gold.

Fueled by jealousy, hatred, racism, mob mentality, and misinformation through print media, Anglo Americans frequently engaged in racially charged mass murder of Mexicans in California throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. Though all of

California's racially marginalized groups also faced racially charged mass murder at the hands of Anglo Americans throughout California's history, this chapter will focus on the racially charged mass murder of Mexicans after the end of the U.S.-Mexico war in 1848—Mexicans who were now Mexican Americans by law in California—by Anglo Americans. This conflict between Anglo and Mexican Americans began at the moment of contact between the two groups. The struggle continued when other Mexicans moved north from Mexico to California in the middle and latter half of the nineteenth-19<sup>th</sup> century.

While dominant Anglo newspapers and literature worked to propagate negative stereotypes and misinformation regarding Mexicans and Mexican Americans in California, John Rollin Ridge published *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta* (1854) in an attempt to combat the falsehoods regularly found in dominant Anglo print media. He also worked to caution his Anglo readers by offering a stern warning about the possible results of mistreating minority groups, and mocking the vilification of Mexicans by Anglos. Ridge's tale of Murieta is one that blatantly points out that Anglo American violence, racism, and mistreatment are what twist Joaquín into the murderous bandit he becomes. Additionally, Ridge used the text to display the negative influence media outlets can have on the behavior of average people. Most importantly, though, Ridge works to show that there is a serious issue within the American justice system: racial discrimination that allows for Anglo dominance in every way—hence the need for a folk-hero figure to retaliate for marginalized groups. To make his case, Ridge used the already existing, popular myth of Joaquín Murieta. Through Joaquín, Ridge shows that this combination of Anglo violence and manipulations of facts and violent acts can turn a

person from being a good, law-abiding citizen to one who thirsts only for the violent, gritty satisfaction of revenge. Ridge also shows what greed can do to a person (or a group of people) through Harry Love, the Anglo ranger who wildly chased, captured, and (allegedly) killed Joaquín (or a Joaquín) for a generous cash reward. By publishing this text for Anglo readers using a dominant Anglo press, Ridge was able to undermine the typical denigrations and misinformation the dominant Anglo press published regarding Mexicans in California, as well as to move Mexicans from the periphery to the center, providing voice and presence for an under-represented, maltreated and intentionally misrepresented group. In doing this, Ridge painted for his Anglo readers a vastly different picture of reality for Mexicans in California for readers.

The dominant Anglo press helped to perpetuate misrepresentation and called for violence against Mexican Americans, by including lynchings, and other acts of random violence. However, *Joaquín Murieta* offers a counter narrative for readers that undermines the majority of what Anglo Americans read about Mexican Americans in newspapers, literary pieces, and other dominant Anglo print media sources. As someone who experienced and witnessed discrimination, violence, forced relocation, and repression throughout his life, Ridge was familiar with the wrongdoings against several groups of people at the hands of Anglo Americans. In the text, Ridge provided voice and exposed what happened to Mexicans and Mexican Americans at large in California. Ridge also derided the dominant Anglo press portrayals of Mexican Americans and the narratives of hostility the dominant Anglo press regularly printed regarding Mexicans in Mexico and California alike. Ultimately, in using a dominant Anglo press in San Francisco to publish *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta*, Ridge reached an

Anglo audience and was able to destabilize these narratives of hostility toward Mexicans and Mexican Americans while also warning readers of the dangers of mistreating groups of people.

### **Navigating a Career Geared to Undermine the Dominant Anglo Press**

Ridge's background offers a unique perspective on the Mexican American experience in California. As both Carolyn Foreman Thomas and Richard Parins note, after intense discrimination and political debates regarding assimilation (Ridge was pro-assimilation) and the "Indian Question," Ridge's Cherokee heritage led to his exile from Georgia. A perilous situation later led him to leave Arkansas for California in search of a new life and monetary success. Though it had a serendipitous outcome, prior to his success, Ridge's arrival in California was preceded by a difficult, harrowing journey, monetary worries, murder, and sickness.<sup>59</sup> In hopes of financial fortune, Ridge traveled to California to work as a miner, but upon arrival found disappointment. He found placer mining to be unsatisfactory, difficult, and non-lucrative—not unlike the experiences of many other unskilled miners who attempted to mine for gold.

However, Ridge also found his calling in California: he became part of the literary circle there almost immediately, and his career as a journalist and writer took off. Parins notes Ridge's arrival was "chronicled by 'Old Block'—Alonzo Delano" (72); Ridge soon also became involved the journalistic circle there shortly after he met Joseph Grant, the "local agent for the New Orleans *True Delta* (73).<sup>60</sup> Ridge then became a correspondent for the *True Delta* and gained almost immediate recognition from readers. Shortly after this, Parins writes that Ridge "began writing for the *Golden Era* in its first year of publication" (76), a literary journal with good circulation started by Rollin Daggett, a

writer and editor, and politician, and by J. Macdonough Foard in 1852.<sup>61</sup> The journal was immensely popular and hosted publications from authors including Twain and Harte. Horace Greeley raved about the journal, calling it “the most remarkable paper,” marveling “to think of its power and influence . . .” (*The Story of the Files: a Review of California Writers and Literature* 16).<sup>62</sup>

Ridge published throughout California, and over the span of his career penned and published many pieces of romantic poetry and journalism, two disparate styles he would combine in *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta*. Ridge was well versed in hardship, exile, mistreatment, and discrimination, he had experienced difficulties in mining and was familiar with newspapers and publishers across California and their treatment (positive and negative) of Mexicans there. By this time, Ridge was also an accomplished writer and was familiar with a host of authors who sometimes doubled as journalists and even as political activists, and therefore he may have imagined his audience as sympathetic to the plight of Mexicans through Joaquín. The Editor’s Preface presses this notion, averring the truth of events and the telling of the story, from his use of “localities” in California to those who harbored Joaquín (Ridge 4-5).

Upon its publication, Ridge’s *Joaquín Murieta* circulated well: a sensational text in many ways, it contains all of the elements necessary to titillate readers and therefore drew an audience of eager readers. Fueled by a need for bloody, gritty revenge, *Joaquín* features rape, fainting women, lynching, blind anger, and gory violence. The myth of Joaquín Murieta already existed in Mexican and Anglo communities, and California newspapers then worked to perpetuate, embellish, and twist the story, even though Ridge claimed the book was “strictly true” (5).<sup>63</sup> Ridge’s narrator, however, vows to “confine



[him] self particularly to the individual moments of Joaquín, and strictly to those facts which are absolutely known and traceable to their original source” (109). Either way, Ridge’s literary approach worked, and the book was successful. According to Ridge, *Joaquín Murieta* sold 7,000 copies and was republished in 1871, and as Parins, puts it, sold “widely” around California, especially in the mining towns of Sonora and Weaverville (104).<sup>64</sup>

Reviewers displayed mixed reactions, but people plagiarized Ridge’s book for decades—evidence of its wild popularity and the success of the media circus following several different bandits by the name of Joaquín, all largely presented by California’s newspaper presses with the goal of profit in mind. Even Ridge acknowledges the media circus surrounding Joaquín, for as his narrator notes, “Joaquín gathered a pretty good knowledge of what his followers were about from the newspapers, which made a very free use of his own name” (30). Harry Love’s wildly romanticized chase of Joaquín and the alleged capture, killing, and beheading of Joaquín was publicized extensively throughout the state on the pages of many California newspapers. Later, when this spectacle was not enough, Murieta’s alleged pickled head was put on display along with Three Fingered Jack’s (alleged) hand for people to ogle throughout California.

Ridge uses Love’s chase of Murieta to point out to readers the exceptional lengths Anglos willingly go to out of greed, but also to show Anglo willingness to decimate the Mexican population. Ridge uses Love to show Anglo behavior toward Mexicans as self-righteous, brutal, violent, and extreme. Ultimately, Ridge showed readers that Anglo Americans are similar to Love. They are driven by greed, jealousy, and hatred. Ridge also uses these stories to show the extent the dominant Anglo press perpetuated racism

and violence against Mexicans. Ridge was not only familiar with these articles but used them to provide readers with a counter narrative that challenged the dominant press' adverse portrayal of Mexicans and glorification of Anglos such as Harry Love.

Ridge, like many others before and after him, expressed a desire to be a successful author, and with *Joaquín Murieta* he may have achieved his goal, if not the fortune he sought. Goeke contends Ridge helped establish “the pulp literature and dime-novel industry” (171), though Ridge’s displeasure with the publishing industry in California is clear in his personal letters. In the publisher’s preface, Ridge announces himself as a Cherokee and reveals his painful and complicated family history (1-3), and alleges in writing the novel that his aim is to show “the character of Indian talent” (3) in writing. It worked well and has influenced other writers. In her essay, “Print, Cultural Memory, and John Rollin Ridge's *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta, the Celebrated California*,” Lori Merish includes a scene from Bette Louise Bell’s novel, *Faces in the Moon*. Lucie Evers tells a snide Anglo American librarian who attempts to belittle her because of her heritage, “I am your worst nightmare: I am an Indian with a pen” (Qtd in Merish 37). Even today, author Sherman Alexie acknowledges, “A smart Indian is a dangerous person, widely feared” (“The Joys of Reading and Writing: Superman and Me” 2) by all.

Goeke argues that Ridge’s announcement of his Native heritage “was both a boon and a hindrance...[I]t made his book a showcase of ‘Indian talent’ rather than a fully legitimate literary offering” (463). Goeke’s statement wavers on the edge of condescension into possible typical ethnocentric views on who “can” or who is even “allowed” to write a novel. Louis Owens, however, addresses this issue, arguing that

Ridge's novel is more about audience interests than highlighting "Indian talent" because Ridge was keenly aware that Anglo audiences would be more receptive and sympathetic to a text about Mexicans and not Indians (33). Moreover, Owens affirms, "Ridge would have recognized the poor marketability of Indian outrage in the West" and because he was a journalist and author, "would have also recognized the kind of literature that would be acceptable and publishable" (33). Owens' argument here aligns itself well with Ridge's experiences both as a newspaper correspondent and as a literary contributor: both positions helped him gauge his audience, as would continual conversations with successful journalists and authors. In other words, Ridge knew exactly what he was doing when he used a dominant Anglo press to publish *Joaquín Murieta*.

Goeke does acknowledge this: he notes Ridge was prepared to "brave the scrutiny of the world accompany[ing] a white audience's reception of an Indian author with the thought that he might represent his people in a positive manner" (464). Additionally, as John Lowe points out, part of Ridge's success was the willingness of the Anglo American reading audience, who "had no problem . . . accepting equal doses of romantic fantasy and gruesome realism" (30), an area Ridge excelled in portraying to readers. Owens also characterizes Ridge as shrewd in his decision-making as an author and as someone "who can move easily inside the dominant white culture but cannot forget or forgive the denigration by that culture of his indigenous self" (Owens 32-33). Owens demonstrates how Ridge may have written the novel using Mexicans as a screen for violence committed against Native Americans to engage in fantasies of revenge for Native Americans. Owens refers to Ridge as an author who "transforms himself and his

bitterness against the oppression and displacement of Indians, becoming a haunted shape shifter writing between the lines” (32).

In adding to this ongoing discussion, and to the distinct but successful arguments several scholars have made, I argue that Ridge’s text moves both Mexican Americans and Native Americans from the periphery of California to the center in *Joaquín Murieta*. I further argue that in using the dominant Anglo press to publish his story Ridge deliberately worked to give voice and presence to Mexican Americans (and through a filtered screen, to Native Americans) within the space of dominant Anglo American literature to show Anglo readers what narratives of hostility do to a person, a group, and even a nation. Though dominant Anglo American history misrepresents, underrepresents, or even ignores minority experiences, and provides a false or altered history, especially in literature, Ridge succeeds in providing not just an alternative history but also in offering a counter history meant to contest and undercut dominant Anglo American behavior through *Joaquín Murieta*. This counter history undermines and upsets the binary oppositions put into place by Anglo American dominance and repositions Anglo Americans as murderous, lawless, greedy citizens, while simultaneously revealing Anglo hypocrisy, violence, theft, and dishonesty that forces Mexican Americans to fight back similarly, or face acts of racially charged mass murder. Ridge is careful to note his sadness of this behavior on the part of Americans whom he deems as undeserving of the name American (10)—a clever move on his part as he separates the reader from this classification of Anglos. Ridge also shows Anglo American readers that if they want to believe Mexican Americans are the monstrous bandits the newspapers would have readers believe, that when Mexicans manifest this behavior it is in responses to Anglo

behavior, violence, and racially charged mass murder. In turn, Ridge argues the same for Native Americans.

### **The Reality of Life for Mexicans in California after the U.S.-Mexico War**

Initially, Ridge's narrator explains that Joaquín has a "mild and peaceful disposition" with a "generous disposition" (8). He grows up with a good family in Mexico, is educated there, and then decides to travel to America once the war ends because he not only believes in democracy, but because of the opportunities he believes are available in America. Joaquín, "took a very dim view of what their government could do for them" (6), so he "resolves to try his fortunes among the American people," whom he views with an "enthusiastic admiration" (Ridge 9). Joaquín sets out for California to become a miner in early 1850, which reflects the history of so many forty-niners from Mexico. Additionally, with the official end of the U.S.-Mexico war in February 1848 and with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Joaquín has no reason not to travel to California.

The treaty ensured that Mexicans living in California would enjoy full U.S. citizenship, offering a propitious outlook, echoing the American pinnacle of democracy. After California became a state on September 9, 1850, California's constitution would secure this aspect of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Article I, Section 17, specifically states, "Foreigners who are, or who may hereafter become *bona fide* residents of this State, shall enjoy the same rights in respect to the possession, enjoyment, and inheritance of property, as native born citizens." The treaty also ensured that Mexican property would remain in the hands of its now Mexican American owners.

Things were not this simple, however: after the U.S.-Mexico war ended in early 1848, California, along with the land that the current states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada comprise no longer were Mexican lands but were now American lands. The transition of land may have been smooth via paper, but the emotions of those who lived there and those who migrated from other parts of America to settle there were raw. As Douglas Monroy notes, “A number of factors show clearly that the Mexican [-American] War continued to sizzle for at least a decade after the peace treaty” (214). Beyond this, the previously Mexican lands had been Native American for several centuries; this sudden change via the transfer of lands caused already existing tensions to increase.

After the land became a part of the United States, Anglo Americans began claiming it as their own, participating in white entitlement, regardless of who already lived on the land and irrespective of the treaties that assured Mexicans of property rights. While these treaties promised Mexicans they would not lose their lands or rights, Anglo Americans took Mexican lands as they wished and regularly robbed Mexicans of their rights in California. In short, violent clashes ensued: Anglo Americans stole Mexican American lands, forcibly relocated the Mexicans living on the lands they stole, brutally beat the men and raped the women, and regularly lynched both at will—all because of the Anglo beliefs of racial and cultural superiority, greed, and White entitlement.

As a result, Anglo American nativism, racism, and belief of cultural superiority spurred deep hatred and resentment of Mexican Americans and ultimately led to acts of racially charged mass murder across California. Ridge’s narrator explains this situation, noting that a group of “lawless” Anglo Americans who have “the brute power to do as

they please visit Joaquín's house and peremptorily bade him leave his claim, as they would allow no Mexicans to work in that region" (10). When Joaquín resists these Anglo Americans, "they str[ike] him violently over the face" and physically overtake him and then "ravish" (Ridge 10) his lover while making him watch. This, according to the narrator, is "the first injury" Joaquín "receive[s] at the hands of Americans, whom he had always hitherto respected" and the events leave his soul "darkened" (Ridge 10). It also represents the historical forcible removal from his land, a fate so many Mexican Americans faced in California at the hands of Anglos.

Joaquín leaves his rightful land because of these acts of aggression against him, and he gives up mining, just as many Mexican Americans experienced. Daniel S. Woods notes a group meeting of miners in Jacksonville in 1850 decided that "No person coming directly from a foreign country shall be permitted to locate or work any lot within the jurisdiction of the encampment [in Jacksonville]" (128). Chan cites the same meeting, noting "a resolution passed in Sonora...require[ing] all foreigners 'not engaged' in permanent business and of respectable character to leave within fifteen days. Those who remained had to turn in their firearms and obtain a permit from a self-styled enforcement committee of American miners" (64).

Ridge also sets up a similar situation in *Joaquín Murieta*, though it is probably later than 1850 and closer to 1853, long after Joaquín's personality changes. The narrator notes the fear the Anglo population who now live in fear of Joaquín's presence. The Anglo Americans fear him so much they "huddled all the inhabitants... mostly Mexicans, together in a large tent, depriving them of their arms" (Ridge 136). When the crowd finds a culprit because of this "round up," the Anglo American crowd decides to hang

him without judge or jury, regardless of his innocence or guilt simply because he is a Mexican. Ridge cleverly uses the nameless Mexican man as an example of reality for Mexicans in California, so that his readers can understand the gravity of the situation. Beyond all of the laws and the violence that followed, the Foreign Miner's Tax came next: twenty dollars per month for all foreigners, an amount so exorbitant almost no one could pay it. Anglo lawmakers clearly designed the law to drive non-Anglo Americans out of the mines and out of California. It also paved the way for violence as retribution for nonpayment of the tax.

Ridge also discusses another important factor in understanding the clashes that occurred in California, as well as what led to the Foreign Miner's Tax: the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in 1848. This discovery was both momentous and detrimental to Mexicans already living in California simultaneously: many Mexicans were already skilled miners and knew they could fare well economically from mining. However, due to Anglo jealousy and entitled belief systems, racial tensions flared and helped lead to planned acts by Anglo Americans of racially charged mass murder against people of Mexican descent. The discovery of gold also led California's inhabitants to become even more diverse, from Native Americans, to Spanish and Mexicans, to the disparate forty-niners of the gold rush era, and the result was a convergence of religions, cultures, languages, and politics. Richard H. Peterson described this as a "magnetic appeal" (*Manifest Destiny in the Mines*) for gold, one that might include harmony, cultural diversity, community support, and economic success for all, but instead of a diverse shared space of prosperity, Anglo Americans worked to ensure no one else could share in California's riches. Anglo Americans achieved this through vigilante law before



California became a state, and then, with statehood, they used the legislature to target non-Anglo Americans—information that was covered and encouraged throughout the dominant Anglo press. As Monroy argues, “The functioning of the law ensured the growth and development of southern California’s productive wealth would be an Americano affair” (206). He further notes, “The legal system helped the Americans exclude Mexicans from economic opportunities, thus forcing them into dependency on wage labor and then forcibly pacifying them if they resisted” (Monroy 205-206). Combined racial hatred and feelings of Anglo superiority set the scene for inevitable violence, a fact Ridge brings to light in his text.

True to historical events again, like so many Mexicans did, Joaquín settles into mining, is exceptionally successful in “fast amassing a fortune from his rich mining claim” (Ridge 10), and well liked within the community. Now re-settled down with his lover, a “beautiful Sonoran girl” (Ridge 10) things seem well enough, but the narrator notes a severe change for Joaquín, and presumably for others, as in history so many experienced what Joaquín experiences. He explains this change is due to “lawless and desperate men, who bore the name of Americans but failed to support the honor and dignity of that title” (Ridge 10). This group of Anglo men, the narrator informs readers, feels “contempt for any and all Mexicans, whom they looked upon as no better than the conquered subjects of the United States and having no rights that could stand before a haughtier race” (Ridge 10-11).

Desperate, confused, shocked, and hurt, Joaquín decides initially to try his fortune in a “more northern portion of the mines” (12). After careful thought, however, Joaquín decides instead to take up farming in a “seclu[ded] area” (12). Though Ridge does not

mention this fact, Peterson notes that “during 1851, the shock waves of American nativism continued to shake the southern diggings [but] on the other hand, only nativist tremors disrupted the northern mines from 1850-1851” (70). This likely explains Joaquín’s temporary harmony after his initial forced removal from his land and Rosita’s rape. The narrator clearly notes that Joaquín is looking for “peace” with the idea of being able to “forget the past and again be happy” (12) but in line with sensational text form, Joaquín’s dream, predictably “is not destined to last” (12). Joaquín faces awful torment at the hands of Anglo Americans again.

This time it is by a “company of unprincipled Americans” who claim his “fertile tract of land” (12) for themselves and then “drive him from it with no other excuse than he was ‘an infernal Mexican intruder’” (12). On March 3, 1851, California’s legislature passed the discriminatory Land Act of 1851, which demanded Mexican American landowners demonstrate proof of ownership in writing through a title—something many had never had. Joaquín’s “blood boil[s] in his veins” (12), but the narrator explains he is still “unbroken” and “resolve[s] to labor on” (12). Many Mexicans living in California at this time did not possess written land titles, and as a result, many faced forcible removal from their lands. Joaquín is no different in this regard, but also serves as a prime example for readers of how Anglo Americans treated Mexican Americans in California.

Tensions continued to develop to the point of racially charged mass murders in California against Native Americans, Chinese Americans, and Mexican Americans. Newspapers across the state helped foster angst, distrust, nativism, and racism toward each group, and popular literature not only affirmed but also reified these ideas. In the mines, violence against Mexican Americans grew rapidly. As Native Americans and

Chinese Americans experienced planned acts of violence from Anglo Americans, by the time California became a state, it already had a history as a hotspot of racially charged mass murder: Countless numbers of specific groups of non-Anglo American people were murdered via a surfeit of premeditated acts. Furthermore, the financial successes of Mexican Americans led Anglo Americans to call for the ousting of Mexicans from the mines, and after California became a state, the demand was for Mexicans (who then were Mexican American) to be driven out of the state as a whole. Frustrations and impatience with California's legal processes, after it became a state and legal disorganization beforehand, however, led to the enactment of these desires by intentional acts of violence, intimidation, and public spectacle to encourage fear of Mexican Americans.

William Robert Kenny argues that Anglo Americans often took advantage of generous Mexican miners. Typically, Kenny notes, "As soon as the newcomer [usually an unskilled Anglo American miner] had mastered the rudimentary skills of gold-washing" (586), the American "ordered all these obliging foreigners out of the mining region at the point of a pistol" (586). As these "foreign" miners were far more successful in extracting gold than were Anglo Americans, tensions ran high. According to Kenny, "In 1848 the average citizen of the United States knew nothing...about mining precious metals" (582), while Mexicans, on the other hand, were particularly skilled in mining.

On the part of Anglo Americans, this caused strained relationships, fear, and distrust of Mexicans that ultimately led to "open violence and lynch law" where Mexicans were "the usual victims" (Kenny 588). Beyond this, long-developed Anglo American fears regarding Spanish culture and heritage, Mexican cultural, and Catholic religious practices further marred relations between the two groups (Paredes 139).

Several other scholars have noted the impact of Manifest Destiny in fostering racism and hatred for non-Anglos, as well as a belief that only Anglos belonged in the westward space of the continent. Kenny notes, “Wherever Mexicans and Americans came into contact in large groups there were commonly exhibited open feelings of dislike and distrust” (583). Beyond this, Richard H. Peterson shows that “popular literature on pre-gold rush California provided...[the] negative stereotype...of the Mexican” (ix), which “implied the cultural inferiority of the Mexican” (ix), but also that Nativism nationally and locally in California fostered hatred (*Manifest Destiny in the Mines* 78). As a result, Anglo Americans continually worked to push Mexican miners farther south and out of California regularly.<sup>65</sup>

As early as 1849, Peterson notes that Anglo Americans called for the exclusions of Mexicans everyday (“Anti-Mexican Nativism in California” 310). Peterson also notes, “California’s military governor, Major General Persifor F. Smith announced, “All foreigners who attempted to dig for gold in California would be prosecuted in as trespassers” (“Anti-Mexican Nativism in California” 314). On August 20, 1850, the Sonora *Herald* published a poem, “The Great Greaser Extermination Meeting,” where the speaker in the first stanza describes a public meeting to call for Mexican expulsion or extermination:

In Sonora, one hot and sultry day/  
Many people had gathered together/  
They were bound to drive the Greasers away/  
And they cared not a d—n for the weather. (Qtd in Kenny 586).

The abundance of tense, violent events that occurred in, around, and because of California's gold mines serves as an example of this uneasy diversity and the angst and violence that accompanied it, as countless numbers of people arrived from many different places to make their fortunes and attempt to settle in California, or to go back home. Part of the issue was also that Anglo Americans accused Mexican Americans of digging for gold, finding it, and then sending the money back to Mexico. Yet, several accounts prove otherwise.<sup>66</sup> Walter Colton, for example, recorded in his journal: "Not one pound of gold in ten, gathered by these foreigners, is shipped off to their credit: it is spent in [California] for provisions, clothing, and . . . [at] the gambling table. It falls into the hands of those who command the avenues of commerce, and ultimately reaches our own mints . . . [and] the capacious pockets of Americans" (367-368). Anglo Americans worked to perpetuate these myths, however, and worked to dispossess Mexicans (and others) of the right to mine in California and then worked to either push them out by force or murder them in droves.

Clearly, these ideas reflect Anglo disregard for Mexican citizenship. They also reflect intense racism, which Ridge eloquently describes as "the prejudice of color" (11) and display the ideas of Anglo superiority to others as a result of Manifest Destiny. The *Stockton Times* printed on April 6, 1850, the following letter from a soldier:

I was in the Mexican War—I was—and I can tell you. . . I know what Mexicans are—I do. They are no men; an army of Mexicans is of no more account . . . and didn't I smash 'em. Mexicans have no business in this country. I don't believe in them. The men were made to be shot at, and the women made for our purposes.

I'm a white man—I am! A Mexican is pretty near black. I hate all Mexicans.

(Qtd in Peterson 9)

Shortly after California became a state, the treaty was undermined and ultimately disregarded, and, according to Peterson, “daily economic competition and jealousy in the California mines...crystalized anti-Mexican feeling into widespread nativist reaction” (*Manifest Destiny in the Mines* ix). Mexicans went from being successful miners and peaceful landowners to experiencing intimidation, theft, lynchings, violence, and forced removal from their lands and the mines. Standart notes that “eviction became reality” (7) for Mexican Americans mining in California, and Gonzales-Day argues that “in the American west, communities that were identified as nonwhite were regularly targeted by exclusionary acts that placed restrictions on who could mine, own land, buy a home, vote, serve on a jury, become a citizen, and even get married” (13). As time progressed, Mexican Americans in California faced a growing backlash from Anglo American settlers of California that led to regular, planned acts of violence that targeted them.

Countless numbers also arrived in scores to seek their fortunes. On May 22, 1850, Robert Wilson, the special correspondent for the San Francisco *Daily Alta California*, wrote of the diversity present in California: “Such a motley collection of Mexicans, Chileans, Frenchmen, Jews, Jonathans, Paddies, and Sawnies, I had never seen together in California before” (Qtd in Perkins 37). Large numbers of people migrated from Mexico. Carrigan and Webb estimate some 25,000 (422) moved to California within four years beginning in 1848, while Richard H. Peterson avers, “Residents of the northern Mexican state of Sonora responded quickly to the news of the gold discovery” (“Anti-Mexican Nativism in California” 309). This response was so fast that according

to Peterson, “as many as 20,000 Sonorans entered California between 1849 and 1851” (“Anti-Mexican Nativism in California” 309-310). Many Mexicans were already skilled miners and readily helped others become successful in the mining of gold, especially helping Anglo Americans (Kenny 586). These numbers do not reflect the many Mexicans already living in California, but does reflect the sheer volume of settlers, and helps to show how problems towards Mexicans developed out of experience, jealousy, and greed towards mining.

### **Exposing, Challenging, and Undermining Narratives of Hostility**

Not all newspapers partook in spreading lies and hatred against Mexican Americans, something Ridge was familiar with as a journalist working in California. The *Daily Alta California* decried the Foreign Miner’s Tax as deadly for those considered foreigners, declaring “riot and bloodshed instead of being prevented, will ensue from any attempt to enforce it. In many instances it will be merely legalizing the most desperate attacks upon the foreign population” (Qtd in Peterson 49). As a result, many miners simply gave up, leaving California, or changed work, much like Joaquín does. The Foreign Miner’s Tax however, was devastating to the businesses of California. Chan points out that Anglo American miners “often resorted to violence” to “enforce” their demands that Mexicans exit from the mines (64), while Lori Merish maintains that most of this property then was transferred to “Anglo squatters or miners” (68). Joaquín experiences both of these events, though Joaquín does not experience what happened next in California. California’s next act against Mexican Americans and other non-Anglo American groups passed the Foreign Miner’s Tax, a monthly tax in the excessive amount of twenty dollars per person. Lawmakers designed the law to drive Mexicans and

other “foreigners” out of the mines so that Anglo Americans could reap the benefits and profits. According to the *Daily* on April 22, 1850, California senator Thomas Jefferson Green introduced the bill (Qtd in Kenny 589). Intended to decimate all “foreign” populations that participated in mining, it especially targeted the Mexican American miners because they were successful and in the minds of many Anglo Americans threatened their economic success.

On June 1, 1850, the *Stockton Times* declared, “Business in many places is at a complete standstill” because of the Foreign Miner’s Tax. Soon after, on July 31, 1850, the *Sacramento Transcript* noted that “if the exorbitant tax of twenty dollars per month on all foreign miners was intended to drive this population out of the mines, the end of the law is about being accomplished, for they are leaving by hundreds” (1). Even after people came to the defense of the foreign population and decried the tax, nothing changed. Peterson cites “a Stockton businessman” who wrote to the *Daily Alta California* in a memo published on March 7, 1851 that, “if the collection of this tax is persisted in, the business of this place will be ruined, and its effect will also be felt in your city” (66). Yet this businessman also expressed grave concern at the violence against foreigners he knew would follow. He writes, “I feel certain that the scenes of robbery and bloodshed of the last year will be renewed with tenfold violence” (Qtd in Peterson 66). This businessman was correct: things continued to become progressively worse. Nadeau writes that “by September of 1851, three-fourths of the Mexican population [had] left Sonora” (29). In fact, even before this, many newspapers celebrated the idea of forced removal. After witnessing the “Sonora Resolutions” in “front of Colonel Jackson’s store” (Woods 125) on January 20, 1850, many Mexican Americans



fled in fear of their lives. Peterson cites a piece from the Sonora *Herald* that claimed, “The prompt action of the people in the late emergency has had the effect of teaching the hombres a lesson that they will never forget.” The *Herald* added, “The outcasts of every nation have combined to disturb us; and we think that now they have effectually been silenced” (Qtd in Peterson 60). The *Daily Alta California* supported Mexican Americans, however, and worked, like Ridge, to give voice and presence to the Mexican American population in California, “condemn[ing] the narrow-minded narrow-souled views of the anti-foreigner party” (Qtd in Peterson 61).

The *Daily Alta California* cited the reactions of foreign miners after several “notice[s] distributed in various languages during mid May 1850,” a reaction Peterson characterizes as “vehement” (56). Peterson also reports the use of propaganda in convincing the Anglo American public of “Mexican criminality” that “provided a pretext for a second wave of expulsions” (*Manifest Destiny in the Mines* 59) from the mines. Peterson further notes that “the foreign miner’s Tax “sanctioned the forcible removal of aliens from their claims for failure to pay” (“Anti-Mexican Nativism in California” 310). Later, Josiah Royce declared the Foreign Miner’s Tax was detrimental to all in California: he argued that it “convert[ed] into rogues all honest foreigners who might come” (282-283) to California. Tinkham also acknowledged that “maltreatment of the foreigners” led to all “suffer[ing]” as a result” (130), though he acknowledges the “abuse was especially directed against Mexicans” (130) in California. Monroy affirms this tax led to “State-sanctioned mass violence against people of color” (203), which Ridge depicts as happening to Joaquín and others in the text.

The Foreign Miner's Tax was the culmination of Anglo American greed, irascibility, and racially charged hatred and nativism in the mines, emotions that had been building for decades. On August 9, 1850, the *Daily Alta California* noted this issue specifically, writing that the Mexican miners displayed "superior and uniform success" and that as a result, Anglo American miners displayed "envy and jealousy" (2). Nothing was done about the violence that ensued, however, and many Mexican Americans paid a price for planned acts of violence against them: death. Lawmakers later repealed the Foreign Miner's Tax, but tensions did not ease, and violence against Mexican Americans continued.

Due to his experiences, newspaper misrepresentations, and falsehoods, as well as knowledge of gross mistreatment at the hands of Anglos, Ridge shows what can happen to a person. Joaquín, for lack of a better term, snaps, and his tale becomes one of gruesome revenge—but his turn from a law-abiding citizen into a murderous bandit is not simply a sensational story. Rather, it is a cautionary tale, one that warns readers of what happens when a dominant. What Ridge achieves here is painting a picture to readers of how Anglos mistreat Mexicans, using Joaquín as a mirror for Anglos. In many ways, Joaquín's violent ways reflect the ways Anglos acted toward Mexicans. Ridge, however, makes it patently clear that Joaquín became an "outlaw" only after Anglo Americans rape his mistress, beat him, accuse him of theft, steal his lands and claims from the mine, and beat and kill his half-brother. With all of these acts of aggression and violence directed at Joaquín, he finally reaches his breaking point and loses his ability to withstand more violence. Ridge also shows that Joaquín moves to the fringes of society because he has become an outcast. Hurt, betrayed, and confused by the actions and broken promises by

a people whom he had once respected, Joaquín ultimately “contract[s] a hatred to the whole American race” (14). As such, he becomes “determined to shed their blood, whenever and wherever the opportunity occurred” (14), and the bandit emerges to exact his revenge on the Anglo American population at large for its crimes against Mexicans. Thus, Joaquín’s story becomes one of revenge as well as a story of survivance in the face of racially charged mass murder.

Joaquín knows he is not alone in his experiences or anger at Anglo Americans and that great numbers of Mexicans have had similar experiences. In Ridge’s novel, the narrator makes it clear that Joaquín’s mistreatment at the hands of Anglo Americans is not unique; rather it represents what is happening to a whole group of people. Secret points out that “leafing through the brittle pages of . . . old gold rush newspapers, one inevitably comes across countless items telling of lynchings, floggings, and brandings of Mexicans for minor or alleged offenses—the object of which, in many cases, was to drive the ‘foreigners’ from the desirable mining claims” (6). This is as significant to Joaquín’s character as his transformation, as well as to enacting survivance. Chan quotes Bancroft’s comments on these acts: “the killing and expulsion of nonwhite groups [were] ‘disgraceful’ and ‘cowardly’” (45) and recalls Royce’s assertion that Anglo “civilization sometimes seemed to have lapsed into semi barbarism” (222). Clearly, though, Royce and Bancroft understood the severity of the crimes committed against Mexican Americans in California. Theodore Henry Hitell, the author of the *History of California*, also noted the practice of lynch law, which he alleged occurred due to a “violent prejudice against foreigners” (III. 283).

In an effort to fight back, Joaquín rounds up others who have been victim to racism, violence, beatings, robbery, and forced removal at the hands of Anglo Americans. Soon, his band of men works to disrupt and weaken Anglo American financial success, tyranny, and racism. Though many have argued Three-Fingered Jack is a problematic character because he is both bloodthirsty and especially fond of killing Chinese miners, Joaquín constantly works to undercut Jack's behavior and expresses remorse when he cannot control Jack, and more frequently than not, he is able to "overrule" (Ridge 63) Three-Fingered Jack's desire for blood (especially Chinese American blood). Pitt has shown that the Chinese community in San Francisco raised one thousand dollars for the capture of [the alleged] Joaquín (80). Though many scholars support Pitt, including Monroy, two significant historical facts suggests their analyses is perhaps incomplete. First, Three Fingered Jack terrorizes and brutally murders Chinese Americans—not Joaquín. Second, because Ridge was writing a text with the very practical goal of making money, he thus was compelled to sensationalize or take liberty with information in order to appeal to his readership. Many of his readers would not be averse to reading about the murders of Chinese Americans.

Though Joseph Henry Jackson and many other scholars debunked the existence of a singular Joaquín Murieta, instructing readers in the popular edition of the book today with the idea that "there wasn't much of a Joaquín Murieta" (L), Jackson misses the point. It is the *idea* of Joaquín that matters, and Ridge knew it and used it to create a scathing critique of Anglo behavior. Ridge created Joaquín's character and his cohorts out of myth and media sensationalism to shed light on the extent to which the general Anglo American public was simply unaware of the gross mistreatment of Mexican

Americans through beatings, theft, forced removal, and the regular lynchings that occurred in large numbers by Anglo American mobs.

Indeed, Luis Leal argues that even today Joaquín is an integral part of California's mythological existence because "history and fiction have become so interwoven...it is impossible to separate them" (153). Historically, the idea of Joaquín as a single, almost omnipresent bandit made him/them "the scourge of the state" (Parins 98). Ridge made good use of the "Joaquín scare" (78), as Leonard Pitt describes it, to challenge and undermine the dominant Anglo press. It does not matter if Joaquín committed one crime or several, "Anglo and Mexican Americans, for different reasons, believed Murieta did" (Alemán 83). As a result, Parins notes some of the Anglo "citizens of various districts where Joaquín operated, particularly around Mariposa, Tuolumne, and Calaveras counties, were terrified" (100) of the so-called bandit, while others praised him.

Anglo Americans also targeted anyone who fought against their dominance, which is exactly what Ridge depicts in *Joaquín Murieta*. Just as Anglo Americans embraced and enacted fierce violence against Mexican Americans in California, Joaquín finally comes to "reject civility as a means of resistance, instead depicting violence as a legitimate response to oppression" (Merish 50). While *Joaquín Murieta* depicts Mexican fantasies of revenge, it also works as a mirror for Anglo Americans to see how violence begets violence but also how lawlessness, greed, and an utter disregard for human life turns men into monstrous, vicious bandits, feared by all, regardless of guilt or innocence. Joaquín Murieta is just such a figure, but Joaquín admits he is a rogue, qualifying his explanation by explaining to readers that it is because of what Anglo Americans have

done to him, to his lover, and to his half-brother, among others. As a result, Joaquín becomes a self-declared bandit in the eyes of Anglo “law.”

For the Mexican American population in California, Ridge’s Joaquín serves as a hero to oppressed populations fighting dominant Anglo society, someone brave enough to fight against Anglo-domination, and planned acts of Anglo American violence against Mexicans—a champion of Mexican Americans who repeatedly faced horrors from Anglo Americans. As Nadeau writes of Joaquín, Ridge fashioned him as “a Romantic avenger, the champion of a down trodden people” (13). Lori Merish’s point that Joaquín is *not* a criminal but rather an avenger (50) affirms this idea, as in reality Anglo American society sought to punish Mexican Americans for the smallest of offenses or just for being Mexican, with the idea of clearing California of all non-Anglo Americans. This is exactly what happens to Joaquín in the novel—and Ridge works to show that Anglo Americans persecute Joaquín for the same crimes they commit against Mexican Americans and in doing so achieves voice and presence for oppressed Mexican Americans using dominant Anglo space.

Joaquín, as readers know him from Ridge’s text, is most definitely the amalgamation of several different bandits or villains from across California. Of course, despite Ridge’s claims of authenticity and many newspaper claims of Joaquín’s ubiquitous existence throughout California, north and south, there is no way in which a single person could be solely responsible for the several crimes that occurred across the state simultaneously. Yet, as Pitt argues, “Men believed in [Joaquín’s] ubiquitousness because of the hostility between Anglo-Saxons and Latin Americans...took many forms and erupted on several fronts” (82). Indeed, in looking at several California newspapers,

including the *Calaveras Chronicle*, the *San Francisco Herald*, the *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, the *Sacramento Union*, and the *Stockton San Joaquin Representative*, Nadeau observes that a “real” Joaquín “emerges” (20) as multiple men conflated into one.

On August 23, 1853, the *Daily Alta California* called out the California legislature on the idea of so many Joaquíns, asking, “Does a legislature soberly and seriously outlaw five men without previous conviction and whose names not one member in ten has ever even heard mentioned? Joaquín Murieta is undoubtedly a very great scoundrel, but...” (1). Moreover, as Shelly Streeby has shown, “Joaquín’s” history begins much earlier in Mexican corridos.<sup>67</sup> Ridge also cherry-picked the newspaper stories he used in the novel to create Joaquín’s tale. For example, Nadeau notes that “public record shows that through the year of 1852, Joaquín Murieta was a horse thief” (26), but that once he was exposed, he “bolted out of Los Angeles” (27). Nadeau also notes that in 1853, a “new Joaquín” emerged and was “far more savage than the horse thief in Los Angeles” (27). Once he was stopped by a sheriff and forced to leave Tuolumne county, Nadeau notes a third Joaquín, an especially “desperate fellow” and a “leader of a gang” (35) emerged. From here, it is easy to see how Ridge created the literary figure that readers meet in *Joaquín Murieta*.

Ridge ultimately shows that Mexican Americans were victims of Anglo American crimes, but that they could fight back. The result of resisting may be death for the individual, as is the case for Joaquín and countless others, but the martyrization figure may in fact be powerful and influential. Indeed, the legend of Joaquín lives on in a haunting absent, yet omnipresent entity in California. Ridge shows that though Anglo Americans argued that they were not thieves, they regularly stole from those they deemed

“foreigners” in the mines, taking whatever they wanted from Mexican Americans and others. They also killed Mexican Americans often and in large numbers, though the true number of victims will never be known. Yet Mexican Americans refused to submit to Anglo American dominance passively. Even if they had been forced into compliance in reality, they could fight back through Ridge’s novel. Paradoxically, Parins notes that many of the people that Anglo Americans referred to as “foreigners” were actually “Native Californians” (96). Yet Anglo American racism, nativism, and greed fueled their desire for dominance in California.

Ridge’s creation of the Joaquín that readers know today helps to show what Anglo American nativism, greed, racism, and thoughts of superiority do to a human: they take a good, law-abiding, peaceful citizen and turn him into a villainous bandit, hell-bent on murder and revenge. In the text, Joaquín’s first experiences with Anglo Americans reflect his hopes of finding fortune and happy life in California, but he rapidly spirals into horror at the hands of Anglo Americans. After enjoying economic success, however, Anglo Americans seek to destroy Joaquín’s happiness in various forms and through various people. Joaquín’s experiences reflect the Mexican American experience at large in California. Thus Ridge shows how and why Joaquín changes from a mannerly and law-abiding citizen to a bandit focused on brutal revenge who is feared by all. More than this, though, Ridge’s text depicts the plight of Mexican Americans in Anglo American space to an Anglo American audience, and as a result, provides voice and presence for a group that faced acts of racially charged mass murder at the hands of Anglo Americans. *Joaquín Murieta* also cautions readers about what can happen when a dominant group pushes too far and hurts too much: the victim, like anyone else, can



suddenly snap and unleash violence upon those who have wronged him as well as on other innocent people.

With the end of the U.S.-Mexico war, the outlook seemed promising for Mexicans already living in California—those who would become Americans via the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—as well as those who ventured north from Mexico who would have new economic opportunities. However, things quickly turned for Mexicans, and instead of living their lives in peace, many Mexicans' lives become dominated by intense fear and anxiety of brutal, violent Anglo American contact. For the smallest offenses, or for no other reason than Mexican descent, Mexicans in California were frequently harassed, beaten, raped, or lynched. Such are Joaquín's experiences. Though he is a character, Joaquín's experiences reflect what Mexicans in California faced on a regular basis after the arrival of Anglo Americans. Too, Ridge was familiar with the issues Mexican Americans faced in California, as he was a Native American in Anglo America. Ridge traveled to California just around the time gold was discovered there. In traveling to California and experiencing life as a miner (albeit for a short period), Ridge witnessed not only some of these issues but also watched Mexican Americans suffer at the hands of Anglo Americans because of greed, racism, hatred, fear, and jealousy of Mexican economic success. Beyond this, local media sources encouraged this racism by printing misinformation that helped spur clashes and racially charged mass murder of Mexican Americans. Not unlike his own experiences in the East due to Anglo racism and hatred of Native Americans, Ridge wrote *The Life and Adventures of Joaquín Murieta* in response to the fabrications and hatred the dominant Anglo press spread regarding Mexican Americans in California. The story also serves as a warning to Ridge's Anglo

readers: that a population might explode if things do not change, because what is happening to the Mexican population in California (and other groups elsewhere) is deplorable, disgusting, and disgraceful. Finally, the story functions to correct the false records prevalent in California's newspapers.

### **Racially Charged Mass Murder via Lynching and Correcting the Official Record**

In the editor's preface, Ridge reveals two other reasons for publishing the novel, equally important to this dissertation. Initially, Ridge claims he wants to record California history, but he also discloses he tells Joaquín's story to do "justice to a people who have so far degenerated as to have been called by many, 'A Nation of Cowards'" (4). True to the historical reality of California, Ridge refers here to the breaking by Anglo Americans of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as well as the attempts to decimate and remove the Mexican American population in California by planned acts of violence, lynchings, and legislation aimed at reclaiming land in California owned by Mexicans. Though Robert Blew argues lynchings were "spontaneous happenings brought about by specific events" that ended immediately "as the danger disappeared" (27), Ridge shows that Mexican lynchings regularly occurred for various and sundry reasons and that the threat of lynching was always imminent—directly challenging the notion that lynchings were sporadic or spontaneous. If anything, the lynchings of Mexicans was grossly under-reported and instead regularly occurred. As Carrigan and Webb note,

More than other Americans, blacks, and Mexicans lived with the threat of lynching throughout the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. The story of Mexican lynching is not a footnote in history but

rather a critical chapter in the history of Anglo western expansion and conquest. If the story of lynching is essential to understanding the African American experience, then lynching is equally important to the story of the Mexican American experience. (414)

Though Ridge only includes a few scenes in his novel discussing lynching, they are powerful and help spread his message to readers. Ridge uses these scenes to drive the point home to readers that lynching was a serious issue: it might happen to anyone, guilty or innocent, it hurts family members, is morally wrong, and causes violent reactions. Ridge also shows the reality Mexicans in America faced regarding lynching.

Ridge uses Joaquín's young cohort, Reyes Feliz, to exemplify this. Feliz joins Joaquín's gang when he is a mere sixteen, and later survives an horrific bear attack that almost kills him only to be recognized and summarily accused of being connected to "the murder of general Bean" (Ridge 54), arrested, and then publicly hanged in Los Angeles when he is seventeen. Feliz insists on his innocence even as he is hanged, but it is to no avail: the Anglo Americans have judged him. Gonzales-Day notes that Ridge wrote *Joaquín Murieta* during "one of the most turbulent periods in California's history," when "more Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and persons of Latin American origin or descent died at the hands of lynch mobs than in any other period" (175). In following this idea, each character in *Joaquín Murieta* serves as a representative of people of Mexican descent who had no voice, no presence, and no rights in the minds of Anglo Americans. In addition, each character serves as a challenge to dominant Anglo print media and the regular misrepresentations and lies printed in newspapers.

A look into how serious the situation was for Mexicans in California helps understand Ridge's choice of events. Gonzales-Day's research reveals the intensity of the racially charged mass murder of Mexicans in California: "Latinos were nearly five times more likely to be lynched than Chinese immigrants, and three times more likely than American Indians, and nearly sixteen times more likely to be lynched than African Americans" (27). In his findings, Gonzales-Day also points out the severity of the situation. When calculating the numbers, Gonzales-Day shows that "Latinos identified as 'Mexican' outnumber all of the groups" (27). He concludes the belief of one's identity as Mexican was "the only material clue" necessary or "considered in determining a person's guilt or innocence" (32), an issue Ridge clearly depicts in *Joaquín Murieta*. While Gonzales-Day acknowledges that "the discovery of racial bias in the history of lynching is not new," (133), he argues that "no one has acknowledged the full impact of lynching . . . in the American west" (133) and that "anti-Mexican and anti-Latin American sentiments may have contributed to this erasure" (133). This erasure does not include just racial bias but that the regular lynching of Mexican Americans in California were acts of racially charged mass murder. When Mexican Americans were not lynched by Anglo American mobs, they were deprived of the ability to live freely, to be successful monetarily, to engage in their own cultural practices, and to enjoy basic human rights. Instead, Anglo Americans worked to dispossess Mexican Americans of their lands, earnings, and freedom, and Mexican Americans lived their lives in a state of constant fear of Anglo American violence. Ridge's text helps to reveal all these issues and ultimately exposes Anglo readers to the horrors that Mexicans in California regularly faced.

Ridge also worked to expose connections of lynching to media sensationalism. Robert W. Blew notes from the moment of California's statehood that "almost every issue of the local press noted several murders" (11), usually blaming a person of Mexican descent—a practice that would continue for decades. Blew and many other scholars have argued that these events lack connection, but a deeper look into vigilante committees, lynchings, and punishments reveals a definite race prejudice in California, especially targeting people of Mexican descent. According to Gonzales-Day, newspaper coverage in California contained "report[s] on everything from the daily emergence of mining camps . . . to even noticing the location of the nearest hang tree" (6). However, not all media outlets engaged in race baiting. Some newspapers argued against this practice, arguing against the lynchings of alleged "criminals," who often were of Mexican descent.

On June 30, 1854, for instance, the *Daily Alta California* noted, "When vigilante committees must go, like thieves, at night in disguise, it is time for them to be hung . . . [W]hen honest men take the law into their own hands, they don't steal about in the dark" (2). Indeed, in the novel, the "Sheriff of Yuba County, R. B. Buchanan, [goes] out on a moonlight night with his posse . . . to examine the premises and to arrest three suspicious characters who were known to be lurking" around (Ridge 22). However, instead of portraying the sheriff as successful, Ridge writes that he gets into a scuffle with the alleged "suspicious characters" only to be "severely wounded with a pistol ball" (Ridge 22). Ridge allows the sheriff to live, but it is only after he almost dies an agonizing death from his wounds. Though Ridge's narrator notes that the sheriff not only survives but also becomes a local hero, he does not allow the sheriff to succeed in such an underhanded practice as moonlight lynching. Gonzales-Day comments on the shift of

lynch mobs targeting Mexican Americans from daytime lynchings to those conducted under the cover of darkness, noting the “masked mobs whose lawless acts “were worse than the [alleged] criminals being prosecuted” (12). Considering the fact that people of color were far more likely to face lynching than Anglo Americans, Gonzales-Day’s information is especially significant in looking at California’s Anglo American mob lynchings of people of Mexican descent.

Blew argues “vigilance committees” first originated in Los Angeles (13), exactly the place where Reyes Feliz faces his gruesome “fate—an ignominious death upon the gallows” (Ridge 53). Though the first recorded lynching occurred in 1835, long before California became a state and long before Reyes Feliz suffers his fate, it is important to point out that the lynchings (legal or otherwise) of California’s Mexicans and Mexican Americans hit a peak right around the time Reyes Feliz was hanged. This practice did not end until the middle of the twentieth century. Blew argues that “a lack of effective law enforcement, inefficient courts, and lax punishments were set forth as justifications for the lynchings” (27), but Gonzales-Day argues other factors, noting, “Public killings were guided by anti-immigration sentiments, the fear of miscegenation, a deep frustration with the judicial system, or in combination with white supremacy” (3).

While Gonzales-Day notes that many Mexican “communities in the west” experienced a “legacy of violence and terror” (3), these lynchings were racially motivated *and* specifically targeted persons of Mexican descent. This ultimately makes these public hangings acts of racially charged mass murder committed by Anglo American groups against Mexican Americans—something Ridge uses to explain Joaquín’s anger and Carmelita’s anguish to readers. Carrigan and Webb’s research shows how “Mexicans

faced a similar risk of lynching as African Americans in some states of the Deep South (414)—a fact that distinctly displays the situation as dire for Mexican Americans and also one that hints at racially motivated acts of racially charged mass murder. The situation deteriorated so badly in California that if a sheriff took a person into custody, Gonzales-Day argues, the sheriff “would be forced to hide, disguise, or move their prisoners to keep them from . . . [lynch] mobs” (11), which Ridge points out in *Joaquín Murieta*. This allows readers to become familiar with the exact opposite of what the dominant Anglo press regularly published regarding Mexican Americans and lynchings.

None were safe from lynching, not even women: Josiah Royce recalls the lynching of a Mexican woman named Juanita in July 1851 simply because she was not an American” (368). Royce clearly notes, “The deed was not only done but defended by American miners” (368). While readers may have been ready to read the grit of *Joaquín Murieta*, the lynching of a woman might have been too much. However, Rosita’s rape reflects the Anglo American sentiment that Mexican women were “made for our purposes,” a sentiment that surely would upset readers. Indeed, Ridge’s narrator views women as delicate, “weeping angels” (53) who faint regularly. As Robert W. Blew has shown, “Los Angeles [was] a city of violence” (11), plagued with vigilante “justice,” and so Reyes Feliz’s hanging is not surprising, but when Joaquín tells Rosita of Reyes Feliz’s lynching, his blunt explanation causes her extreme emotion. He explains, “Rosita, you will never see your brother again. Reyes Feliz is dead. He was hung two days ago by the people of Los Angeles” (Ridge 53). She is “pierced with anguish” and swoons in Joaquín’s arms. Carmelita, Reyes’ “devoted” lover (Ridge 53), reacts strongly to the news of Reyes’ lynching as well. Ridge’s narrator relates, “Alas for the unfortunate

Carmelita! She wandered alone in the woods, weeping and tearing her hair, and many a startled ear caught the wail of her voice at midnight in the forest. She fled at the approach of a human footstep, but at last they found her cold and ghastly for stretched on a barren rock, in the still beauty of death” (Ridge 54). The scene is significant, as it shows the outcome of lynching and laws designed to harm Mexican Americans: lynching, both in the story and historically, is devastating, harrowing, and drives people to madness, excessive grief, and finally, death.

Just as Ridge’s narrator cannot tolerate violence or emotional stress toward women, neither can Joaquín. When one of his cohorts, Reis, allows a female captive to become frightened for her safety, Joaquín responds by saying to him, “Reis, if it was any other man but you, I would kill him on the spot. I would shoot him like a dog” (Ridge 105). When Joaquín finally believes Reis has not harmed the girl, he tells Reis, “I would have no person’s woman without her consent. I have read of robbers who deliberately ravished tender and delicate females, and, afterwards, cut their throats, but I despise them. I am no such robber, and never will be” (Ridge 105). It is safe to conclude that Joaquín feels this way especially because of his initial experience in California, where his own lover is raped, right before his eyes, as he is forced to watch the event while forcefully restrained, and disallowed a reaction of any kind. The experience is nothing short of traumatic for Joaquín and stays with him throughout the text.

Yet despite his lover’s brutal rape, Joaquín, like so many others, is not prepared to give up; in fact, he has no desire to return to Sonora, and so he travels on, innocently, with no idea of the lynching that awaits his half-brother or the lynchings of so many others to come. When Joaquín travels to Calaveras County, he takes up dealing cards for



the game of monte instead of mining, netting him higher profits than mining and lives in considerably less danger. Surprisingly, all goes well for Joaquín, and he is not harassed and tormented at all while dealing monte, until he visits his half-brother and borrows a horse. The narrator notes someone, an Anglo American identifies the horse, perhaps a little too easily, but the crowd agrees, deciding, “The animal proved to have been stolen” (14). While “surrounded by a furious mob” accusing him of horse “theft” (15), Joaquín attempts to explain the situation. It is to no avail, of course, and the Anglo American mob “b[inds] him to a tree, and publicly disgrace[s] him with the lash” (15). If this is not punishment enough, the lynch mob continues the pillaging by finding “the house of his half-brother and h[angs] him without judge or jury” (15). These kinds of events are historically accurate, confirmed by numerous accounts reported in scores of newspapers at the time, an issue Ridge makes patently clear.

Ridge makes it unclear as to whether the horse actually was stolen and probably does so purposefully to show the doubt the situation casts. It is also important to note that historically, racial tensions were at a high point in California. By this point, the violence that ensued against Mexican Americans was intense and regular, leaving Mexican Americans living in constant fear of Anglo American vigilante groups. Carrigan and Webb note that “for decades lynch mobs terrorized persons of Mexican origin or descent without reprisal from the wider community” (411). The “danger of lynching for a Mexican resident in the United States” was “in some instances greater than the specter of mob violence for a black person in the American South” (Carrigan and Webb 414). They support their claim by considering the ratio of residents to lynchings in their respective geographic areas.

Reyes Feliz's story confirms this problem and Ridge carefully notes that Feliz's fate is typical or is at least "almost always the outlaw's fate—an ignominious death upon the gallows" (Ridge 53). Feliz is, according to the narrator,

suddenly arrested and covered with irons. He was charged with being a party to the assassination of General Bean, and although no evidence appeared to implicate him in this transaction, yet enough was elicited to show that he was undoubtedly a thief and a murderer. (Ridge 54)

Readers know Feliz is no angel, but what matters is that Anglo Americans did not care if Feliz was involved in the events or not. Such was the fate, as Carrigan and Webb show, for too many Mexican Americans.

Peterson notes that alleged "Mexican crimes in Calaveras County triggered an American campaign of expulsion during the early months of 1853, culminating in the burning of the Sonoran's houses, disarming of foreign inhabitants, and forcible removal of the Mexican population from San Andreas and the forks of the Calaveras River. In a mass meeting at Double Springs, [Anglo] American miners decided to exterminate the Mexican race" (76). With little voice and a threatened presence, and no space to survive, Mexican Americans in California often faced acts of racially charged mass murder, designed partly to exterminate them and partly to drive them from the state of California. They also faced countless articles in newspapers depicting Mexican Americans as depraved, violent, angry, and conniving. As the Mexican American population struggled for voice and presence, the situation continued to become graver by the day, as very few newspapers supported the Mexican American presence in California. Furthermore, beyond publicly sanctioned violence, many Anglo Americans called for the

extermination or exclusion of Mexicans from California. Mexican newspapers, of course, called out American racism and behavior. Peterson translates a response first printed in Spanish in the Mexican paper *El Siglio* on February 17, 1853, also reprinted on April 8, 1853, in *El Sonorese*:

It is enough to say that Mexican families have been thrown out of their homes, that their property has been confiscated, their houses burned, and some individuals murdered by a semi-savage and immoral rabble, which in a tumultuous meeting has resolved to violate the rights of mankind, to attack the defenseless foreigners, and to cast a blotch of infamy on their country. That rabble, that mob, has encountered a beneficial control neither in the laws, nor in the American authorities of California, who perhaps look over the whole thing, provided that they are aggressions against the Mexicans. (76)

Just as these newspapers chronicle what Mexican Americans faced, they reflect Joaquín's reasons for his change in behavior and action against Anglo Americans. Ridge's narrator recalls Anglo Americans' acts against Joaquín and his subsequent reaction to them:

Wanton cruelty and the tyranny of prejudice had reached their climax. His soul swelled beyond its former boundaries, and the barriers of honor, rocked into atoms by the strong passion which shook his heart like an earthquake, crumbled around him. Then it was that he declared to a friend that he would live henceforth for revenge and that his path should be marked with blood. (Ridge 12-13)

One can hardly find fault with Joaquín's reaction and the life he takes up; as Standart notes, "There is no doubt that some of the Mexicans . . . resentful of the injuries they had suffered and angered at the loss of their claims and property, took to the hills and became

outlaws” (Ridge 11). Ridge illustrates that life became rather difficult for those who remain honest through the character of Joaquín before he becomes an outlaw.

### **Oppression, Love’s Pursuit of Joaquín, a Pickled Head, and Anglo Media Frenzy**

Those who remained in California faced acts of brutal violence and countless numbers of lynchings, orchestrated and conducted by angry, jealous, and resentful Anglo American mobs. Mexican Americans also faced daily harassment and brutality and were not allowed to be economically successful and ultimately were dispossessed of their rightful lands. In short, the peace and optimism offered by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was brief. Even as early as 1849, Chan observes, “notices appeared [in mining areas] . . . warning all non US citizens to leave within twenty-four hours” (64). When this kind of intimidation failed to work or did not have the desired result, Anglo Americans turned to the California legislature to complete their plans. California’s first governor, Peter H. Burnett, launched a “war to exterminate Native American populations from the state” (Owens 32), which evolved into an effort to drive Mexicans and other non-Anglo American groups out of California when John Bigler succeeded Burnett as governor.

Soon after he took office, Bigler would offer the first monetary reward for the notorious “Joaquín Murieta.” It was for the sum of \$1,000. Parins, however, notes that the bounty was “deemed entirely too small” (100). The reward grew to \$5,000, which Harry Love, the man who searched relentlessly for “Joaquín” would split with his men. In reality, however, Love was awarded an additional \$5,000 because he pickled and publicly displayed Joaquín’s head, providing even greater relief for the state of California. In other words, Love was allowed to do whatever he wanted, from terrorizing

innocent Mexican Americans to killing whomever he felt like killing, while Joaquín and other Mexicans faced death in large numbers for even the minutest of “offenses.”

As Carrigan and Webb note, California’s “legal system not only failed to protect Mexicans, but served as an instrument of their oppression” (417). While there was “pressure to investigate acts of mob violence,” Carrigan and Webb argue, “they inevitably failed to identify those responsible” (417). The result is typical: “no white man was *ever* made to stand trial for the lynching of a Mexican” (Carrigan and Webb 417). The only reaction that ever led to any government intervention on the part of Mexicans occurred in 1895, after a Mexican awaiting a trial in Yreka, California was forcibly removed from his cell and lynched (Carrigan and Webb 427). After the Mexican government “demanded that those responsible be punished and that a suitable indemnity be paid” (Carrigan and Webb 427) to the victim’s family, President McKinley intervened and “recommend[ed] to Congress a payment of a \$2,000 indemnity” (Carrigan and Webb 427). It should come as no shock that a “grand jury failed to return *any* indictments against the members of the mob” (Carrigan and Webb 427).

Mark Rifkin argues, “The text suggests that U.S. law oscillates between apathy and assault, alternatively turning a blind eye toward Anglo reigns of terror” (36). While this is true, Ridge depicts how and why Joaquín changes from a peaceful man into a bandit bent on revenge in a calculated manner meant to depict Mexican oppression by Anglos. Ridge shows that Joaquín’s change happens only after several severe encounters with Anglo Americans. More importantly, though, while the law “chases after” Joaquín and his band, the Anglo Americans in the text are exempt from obeying the law because they *are* the law. None of the Anglo Americans in *Joaquín Murieta* receives legal

punishment: instead, Joaquín finds himself forced to seek out these Anglo Americans and then forces them “pay” for their offenses against Mexican Americans. While the Anglo Americans in the book may suffer death at Joaquín’s hands, more of his men suffer death at the hands of Anglo lynch mobs. Too, Love and his men capture and kill Joaquín and then allegedly pickle his head in a jar only to receive a cash award for the murders—\$5,000: a bounty set by the state of California for the capture and murder of the “murderous bandit.” Before this, Joaquín executes his own acts of terror in revenge, but while Love and other Anglos go free for their crimes, Joaquín faces legal persecution and has to live in the margins of society. The law never prosecutes Love for misconduct of any kind. Rather, the government glorifies him as a hero while publicly displaying Joaquín’s head as a warning to other Mexican Americans: stay in the peripheries, get out of California, remain poor, or end up decapitated, pickled, and displayed for all to see.

What follows in Ridge’s novel is significant: no matter how many real Joaquín’s there were (or were not), and no matter that Ridge conflates all of them into a singular Mexican figure named Joaquín, what is done to Ridge’s Joaquín reflects what Mexican Americans regularly experienced. In doing this, Ridge explains the need for Joaquín to become a murderous bandit hellbent on revenge. As José Manuel Valenzuela Arce shows, it is Joaquín’s myth that matters in how it functions socially (Qtd in Irwin 39). Ridge further shows and explains to readers the multiple and unrelenting acts of oppression that Mexican Americans in California regularly experienced at the hands Anglo Americans.

Ridge notes that Love’s history is equally “romantic to that of Joaquín” (34) and Nadeau recollects the start of his chase with the “governor’s reward” for Joaquín’s

capture and killing. This prompted Love's "predictable" (Pitt 80) chase after Joaquín and the media circus that followed: the governor's reward finally "gave Joaquín a last name—Carrillo, and a description: 'a Mexican by birth, 5 feet 10 inches in height, black hair, black eyes, and a good address'" (57). Many newspapers immediately displayed skepticism at the idea of a single Joaquín from such a vague description. In protest of the governor's reward, coupled with a vague description and multiple incarnations of Joaquín, the *Daily Alta California* printed this: "Every murder and robbery in the country has been attributed to 'Joaquin.'" Sometimes it is Joaquin Carrillo that has committed all these crimes; then it is Joaquin something else, but it is always Joaquin!" (Qtd in Jackson xxvi).<sup>68</sup> Yet, the hunt was on, and even years later, Nadeau says, "Previously unsolved crimes throughout the state in the early 1850s were now definitely attributed to Joaquín" (14). Though Love claimed to have found Joaquín despite opaque information and purportedly had Murieta's head (and Three Fingered Jack's hand) preserved in alcohol and then placed on public display, many people were more than unconvinced about the capture, death, and decapitation of Joaquín and much less the actual existence of one specific Joaquín.

While papers such as the Los Angeles *Star* affirmed "that [Joaquín's] head was put up in whiskey" (Qtd in Pitt 80), the San Francisco *Alta California*, among other newspapers, disbelieved that Joaquín had been found or that he was dead. On August 23, 1853, the San Francisco *Alta California* among many other newspapers, disbelieved that Joaquín had been found or that he was dead. On August 23, 1853, the San Francisco *Alta* ran an editorial noting how the staff there found the "various accounts of the capture and decapitation of 'the notorious' Joaquín Murieta" were "amus[ing]" (Qtd in Jackson xxv).

This paper also noted, “It is too well known that Joaquín Murieta was not the person killed by Captain Love’s party . . . [and] the head exhibited bears no resemblance to [Joaquín]” (Qtd in Jackson xxv). The same went for Three Fingered Jack, another of Joaquín’s companions. Nadeau notes, “Harry Love’s ‘Three Fingered Jack’ was simply a nameless Mexican horseman who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time when the California Rangers came along” (93). With all this debate, it is clear that many people believed there was no such bandit as Joaquín, while others believed Joaquín lived on.

The disbelief in Joaquín’s capture, killing, and ghastly display led others, such as the San Francisco’s *Daily California Chronicle*, to mock Ridge and his claims of authenticity. Their review on August 7, 1854, taunted Ridge’s claims of the capture and killing of a bandit named Joaquín. This newspaper reviewer not only expressed distaste for the gruesomeness of the book but noted that the book might “serve as amusing for Joaquin Murieta, should he get a hold of it” (Qtd in Parins 104). Parins notes Ridge’s reaction to this review was one of apprehension as well as frustration, as it challenged his claim that the book was authentic (105) and undermined his hopes of financial success. In an attempt to undermine this claim, on August. 24, 1854, in San Francisco’s *Daily Placer Times and Transit*, Ridge responded to the review, challenging, “Prove it!” (Qtd in Parins 105). He then provided readers with a detailed account of his research and the methods he used to write the book. Suspicion prevailed for many, however, but the legend of Joaquín persisted. Though Love eventually finds and kills Ridge’s Joaquín (just as this allegedly happened historically), his character serves as an example of how Anglo Americans sought to keep non-Anglo Americans from participating in Anglo American



cultural practice. As Jesse Alemán notes, Ridge's novel "critiques the United States for not living up to its claims of social equality" (72). However, Ridge shows how even in the face of racially charged mass murder, people can fight back, have presence and voice, and can participate in Anglo-dominant spaces, even dominating them periodically. The character of Joaquín achieves this. Even if Joaquín survives only a short time, he lives on, inspiring many generations to come.

While Ridge claimed the novel is "strictly true" (5) and is based upon countless newspaper clippings about Joaquín and his escapades, Secret claims that *Joaquín Murieta* is "not a personal story, but rather a piecing together of contemporary accounts and available documents" (5). Yet, Ridge's creation of Joaquín as a singular heroic man who fights Anglo American tyranny and violence with violence was revolutionary: not only did a minority author publish what Mexicans in California faced, but he also used dominant Anglo space to do so. Ridge created one of the most beloved outlaw-heroes in California—a wonderful irony that a Native American created a Mexican American hero for the Anglo American California that persists today. More than this, though, Joaquín's survival proves the point that Ridge successfully used Anglo American space to give voice and presence to Mexican Americans in California. Moreover, by exposing the wrongs done to Joaquín (and thus Mexicans in California at large), Ridge moved the Mexican American plight from the periphery to the center of California history.

Earlier treaties between Mexico and the United States, including the 1832 Treaty of Friendship, hint at the problems Ridge considers for Mexican Americans, such as commerce and navigation, which as Jaime E. Rodríguez O notes, "Anglo Americans respected . . . about as much as they respected those that their government signed with

Indian nations” (39). As a Native American, Ridge was familiar with broken treaties. Rowe argues that Ridge’s *Joaquín Murieta* is “an ideological co-optation of the right to speak out, to rebel, [and] to conspire against . . . injustice” (171-2). In a land of inequality, where treaties were made and regularly broken and where several groups of people faced racially charged mass murder at the bloodthirsty and greedy hands of Anglo Americans, it is no surprise that Ridge offers violence as the only valid solution to the problems Mexican Americans faced. For Mark Rifkin, the novel “dwells on violence” instead of offering “a particular program of revolt or reform” and depicts the “failure of U.S. governance in addressing/redressing the conflicts created by its own territorial ambitions” (36). As a result the novel, according to Molly Crumpton-Winter, “takes California history beyond the official discourse and enacts a dark and turbulent scenario of what happens when national hegemony faces local resistance” (262). What emerges is a book explaining what was being done to Mexican Americans and the imagined response to mistreatment.

As Lori Merish claims, the novel offers “an alternative locus of authority—a counter-history” (52). However, it is even more than a tale offering voice and presence for Mexican Americans in California. Ridge’s *Joaquín Murieta* offers a fantastic tale of Mexican retaliation for mistreatment at the hands of Anglo Americans while simultaneously fighting the dominant Anglo narratives and literature of the time designed to perpetuate violence against Mexicans. In writing the text as such, and in using the dominant Anglo press to spread his message, Ridge was able to offer voice and presence for Mexican Americans while showing Anglo Americans how their behaviors and legal misdoings encourage others to rebel and take matters into their own hands. Additionally,

Ridge was able to challenge and ultimately undermine the misinformation the dominant Anglo press regularly published regarding Mexican Americans. After Love captures, kills and beheads Joaquín, the narrator sharply notes to readers that Joaquín “leaves behind him the important lesson that there is nothing so dangerous as its consequences as injustice to individuals—whether it arise from prejudice of color or from any other source; that a wrong done to one man is a wrong to society and to the world” (Ridge 158). In writing this sensational text and perpetuating the newspaper media circus surrounding the name of Joaquín Murieta, Ridge also gave further life and Anglo American recognition to a Mexican American folk hero that nearly all Californians know his name, if not his tale.

Ridge published the novel just one year after Murieta’s alleged murder in 1853. This provided Ridge with a unique opportunity to write a successful novel, as Joaquín was still well known and popular in California. Curious spectators still were visiting the alleged pickled head of Joaquín at this point, but more importantly, Mexican Americans and other groups still faced brutal lynchings, murder, and forced relocation from California. The novel allowed Ridge to offer voice and presence for these Mexican Americans, who were not simply absent from Anglo American attention (especially outside of California) but who faced acts of racially charged mass murder there. In writing *Joaquín*, Ridge not only memorializes a folk hero but brings Anglo American abuses of Mexican Americans to the forefront for his audience while using select newspaper references to document his story. The power of Joaquín’s stories, or his myths, as it were, is that Joaquín becomes a “folk” hero for the Mexican population and in doing so, avenges the wrongs done to the Mexican American population at large and

fulfills the need for revenge, even if it is an imagined revenge. As Irwin claims Joaquín is “a source of Mexican pride in the face of anti-Mexican prejudice in the United States . . . he is a cultural icon whose shape-shifting persona performs a diversity of functions” (39). Jesse Aleman argues that “Murieta’s plot is a socially significant act of rebellion that literally and figuratively ‘cuts to pieces’ the entire Anglo American citizenry responsible for his humiliation and the general dispossession of the Mexican population” (86) in California. Perhaps even more biting, though, is that while California became Anglo dominant after the discovery of gold in 1848 and attempted to decimate its Mexican American population through acts of violence and racially charged mass murder, California has a Mexican American hero who refuses to disappear. In doing so, Ridge’s novel is a victory for Mexican Americans who faced annihilation by Anglo American lynch mobs and state- sanctioned oppression and racially charged mass murder. Ridge offers voice and presence for Mexican Americans in California, as well as an explanation of why Joaquín changes into a bandit/villain for unknowing Anglo American readers. Ridge also importantly shows the gross mistreatment of Joaquín and Mexicans in California by Anglo American miners and the California government.

Joaquín is so popular that even today, after a century and a half, his name is still recognized as someone who brings hope and pride for many (and perhaps terror for others), especially in California. Popular movies are based on Joaquín; he even has a place in social media outlets. Even controversial author Richard Rodriguez, who finds himself living in the California “of Fillmore Street, of blond women and Nautilus-educated advertising executives . . . [and] pastels and pasta salads” (140) dominated by Anglo Americans, speaks of an “Other California, haunted everywhere by Joaquín

Murieta's ghost—haunted by a good man made 'bad' by 'gringos'" (135). Ridge makes sure that Joaquín explains this change throughout his tale. Joaquín explains, "I was driven to [this way of life] by oppression and wrong [doing]. I hate my enemies . . . Americans" (Ridge 50). The history of wrongs against Mexican Americans is there, in the periphery as well as at the epicenter of California, though it remains a charged undercurrent. "We know," Eric Hobsbawm tells us, "that the Joaquín Murieta of California is a literary invention" (7) but he remains a "social phenomenon" (10) even now because as a bandit he is able to achieve regularly unattainable goals. Additionally, as a bandit, Joaquín "resist[s] obedience" (Hobsbawm 12) to the Anglo population in California. Even Joseph Henry Jackson, who refers to *Joaquín Murieta* as a "preposterous" character (xi), is forced to admit the book is "a part of [California's] tradition" (L), and California's history writers—Bancroft, Hittel, Tinkham, and others—solidified this history when they recorded California's history in print media.

It is no surprise, then, that Robert Cowan listed the book as one of the "twenty rarest and most important works dealing with the history of California" (Parins 112): for one, no one can rightly discuss California's history and not acknowledge the Mexican contribution there. For another, Joaquín is still "alive" in several manifestations, which marks the creation of his character as one who has survived in print and cultural memory, and Joaquín lives on as a catalyst for Mexican Americans to enact survivance, especially in California.

As Ridge notes, "the blood which stains our Mother Earth may not be washed by an ocean of tears" (53), and while Anglos at large never were brought to trial for wrongdoings against Mexican Americans in California, the novel functions as a voice for

a people in the face of racially charged mass murder. It also works to provide presence and voice in dominant Anglo literary space for Mexican Americans. More than this, though, Joaquín remains very much alive in the California psyche, even when so much of present-day California appears to be Anglo dominant on the surface. This undercurrent of resistance and remembrance in the form of a “mythological legend” makes the novel one of survivance: even after Joaquín dies, he lives on. As Richard Rodriguez notes, “There are many places named for Joaquín Murrieta, there are springs and spas and trails, two towns. There are rock formations and caves and ridges, valleys, creeks, post offices, and Mexican restaurants. There is a slough” (136). Even though these examples may be the work of capitalist entrepreneurship, they offer evidence that Joaquín Murieta’s spirit is woven into the fabric of California’s history and subconsciousness. While even today Rodriguez attempts to deny Joaquín’s flourishing existence in California, he finds himself forced to acknowledge “there really was such a place as the Wild West” (148), and that Joaquín, real or fake as a singular person, plays a major role in California’s history and mythology. It is here that Joaquín’s character becomes a character who enacts survivance for Mexican Americans.

At the end of Rodriguez’s essay, Father Huerta again tells Rodriguez, “somebody should bury that thing” (149), referring to Joaquín’s alleged pickled head. However, burying the head of Joaquín would work against everything Ridge tried to do in exposing the horrors of racially charged murder that Mexicans faced every day in California. It would bury the past, erase it, and keep Mexicans in the periphery, further silence them, and allow for dominant Anglo press, belief, attitudes, entitlement, and racism to flourish. The true numbers of actual lynchings, murders, and forced relocations of Mexican

Americans remain unknown and ultimately immeasurable, just as each group discussed in this dissertation experienced, but Ridge's novel at least provides an attempt to illuminate the issue for Anglo American readers.

Beyond the government-sponsored hunt for Joaquín in California, it was mostly nameless men who committed the bulk of acts of racially charged mass murder against Mexican Americans there. While newspapers fueled hatred and spurred fear, many could (and probably would) argue the legality of their use of the First Amendment, citing freedom of speech to avoid censure or persecution. While so many read Ridge's novel as a fantastic text of how a good man becomes a murderous villain, concentrating on the wrongdoings toward Joaquín as representative of what was done to Mexican Americans at large. This allows the novel to become historical commentary with a moralistic, didactic spin meant to undermine the dominant Anglo press and its lies, as well as Anglos who engaged in racially charged mass murder. Considering the novel as one written by a non-Anglo American to give voice and presence to Mexican Americans in dominant Anglo space allows a completely new way of reading the novel to emerge. Joaquín, forced to live on the border of society, like other non-Anglo Americans, invades the center of dominant Anglo space as often as he can in order to fight back, just as Ridge does with his text. When no one else was willing to give voice and presence to a group facing racially charged mass murder, Ridge did while simultaneously offering voice and presence to those who faced acts of racially charged mass murder at the hands of Anglo Americans.

The fate of so many Mexican Americans became cataclysmic during the late nineteenth century, and not by their own choices. The majority wanted to start anew and

build peaceful, productive lives in California, or carry on their already peaceful lives there. In reality, though, they faced brutal lynchings, murders, rapes, and land grabs by unrestrained Anglo American mobs. Jesse Alemán rightly shows that “Ridge and his novel demonstrate what happens to the individual and collective racial body politic when they appeal to American ideology for social equality. They end up dispossessed, dismembered, and eventually decapitated” (73). While this is true for large numbers of the Mexican population, *Joaquín Murieta* shows that no matter how hard the Anglo population in California attempted to achieve these goals of mass murder, the public can never be certain the dismembered culprit is truly dead or not. Even after the purported head of Joaquín disappeared in the great earthquake, it continues to have presence in Santa Rosa, California, more than a century later. It was last reported by Richard Rodriguez as “belong[ing] to a man named Walter Johnson . . . who paid twenty five hundred dollars for it . . . and ran a kind of Old West museum for a time” (125). Just as Mexican Americans suffered racially charged mass murder at the hands of Anglo Americans, their legends live on—through Ridge’s novel and through the idea of Joaquín. Instead of fading into the background of Anglo American California history, those Mexican Americans who suffered racially charged mass murder not only haunt the background but remain in its forefront because of Ridge’s use of the dominant Anglo press. Thus, Ridge’s *Joaquín Murieta* succeeded in undermining, destabilizing, and weakening the falsehoods published by the dominant Anglo press. Because of Ridge’s novel, Joaquín remains a present absence hovering in the Anglo-dominant space of California.



Whether Joaquín Murieta is real or not is of no matter. People *feel* Joaquín is real and feel he represents a repressed people at the hands of Anglo Americans. Rodriguez's Father Huerta notes the supposed head of Joaquín should be buried as custom dictates but also as he worries it is "expanding . . . [and might] explode" (148). Perhaps Rodriguez's Father Huerta is onto something, though his desire to bury Joaquín's purported head is more problematic than helpful. As Jesse Alemán notes, "Ridge's Murieta also stands as an individual collective symbol of Mexican American experiences in the United States" (84). Indeed, Joaquín's experiences also show that Mexican Americans found their fates in the hands of a vigilante system designed to desecrate Mexican Americans, regardless of their guilt or innocence. Love took off in search of Joaquín on hearsay, on vague accounts from people, and then killed someone who somewhat fit the alleged Joaquín's description. Though Love may have murdered innocent men, he never was brought to trial: there are very few legal references to Joaquín, and even those who kept meticulous diaries mention a "Joaquín" who terrorizes people, but none ever confides in having actually met him. Joaquín, then, represents a fear on the part of Anglo Americans, especially within the mines. The crimes done to him represent the crimes done to Mexican Americans at large in California, and if Ridge had not chronicled the life of a "Joaquín," Anglo Americans across the country may never have come to know what fates befell those of Mexican American descent in California.

## Chapter 4

### **The Yellow Peril: Fantasies of Economic Threats, and Chinese American Responses to Racially Charged Mass Violence and Murder in California**

*More than half the Chinese in this country would become citizens if allowed to do so, and would be patriotic Americans. But how can they make this country their home as matters now are!*" From "The Biography of a Chinaman" by Lee Chew (423)

In 1854, Bret Harte emigrated from New York to California, where his literary career soon flourished. As his literary and journalistic career progressed, Harte's popularity as a realist and local colorist led him to become the then "highest paid author in America" (*Bret Harte's California* 1). Harte was also one of the few Anglo writers to consider the plight of the Chinese population within California in both literary pieces and editorials, as Chinese immigrants had been living in California for several years when Harte arrived in California. In 1867, Harte noted "attack[s] on...defenseless Chinamen" came as the result of "the natural climax of a system of tyranny and oppression to which [the Chinese] had been subjected [to] at the hands of the ignorant since their first immigration." Harte continued to note to readers that though the Chinese were largely responsible for "developing the resources of the state," they regularly experienced brutality at the hands of "California juveniles" (*Bret Harte's California* 113). Harte continued to publish several short stories exposing the plight of the Chinese in California as dire, though many of his pieces are problematic.<sup>69</sup> While Harte's position regarding Chinese maltreatment places him in the minority of Anglo authors, his literature sometimes reflects the same attempts Chinese Americans made from the 1850s: to gain voice and presence within California's community at large using Anglo print media. For over half a century Chinese Americans worked to achieve this presence by using the

Anglo press to fight the dominant Anglo view that regularly portrayed Chinese Americans in a negative light.

Things had not always been this way for Chinese Americans, however. Many Chinese immigrants happily considered themselves Americans after California became a state in 1850, and many business owners along with other Californians gladly worked with them. The new state governor John McDougal even referred to Chinese immigrants as invaluable and warmly welcomed the group in his January 1851 inaugural address, where he deemed them a hardworking and dedicated people who would be beneficial to the development of California.<sup>70</sup> McDougal went so far as to note, “more Chinese migrants would be needed” (qtd. in Takaki 81) in California to fill the growing number of menial jobs. According to Mary Coolidge, initially in California the Chinese were “welcomed, praised and considered almost indispensable” (21). As a result, many businesses hired Chinese immigrants where they would be a positive, driving force in the development of California’s economy. Ronald Takaki contends that this moment for the Chinese “seemed auspicious” (81).

Takaki’s use of the word “seemed” is acutely accurate: though many welcomed the Chinese in California, many Anglo Americans still considered the Chinese foreigners and therefore fostered racism and hatred against them—ideals prevalent throughout media sources from California, including newspapers and literary pieces. Harte noted this issue much later, in 1867, writing that Anglos “encouraged and fostered...blind hatred and active malice...[and] from the first regarded [the Chinese] with a jealousy and malevolence” (*Bret Harte’s California* 114). The result of several misconceptions and racist ideas, many Anglos believed they were superior to Chinese Americans culturally,

educationally, intellectually, and religiously. This led to the popular Anglo belief that Chinese Americans were suited for manual labor at best, if they were allowed to remain in California at all, a question hotly debated even after the exclusion of new immigrants from Asia in 1882. Ultimately, attitudes toward Chinese immigrants did not remain positive in California, and as a result, Chinese Americans suffered physically and mentally, singularly and as a group. Barred from citizenship in California just three years earlier, things became worse shortly after McDougal left office.

Attitudes toward Chinese Americans became virulently anti-Chinese to the point that racially charged mass murders occurred throughout the state for several decades and were encouraged through dominant Anglo newspapers and popular Anglo literature. As a result, Chinese Americans routinely faced racially charged violence and mass murder in California during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This attitude toward Chinese Americans clearly represents that many of the anti-Chinese events in California even after the Chinese Exclusion Act. However, until passage of the exclusion act, Chinese immigrants not only participated in American life and culture but made significant contributions to California, economically, and culturally.

Originally, California's constitution contained a clause allowing Chinese citizenship: "Foreigners who are, or who may hereafter become bona fide residents of this State, shall enjoy the same rights in respect to the possession, enjoyment, and inheritance of property, as native born citizens" (Article I, Section 17). The first group of people to immigrate to America voluntarily, according to William F. Wu, Chinese Americans settled mainly in California, not only "the place where they made their greatest contribution" (12) but also "where anti-Chinese sentiment first turned ugly" (56).

Indeed, the warm welcome of the Chinese in California by McDougal was short-lived: Bigler was elected governor of California in 1852, after a heated campaign during which he expressed extreme anti-Chinese sentiments, called for immigration restrictions, and sought a version of the Foreign Miner's tax, he was elected governor. From that moment, life in California for Chinese Americans became increasingly problematic and included random acts of violence and racially charged mass murder, and the end of free immigration.

After Bigler's election, violence against Chinese Americans began and then intensified over the next half century for a multitude of reasons. Chinese Americans began to encounter growing prejudice and backlash from Anglo Americans, which newspapers, literary publications, and politicians capitalized on. Chinese Americans also routinely faced racism, harassment, aggression, brutality, boycotts, murder, and eventually legislation that limited their economic participation and citizenship. While anti-Chinese violence reached its peak in the 1880s, major acts of racially charged mass murder occurred throughout California, as well as in Alaska, Colorado, Wyoming, and Washington, causing "millions of dollars worth of [Chinese] property [to be] damaged and burned in mining towns" (Tsai 67). While anti-Chinese American violence occurred throughout the West, California experienced the bulk of this violence. These occurred "in 34 California communities" including Eureka (1885), Redlands (1893), and Chico (1894)" (Tsai 67). Earlier, in the 1870s, racially charged mass murder took place in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Eureka.

From the moment Bigler took office until the turn of the century, Chinese Americans in California lived in continual fear for their lives, facing silence, oppression,

and regular acts of violence. However, at the same time, Chinese Americans fought back publicly against Anglo racism, nativism, anti-Chinese sentiment in California, and the abundance of falsehoods printed in Anglo newspapers, novels, and literary magazines. This group of Chinese Americans includes Norman Asing (also known as Sang Yuen), and Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick (1852), Kwang Chang Ling (1878), Lee Yan Phou<sup>71</sup> (1887), and Lee Chew (1903). What makes these acts of public writing via newspapers so significant is that these men not only wrote in English but utilized Anglo dominant newspapers instead of Chinese newspapers to relay their messages, and therefore their words were seen by Anglo readers—a technique that other authors in this dissertation applied to their novels. Later, many of their works would be reprinted in pamphlets and other texts.

In *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance*, Gerald Vizenor refers to the “literature of dominance,” a definition I will extend here to include Anglo dominant newspapers and print media. Using Anglo dominant newspapers allowed for two major benefits for the Chinese American community. First, it allowed timely responses to immediate threats of racially charged violence and to racially charged acts of mass murder. Instead of waiting for a book to be written and then published in due course of time, their use of newspapers allowed for direct, if not immediate, wide reaching responses and rebuttals to the countless articles of hate speech and falsehoods concerning Chinese Americans that spanned all media forms in the United States, especially in California.

Newspapers use also allowed Chinese Americans to paint vivid pictures of their culture, lifestyles, and Chinese history, as well as how they had Americanized—a direct

contrast to what most American literary and journalistic texts offered at the time. Moreover, instead of reaching the relatively limited audience books would reach, newspapers reached a large, extensive audience. In using the space of dominant Anglo newspapers, these Chinese Americans attempted to dissuade Anglo Americans from violence and toward tolerance and acceptance, while also actively giving voice and presence to Chinese Americans in the face of continued acts of racially charged mass murder, racism, and calls for Chinese extermination and exclusion.

From 1852 until the end of the century, Chinese Americans would use Anglo newspapers to achieve this goal, just as the majority of Anglo authors would use literature to demean, degrade, and inaccurately portray Chinese Americans. The precedent these men set will be the focus of the first portion of this chapter. The racially charged mass murder of Chinese Americans in California, especially in the 1870s and 1880s, juxtaposed against their fight for voice and presence in California, will be the next focus of the following section of this chapter, along with how these Chinese American authors exposed what Chinese Americans experienced continually—for more than half a century. In the face of racially charged mass murder, each of these authors offered logical refutations to what the Anglo American population claimed in print media, from newspapers to short stories and novels. They also offered other Chinese Americans voice and presence through the space and use of Anglo-controlled newspapers and later through books. In the end, these authors not only document the Chinese American experience of the mid- through late-nineteenth century, including the racially charged mass murder they faced, but also enact survivance through their use of newspapers.

## **The 1850s: Chinese American Responses to calls to ‘check [the] tide of Asiatic immigration’**

In *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California*, Elmer Sandmeyer claims that “No single cause furnished the motivation of the anti-Chinese movement in California” (25). While Sandmeyer is truthful, California’s third governor, John Bigler, was as an early public contributor to the violent eruption of anti-Chinese American sentiments in California and the racially charged mass murder that followed. Bigler was largely responsible for inciting the anti-Chinese American movement there. In April 1852, he set in motion what would ignite a serious debate and then a controversy in California. He used the popular San Francisco newspaper, the *Daily Alta California*, a pro-Chinese newspaper at the time, to spread his anti-Chinese message.<sup>72</sup> While Bigler had campaigned on a popular anti-Chinese platform, as governor, he believed he had the legal power to execute his plans, and he wasted no time in putting them into motion. In an editorial printed in the *Daily Alta California* on April 25, 1852, as the “Governor’s Special Address,” the recently elected Democrat declared,

In order to enhance the prosperity and to preserve the tranquility of the State, measures must be adopted to check this tide of Asiatic immigration, and prevent the exportation by them of the precious metals which they dig up from our soil without charge, and without assuming any of the obligations imposed upon citizens. (1)

Bigler’s party-line argument here would become the seed of two of the most frequent cases for Chinese exclusion in California and later for acts of racially charged mass murder. However, Bigler’s “Special Address” also enabled the Chinese American population to claim a voice and presence in Anglo print media, specifically newspapers.<sup>73</sup>



While Bigler's claims also contributed to the beginnings of Sinophobia and the idea of "The Yellow Peril," Chinese Americans began to refute anti-Chinese messages to large populations of California's Anglo readers, simultaneously providing historical and cultural information about China and positive images of Chinese Americans to challenge the archetypal negative, stereotypical portrayals found throughout Anglo media. Chinese Americans, including two merchants, Hab-Wa and A-chick, and restaurant owner Asing, not only felt the need to respond to Bigler but to use their editorials to correct Bigler's fabricated assumptions. Their responses serve as an attempt to assuage the Sinophobia brewing in California and provide expression and positive presence of and for Chinese Americans to Anglo readers.

Their actions are significant: No major Chinese American author was writing in English at this point. This detail differentiates the Chinese American response to racism, nativism, and later to racially charged mass murder from other minority groups and their experiences. Hab-Wa, A-chick, and Asing's responses are especially important in that each response provides voice and presence for Chinese Americans and uses dominant Anglo American space to achieve this. Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick's piece first was published on April 29, 1852, in both the San Francisco *Daily Alta California* and the San Francisco *Herald*, and then the *New York Times* reprinted it on June 5, 1852, and *Littell's Living Age* printed it a fourth time in July 1852.<sup>74</sup> These publications broadened the audience the authors reached and therefore broadened their message. Their actions also are notable in that they set a precedent for Chinese Americans who later desired to fight back against Anglo racism and nativism. They also work to expose the mistreatment of Chinese Americans as well as the planned acts of racially charged mass murder aimed in

some Californian counties and cities where the goal was the extermination of the Chinese.

While holding Bigler accountable as an initiator and perpetuator of Sinophobia in California, it is within reason to credit Hab-Wa, A-chick, and Asing for establishing a literary method for Chinese American responses and survival in California. Their responses give Chinese Americans voice and presence and do not depict the Chinese Americans simply as victims. Rather, their responses provide history, culture, work ethic, and interest in being a part of the American community to Anglo readers. In the decades to follow, other Chinese Americans would follow their lead, continuing to resist Sinophobia, nativism, and racially charged mass murder via Anglo dominant newspapers.

Just four days after the publication of Bigler's editorial, on April 29, 1852, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick responded to it. Their choice of using a newspaper to respond allowed for an almost instantaneous response that reached local and national audiences. Moreover, the publication of their letter in the *New York Times* and *Littell's Living Age* allowed them to reach a national audience. Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick begin their letter by distinctly noting that they "learned with sorrow that [Bigler] published a letter against [the Chinese]" (32). They continue their critique of Bigler's piece by declaring that they are not only fluent in English and are American-educated but that Bigler's letter prompts them "to explain [his message] to the rest of [their] countrymen" (32). This is significant in that it depicts Chinese Americans as a united group concerned for their own well-being. Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick are not aggressive in their response to Bigler; rather, they write that they are interested in responding with "as decent and respectful a letter as [they] could, pointing out to your Excellency some of the errors you have fallen into

about us” (32). Readers then would easily see the calm, collected, well-written response from Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick as vastly different from Bigler’s aggressive and violent anti-Chinese rhetoric.

Asing, a Chinese immigrant who became a U.S. citizen, also responded politely and directly to Bigler’s “Special Address” just one week later, using San Francisco’s *Alta California* to deliver his response, thus reaching not only the new California governor but also the Anglo population there. Like Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick, Asing may have addressed this letter as a direct response to Bigler, but because he chose to offer it to the *Alta California*, Asing knew he would reach a large Californian Anglo audience, and clearly, the editorial staff agreed with his piece and published it. What makes this choice significant is that in reaching a large number of readers he was able to debunk the beliefs of the many Anglo Californians regarding Chinese immigrants who were gaining U.S. citizenship. He also was able to display knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and share his sizable historical and political knowledge of the United States. Another benefit was that he explained and combatted the incorrect assumptions that the Chinese were merely temporary residents of the U.S. Asing cleverly refers to Bigler’s position as an elected one, not a permanent one, acknowledging the power of voters and the fleetingness of terms in political office. Asing notes, “Your predecessor [John McDougal] pursued a different line of conduct towards us” (1). Chinese Americans would not fully lose the right to vote until the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, and Asing’s delicate method of pressure here offers Bigler a warning about his seat as governor. Asing’s witty use of the American practice of “free institutions” is also telling, as it hearkens back to the uprising of colonists in the late-eighteenth century to the tyrannical rule of Britain and the

subsequent establishment of the United States of America. Most importantly, perhaps, in writing this response, Asing presents himself as a voice for the growing Chinese American population in California that refuses to be silenced, sent away, or further mistreated, while simultaneously offering his own experiences as a Chinese American.

In his “Special Address,” Bigler used the Chinese immigrants who settled in California as scapegoats for economic troubles brewing in California: Chinese coolies, he declared, were the cause of California’s economic problems, as he alleged the Chinese immigrants in California sent money to China, removing it from the local economy. Bigler also maintained that Chinese Americans took jobs from Anglo Americans because Chinese Americans were willing to work for lower wages. Bigler said, “In this State their habits have been migratory; and so far as I can learn, very few of them have evinced a disposition to acquire a domicil [sic], or, as citizens, to identify themselves with the country” (1). Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick note that Bigler’s notions here were simply erroneous. They write,

As to our countrymen coming over here to labor for \$3 or \$4 per month wages, it is unreasonable on the face of it, and it is not true. That strong affection which they have for their own country, which induces them to return with the gold they dig, as you say, would prevent them from leaving their homes for wages so little, if at all, better than they could get there. (32)

If anything, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick provide a picture of the multidimensional lives Chinese immigrants experienced. They also show, intentionally or not, how difficult it was for Chinese Americans to survive on wages they were forced to accept in America, a

move surely made to discredit those who complained about the Chinese desire to make less and survive happily while earning less than Anglo workers.

Asing, who had been living in the United States for several decades by the time Bigler published his Special Address, also used his knowledge of U.S. democracy, law, and history to discredit Bigler's declarations. Asing does not shy away from voicing this opinion at once, though he waits to tell Bigler he is a U.S. citizen until nearly the end of his response. He begins his letter by identifying himself as "a Chinaman, a republican, and a lover of free institutions" (1). Although he acknowledges that Bigler's "opinions through a message to a legislative body have weight" (1), Asing condemns Bigler's attempt to incite the Anglo public with hate speech and misinformation. Calling public attention to issues of Anglo American racism against Chinese Americans, Asing asserts in his letter in the *Alta California* that "The effect of your late message has been thus far to prejudice the public mind against my people, to enable those who wait the opportunity to hunt them down, and rob them of the rewards of their toil" (1). This deprecates the violence perpetrated against Chinese Americans and portrays Chinese Americans as innocent, hard workers who are victims of brutish Anglos. More than this, it is an example of how Chinese Americans attempted to resist Anglo racism, nativism, and hatred in a calm and collected manner.

Asing wastes no time in addressing Bigler's claims. He advises Bigler in the letter, "We are not the degraded race you would make us" (1). While the common stereotypes in print media caricatured the Chinese as gamblers and opium addicts linked to prostitution, Asing specifically tells Bigler the stereotypes are incorrect. Asing disputes these common claims by noting, "You do not find us pursuing occupations of

degrading character” (1). Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick respond to Bigler’s claims here as well, writing:

There are no Chinese drunkards in your streets, nor convicts in your prisons, madmen in your hospitals, or others who are a charge to your State. [Chinese Americans] live orderly, work hard, and take care of themselves, that they may have the means of providing for their homes and living amidst their families. (33)

In concluding their letter, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick write, “We will only beg your Excellency not to be too hasty with us, to find us out and know us well, and then we are certain you will not command your Legislature to make laws driving us out of your country. Let us stay here—the Americans are doing good to us, and we will do good to them” (34). Though the three authors all make eloquent appeals to Bigler and other readers, Chinese Americans would find a need to beseech Anglo Americans to treat them respectfully, as anti-Chinese sentiments grew rapidly. Popular literature by several authors, including Frank Norris, Ambrose Bierce, and Joaquin Miller, promulgated racial hatred for several decades, and though Chinese Americans would fight back, their pleas would remain largely unheard. As a result, many instances of racially charged mass murder would take place. However, what these letters illustrate is the desire of Chinese Americans to be an active presence in America, even in the continual face of calls for and acts of racially charged mass murder, extermination, and exclusion. Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing show that, even when faced with racism, nativism, and racially charged mass murder, Chinese Americans refused to be silenced and persistently worked to archive their experiences and share their memories, history, and culture—exactly what literary texts aim to do.

Nevertheless, Chinese Americans eventually were denied the right to become American citizens. Bigler's "Special Address" represents an early call for a prohibition of Chinese American citizenship, an outcry based on multiple fabrications. In response to Bigler's political rhetoric and falsehoods regarding a lack of desire for Chinese American citizenship, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick refuted Bigler's claims, writing:

We do not think much about your politics, but we believe you are mistaken in supposing no Chinaman has ever yet applied to be naturalized, or has acquired a domicil [sic] in the United States except here. There is a Chinaman now in San Francisco who is said to be a naturalized citizen, and to have a free white American wife. He wears the American dress, and is considered a man of respectability. (34)

Moreover, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick chide the governor for not being as informed as they thought he ought to be. They continue, noting, "[T]here are...Chinamen residing in Boston, New York, and New Orleans" (32). After this, however, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick make a serious statement about Chinese immigration and American citizenship. They claim:

If the privileges of your laws are open to us, some of us will, doubtless, acquire your habits, your language, your ideas, your feelings, your morals, your forms, and become citizens of your country;—many have already adopted your religion as their own; —and we will be good Citizens. There are very good Chinamen now in the country, and a better class, will, if allowed, come hereafter—men of learning and of wealth, bringing their families with them. (33)

Asing also addresses Bigler's threats of legal action against the Chinese in America as well as the governor's belief that the Chinese had no desire to become American citizens. Asing asserts that he not only knew the laws of the United States and its history but that the governor's notions of freedom were distorted, as Bigler believed freedoms for Chinese Americans were not included in the freedoms Americans enjoy. Asing shows his knowledge of the founding ideals of America and then notes he is "much attached to the principles of the government of the United States" (1). This is a clear message to Bigler that Asing not only is a follower of U.S. governing policies, but he has an interest in American culture, history, and law, and that he is as American as anyone else, even if he was born elsewhere.

Yet, in this response, Asing achieves even more: Through his reference to the freedoms Americans are privileged to share, Asing subtly but logically attacks Bigler as hypocritical and tyrannical, and therefore, un-American, as Americans fought a revolution against this behavior by the British. Asing also debunks the stereotype that Chinese immigrants have no interest in becoming American citizens or in learning the laws of the United States, and he corrects the governor's notions that the Chinese were not interested in staying in America and that they held no interest in American citizenship. Asing informs the governor, "I am a naturalized citizen...of Charleston, South Carolina, and a Christian, too; and so hope you will stand corrected in your assertion 'that none of the Asiatic class,' as you are pleased to term them, have applied for benefits under our naturalization act" (1). By including these statements in their responses to Bigler, Hab Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing provide a voice for Chinese Americans and work to correct the falsehoods of Bigler's Special Address," particularly



in regard to Chinese citizenship in the United States as well as in asserting their knowledge of U.S. laws.

While Bigler's claim of "checking the tide of [Chinese] immigration" betrays his Sinophobia, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick inform the governor and readers,

The gold we have been allowed to dig in your mines is what has made the China trade grow up so fast, like everything else in this country. If you want to check immigration from Asia, you will have to do it by checking Asiatic commerce, which we supposed, from all that we have ever known of your government, the United States most desired to increase. (33)

Bigler did not simply state his thoughts on the problems of the Chinese Americans in California, however: He had a two-fold solution. First, he would tax Chinese Americans, or enact a version of the Foreign Miner's Tax. Second, he vowed to not just endorse but to enact a law prohibiting "Coolies" from entering California "under contracts, from laboring in the mines of this State" (1). In using the term coolie to describe Chinese American immigrants, the governor was misled.<sup>75</sup> The idea of the Chinese coolie was a myth as well as both a misunderstood and misused term, which Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing explain and refute. Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick object vehemently to the use of the term in their letter. They write

What your Excellency has said about passing a law to prevent Coolies, shipped to California under contracts, from laboring in the mines, we do not conceive concerns us, for there are none such here from China, nor do we believe any are coming, except a small number, perhaps, who work on shares...just as people from all other countries sometimes do. (32)

They point out that the governor's assumption about unskilled Chinese laborers was flawed, as many of them were literate and acquired new skills to survive.

Takaki points out that Chinese coolies were commonly believed to be “unfree laborers who had been kidnapped or pressed into service by coercion and shipped to a foreign country” (193). Takaki's clarification points to Mary Roberts Coolidge's inclusion of the letter of two trade commissioners from 1880, Pao Chun and Li Hung Tsao, who explain:

Being from a race of dwellers upon the sea-coast, [Chinese laborers] have desired to go thither and have regarded California as a land of abundance and as furnishing great opportunities. They have also rejoiced in the freedom of the United States. Hence, they have not gone there as a result of deceit, or by being kidnapped, nor under contract as coolies, but have flown thither as the wild geese fly. (qtd. in Coolidge 41)

Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick address the notion of the Chinese coolie in their response to Bigler:

You speak of the Chinamen as “Coolies,” and in one sense the word is applicable to a great many of them; but not in that in which you seem to use it. “Cooly” [sic] is not a Chinese word; it has been imported into China from foreign parts, as it has been into this country. What its original signification was, we do not know; but with us it means a common laborer, and nothing more. We have never known it used among us as a designation of a class, such as you have in view—persons bound to labor under contracts which they can be forcibly compelled to comply with. The Irishmen who are engaged in digging down your hills, the men who

unload ships, who clean your streets, or even drive your drays, would, if they were in China, be considered “Coolies”; tradesmen, mechanics of every kind, and professional men would not. If you mean by “Coolies,” laborers, many of our countrymen in the mines are “Coolies,” and many again are not. There are among them tradesmen, mechanics, gentry, (being persons of respectability and who enjoy a certain rank and privilege,) and schoolmasters, who are reckoned with the gentry, and with us considered a respectable class of people. None are “Coolies,” if by that word you mean bound men or contract slaves. (*Living Age* 32)

While Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick deliberately misunderstand Bigler’s application of the word coolie to Chinese Americans, they also mark the use of coolie to be an Anglo American use and therefore not applicable to how the Chinese arrived in America or how they currently lived there. Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick’s use of “bound men” and “contract slaves” is also rhetorically charged. From the debate about California’s status as a slave state, to the debate on slavery in the American South, these words evoke a particular meaning designed to move their Anglo readers emotionally.

By acknowledging that some Chinese Americans are simply laborers, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick also show that Chinese Americans enjoyed a variety of positions in America and China in order to correct Bigler’s stereotypical and indecent portrayal of Chinese American lifestyles. Perhaps most interesting in their response to the concept of the coolie is their mention of the Irish, as tensions between Irish and Chinese Americans would continue to heat up in the decades to follow, ending many times in racially charged mass murder and forced relocation. Nevertheless, each author works to dispel the myths of the unskilled Chinese worker. Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick’s final thoughts regarding

“coolies” are that “the emigration of the ‘Coolies,’ as your Excellency rather mistakenly calls us, is attended with the opening of all this Chinese trade, which, if it produces the same results here as elsewhere, will yet be the pride and riches of this city and State” (33). This sharply contrasts Bigler’s economic rhetoric that California’s economy was in jeopardy because of Chinese immigration.

While Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick work to dispel Bigler’s misconceptions of the Chinese coolie, they were not finished in defending Chinese immigrants from Bigler’s anti-Chinese American sentiments. The governor’s most contentious claim in his Special Address dealt with his desire to see California granted the right to enact Chinese exclusion, a subject he “deemed [his] duty to examine” (1) as the newly elected governor. He noted, however, that he had “no desire to see [a] change in the generous policy of this government as far as regards Europeans” (1), thus marking his calls for exclusion based solely on race. Yet, as far as California’s fate was concerned, Asing asserts Chinese Americans were especially important there, even in their small numbers in the state at that time. While the governor called for immigration restrictions and argued the Chinese were unskilled laborers, Asing argues Chinese Americans offered California a “population of producers, of men who by the labor of their hands or intellect, enrich the warehouses or the granaries of the country with the products of nature and art” (1). Additionally, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick describe how the Chinese arrive in California and work to become a “population of producers” (Asing 1). Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick then move to explain to the governor

how it is that the Chinese poor come to California. Some have borrowed the small amount necessary, to be returned with unusual interest, on account of the

risk; some have been furnished with money without interest by their friends and relations, and some, again, but much the smaller portion, have received advances in money, to be returned out of the profits of the adventure. The usual apportionment of the profits is about three-tenths to the lender of the money, and rarely, if ever, any more. These arrangements made at home, seldom bring them further than San Francisco, and here the Chinese traders furnish them the means of getting to the mines. A great deal of money is thus lent at a nominal or very low interest, which, to the credit of our countrymen, we are able to say is almost invariably faithfully repaid. The poor Chinaman does not come here as a slave. He comes because of his desire for independence, and he is assisted by the charity of his countrymen, which they bestow on him safely, because he is industrious and honestly repays them. (33)

While the governor's editorial aims to justify the exclusion of Chinese immigrants and Chinese Americans from California, Asing boldly declares the governor's calls for exclusion a "step towards a retrograde movement of the government, which, on reflection...the citizens of this country ought never to tolerate" (1). Asing also uses his knowledge of American history and reminds Bigler that "Immigration made you what you are—your nation what it is" (1), a rhetorical move other Chinese Americans fighting against continual Anglo racism and nativism would later use. To the governor's use of a states' rights argument, Asing replies: "It is out of your power to say...in what way or to whom the doctrines of the Constitution shall apply. You have no more right to propose a measure for checking immigration, than you have the right of sending a message to the Legislature on the subject" (1). Again, Asing displays a sound knowledge of American

law, history, and politics, and he uses it to his advantage here not only to make his argument but to show the breadth of his knowledge of American history, politics, and culture.

Asing also recognizes Bigler's attempts to belittle and degrade the Chinese, in America and in China. He writes that the Chinese are no fools and see this attempt clearly:

You have degraded the Negro because of your holding him in involuntary servitude, and because for the sake of union in some of your states such was tolerated, and amongst this class you would endeavor to place us; and no doubt it would be pleasing to some would-be freemen to mark the brand of servitude upon us. (1)

Asing continues his argument by providing China's extended, developed history in comparison to the United States' short history as a nation. This affords a different kind of presence for Chinese Americans, as Asing's words move to turn American arguments on themselves while also educating readers about China's extensive history. In using this dominant Anglo American space, he not only achieves voice and presence for Chinese Americans but provides Chinese cultural history for Anglos who otherwise would be unfamiliar with China's history. Asing asserts:

[W]e would beg to remind you that when your nation was a wilderness, and the nation from which you sprung barbarous, we exercised most of the arts and virtues of civilized life; that we are possessed of a language and a literature, and that men skilled in science and the arts are numerous among us; that the productions of our manufactories, our sail, and workshops, form no small share of

the commerce of the world; and that for centuries, colleges, schools, charitable institutions, asylums, and hospitals, have been as common as in your own land.

(1)

Asing's use of historical information later would become essential to Chinese American arguments for tolerance and acceptance in the face of racially charged mass murder. It also is important because it displays China's long, developed history—a history with which many Anglo Americans were not familiar—in a smooth, easy to read format. Moreover, Bigler and others would attempt to erase, rewrite, or misinform others about Chinese history through both subtle and overt racism that institutionalized itself in the American imagination and is perpetuated today. Asing also works here to show that the Chinese are not that different from other Americans, but perhaps most importantly in doing so he works to undermine Anglo arrogance while using dominant Anglo media to give voice and presence to Chinese Americans.

While the governor further supported his claims by assuring *Alta California* readers that he would look into “the opinions of eminent writers on international law, as well as the written opinions of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States” (1) regarding immigration, Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick moved to work against this attitude.

They tell Bigler:

You say there is no treaty provision for the manner in which Chinese emigrants shall be treated, and that the Chinese government would have no right to complain of any law excluding us from the country, by taxation or otherwise. This may be true of the government, but it would certainly alienate the present remarkably friendly feelings of the Chinese people, and in many ways interfere with the full

enjoyments of the commercial privileges guaranteed to the Americans by the treaty of Wang-Hiya. (32)<sup>76</sup>

Bigler sincerely espoused the beliefs he expressed in his “Special Address.” However, the Chinese American response, as well as the legal action they took in California and their use of Anglo dominant newspapers to combat opinions like Bigler’s, proves they did not simply submit to racism, nativism, misconceptions, or Sinophobia, violence, racially charged mass murder, and attempts to exclude them from the U.S. The governor’s message created the cultural environment that would turn bloody a year later. It is patent to note that Bigler had an agenda in this editorial: to justify Chinese exclusion, foster anti-Chinese sentiment, and cater to an Anglo American audience of European descent.

While Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing responded to Bigler’s hate speech, they also worked to give voice and presence to Chinese Americans and to resist political maneuvering as best they could. In incorporating all of this information into their letters, they set the early standard for the Chinese American response to such racism, hatred, and mistreatment, especially in California. Other oppressed groups often used literary texts to spread knowledge of wrongdoings and acts of racially charged mass murder, but because of the immediacy of their situation in California, coupled with their desire to be a part of mainstreamed American culture, I argue Chinese Americans resorted to the use of Anglo newspapers. Bigler’s editorial demonstrates the swift change in how Anglo Californians came to view Chinese Americans. The governor’s calls for Chinese exclusion prompted the need for immediate public response, with Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing bearing the responsibility of response for the Chinese American population in California.

### **From Bad to Worse: Anti-Chinese Legislation and Terror**



Just as this public feud took shape in early 1852, Chinese leaders began to send “circulars to their countrymen in China, urging them not to come to California because of growing anti-Chinese hostility in the state” (9). Years later, in his *Biography of a Chinaman*, Lee Chew would recollect how, as a child, he, “heard about the American foreign devils, that they were false, having made a treaty by which it was agreed that they could freely come to China, and the Chinese as freely go to their country” (419). Yet he did not want to believe what he had read.<sup>77</sup> Anti-Chinese legislation in America began to be adopted soon after Bigler’s “Special Address,” first through the Foreign Miner’s Tax in May 1852, and then later through the governor’s “Act to Discourage the Immigration to this State of Persons Who Cannot Become Citizens Thereof.” Perhaps the most extreme anti-Chinese language appeared in 1855. Charles J. McClain argues that California’s legislature began to work on a bill that would “flatly prohibit the immigration of any more Chinese into the state through any of its ports” (18). The Committee on Federal Relations in California then declared, “California is...the country of the white man and [it] should exclude any of the inferior races” (qtd. in McClain 18). The committee also believed through legislation that it could force the Chinese living in California to relocate or leave, but McClain notes the bill was “struck down by the California Supreme Court” (18).<sup>78</sup> Even so, Chew declared Anglo American treatment of Chinese Americans “outrageous” (422) in his memoir, though all was not lost for him. Upon reaching San Francisco, long before the Chinese Exclusion Act, Chew recalls arriving in America “half starved” because he was “afraid to eat” foreign food. Chew notes that after “a few days’ living in the Chinese quarter made [him] happy again.” He

recalls gaining employment “as a house servant [for] an American family” and notes his “start was the same as that of almost all the Chinese in this country” (Chew 420).

Initially, Chinese immigrants farmed, mined, and worked as servants, a fact Lee Yan Phou would remind readers of the *North American Review* of in 1889 (476). It was not until they were physically and violently forced out of mining and rural areas that Chinese Americans became railway and urban workers (though the 1860s would again prove problematic for Chinese workers when they were hired to partake in the construction of the transcontinental railroad), such as Chew was. The situation continued to deteriorate for Chinese Americans earlier in the 1850s, though. In 1854, a California Supreme Court case, *People vs. Hall*, deprived Chinese Americans from testifying against Anglo Americans; in 1855 a law was implemented that required a \$50 entry fee to California that most newly arrived Chinese could not pay. All of this contributed to anti-Chinese sentiments and the continual buildup of racism against Chinese Americans, spurring pleas of tolerance and acceptance. The growing number of seemingly random acts of violence, including the murder of Chinese Americans, further contributed to the need of a Chinese American voice, presence, and agency, but no major voice of resistance arose in the English and Anglo dominant newspapers for some time.

The 1860s proved to be a turbulent period for Chinese Americans, as they had lost the right to immigrate to California and faced another new tax, the Capitation Tax in 1862, as well as growing violence and hatred from Anglo Americans.<sup>79</sup> In 1862, California Governor Leland Stanford enacted a \$2.50 tax, known as the Chinese Police Tax, a monthly tax with the subtitle of “An Act to Protect Free White Labor against Competition with Chinese Coolie Labor, and to Discourage the Immigration of the

Chinese into the State of California.”<sup>80</sup> In the 1860s, Chinese Americans became workers on the transcontinental railway, sparking racially charged tensions against the Chinese, especially from the Irish. Chew recollects his experiences: “When the railroad construction gang moved on we went with them. The men were rough and prejudiced against us” (421). Perhaps the largest boon for Chinese Americans in the 1860s was Charles Crocker’s invitation to them to work on the Pacific Railroad project, but this ultimately led to more racial strife and economic anxiety that would culminate in several planned acts of racially charged mass murder years later when mobs of Anglo workers violently murdered Chinese Americans in spurts.

The economic crash of the 1870s, however, pushed racial and economic tensions in California to a climax—Bret Harte mentioned the worry of cheaper labor and Chinese employment earlier in 1867 when he claimed calls for cheaper labor led to Chinese fulfillment of job openings in favor of the Irish. While Harte mentioned the issue would fester, he also argued the Irish to remember “that they have long enjoyed a monopoly in their peculiar avocations, often to the exclusion of native [born] Americans” (*Bret Harte’s California* 114). Several Chinese American authors would later combat this claim, but the economic crisis helped lead to racially charged violence targeting Chinese Americans. During this period, acts of violence toward Chinese Americans occurred across the West in Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Wyoming, Colorado, Nevada, and California. California saw some of the most frequent violence: in Los Angeles, on October 24, 1871, for instance, five hundred angry Anglo men gathered in Chinatown with the intent to commit racially charged mass murder by hanging, shooting, or stabbing Chinese Americans who lived there. The mob burned down buildings where Chinese

Americans lived, ultimately destroying the small but thriving Chinatown there, killing many in the process. The mob responsible for the arson claimed that an innocent Anglo man had been shot by a person of Chinese decent. As a result, the Anglo mob plotted racially motivated revenge. Much like the events in Wilmington, N.C., Wounded Knee, South Dakota, and across California, official records claim numbers as low as nineteen Chinese Americans slain that day, but many scholars place the number closer to a hundred. However, the true number will remain a mystery. Moreover, even after official inquiries, conducted under public pressure, no one ever faced conviction for engaging in racially charged mass murder. In a recent article published in the *LA Weekly News* on March 10, 2011, John Johnson Jr. declared the events of 1871 in Los Angeles had been “covered up” and “The bloodlust unleashed that October night was allowed to unfold (if not also set in motion) by some of the city’s leading citizens.” Johnson notes these men were “so powerful they could arrange to have the convictions fall apart and the reasons for the massacre covered up” (“How Los Angeles Covered Up the Massacre of 17 Chinese” 1).

In *The Chinese in America: A Narrative History*, Iris Chang notes, “Racial and ethnic tensions simmer just below the surface in virtually all multiethnic societies, but it usually takes an economic crisis to blow the lid of off civility and allow deep-seated hatred to degenerate into violence” (116). The events of 1871, as well as throughout that decade in California and the United States, exemplify Chang’s observations. As Coolidge points out, “The Chinese became the scapegoats for the evils of the time; they were stoned, robbed, maltreated in the streets with impunity by the idler and the hoodlum, who suffered no restraint” (61). Survivors recall the terror and fear with which

the Chinese Americans lived. In his memoir, *Reminiscences*, Huie Kin, a survivor of the violence in San Francisco in the 1870s, recalls, “The Chinese were in a pitiable condition in those days.... [W]e were simply terrified; we kept indoors after dark for fear of being shot in the back” (qtd. in Chang 126). Iris Chang also quotes Andrew Kan, who recalled, “When I first came, Chinese treated worse than dog. Oh, it was terrible, terrible” (126). Kan continued speaking of the violence Chinese Americans faced, remembering the harassment: “The hoodlums, roughnecks, and young boys pull your queue, slap your face, [and] throw all kinds of old vegetables and rotten eggs at you” (qtd. in Chang 127). Another survivor noted he felt as if the Chinese were

[r]unning the gauntlet among the savages of the wilderness. They follow the Chinaman through the streets, howling and screaming after him to frighten him. They catch hold of his cue [sic] and pull him from the wagon. They throw brickrats and missiles at him, and so, often these poor heathen, coming to this Christian land under sacred treaty stipulations, reach their quarter of this Christian city covered with wounds and bruises and blood. (qtd. in Chang 126)

J. S. Look recalled that in San Francisco, “The small American boys would throw rocks at us” and that “all the windows had to be covered at night with thick wooden doors or else the boys would break in the glass with rocks” (qtd. in Chang 127). On the East Coast, things were similar. Chew, who worked his way to the East Coast from California, remembered when the Chinese finally were able “to discontinue putting wire screens in front of their windows” (422)—a development he notes only happened in 1903, long after an extensive period of intense anti-Chinese American violence. Chew noted, though, that “at the present time the street boys are still breaking the windows of

Chinese laundries all over the city, while the police seem to think it a joke” (421). While popular Anglo American media sources portrayed Chinese Americans as instigators and troublemakers, especially in California and New York, these testimonies depict a radically different version of events that continued to fester into acts of violence.

### **From Economic Terror to National Paranoia: The Origins of the ‘Yellow Peril’**

The 1870s depict a marked turn in the racism Chinese Americans faced in the daily publications of false information about them. Instead of hate speech coming from public addresses, pamphlets, and newspapers, countless literary magazines and now-forgotten novels emerged, weaving a new web of Sinophobia.<sup>81</sup> Chinese Americans not only faced tales essentializing them as a single people with no culture or history at all, but they also were accused of being a people who stole American jobs, a stereotype that never disappeared, even with Chinese American refutations and verifiable proof. However, this also led to a rise of anti-Chinese American violence and incidents of racially charged mass murder. Chinese Americans also had to deal with a rise in the use of print media that painted them as insidious to the extreme: They were portrayed as plotting to take over America, through war, racial mixing, or business enterprise, and sometimes a combination of these. Wu points out that “anti-Chinese agitators claimed that the Chinese would swarm over the Pacific and invade white America” (11).<sup>82</sup> After this, Sinophobia reached a new extreme, and the “Yellow Peril” erupted in full swing. Yet this period also marks a new point in Chinese American response: Chinese Americans again turned to Anglo dominant newspapers to respond to Anglo Sinophobia—and then began to have their editorials bound into publications.

Kwang Chang Ling exemplifies this use of newspapers for initial rebuttals to Anglo racism and extreme Sinophobia, and later his editorials were published in book format. He addresses the paranoid beliefs of the ‘yellow peril’ in his final letter to the San Francisco *Argonaut*, “The Decay of the Chinese Empire,” on September 7, 1878. China was, according to Ling, decaying, but “is by no means dead, but only sleeps...[S]he is far from threatening to let loose upon the Western world a pauper population of four hundred and odd millions of people, she does not possess over a hundred millions of people” (16). Lee Yan Phou also considered the claims of the Chinese “invasion,” noting, “the Chinese are not a migratory people...[H]ardly 1,000,000 have left the country by sea in 100 years” (478). Even so, very few Anglo Americans regarded what these men had to say, but these authors never gave up fighting racism and Sinophobia. In a speech years later, Lee Yan Phou addressed this by arguing,

[I]t is assumed that the Peking [sic] authorities are anxious to get rid of its redundant population. Nothing can be more absurd. They have been always, and are still, averse to the emigration of their subjects; so much so that they yielded only to the inducements and concessions offered by this Government, which are embodied in the Burlingame Treaty. (269-270)

The creation of the “yellow peril” threat also included articles and works of fiction that “focus[ed] on [Chinese] communities as exotic, filthy, and crime ridden ghettos...[filled with] lurid tales of vice, gambling, and tong wars” (Wu 2-3). Novels such as H. J. West’s *The Chinese Invasion* (1872) and Atwell Whitney’s *Almond Eyed: The Great Agitator; A Story of the Day* (1878) exemplify the growing issue of Sinophobia in the 1870s. Though West and Whitney are now-forgotten authors, other canonical authors, including Frank

Norris, Ambrose Bierce, and Jack London, worked to perpetuate racist beliefs and Sinophobia regarding Chinese Americans even into the twentieth century. They remain perhaps the most well-known authors for racial intolerance regarding Chinese Americans. Norris, like Bierce, claimed he did not write for popularity but rather that he wrote truthfully about non-Anglo Americans. In an interview in October 1901, Norris recalled, “I never truckled. I never took off the hat to Fashion and held it out for pennies. I told them the truth. They liked it or they didn't like it. What had that to do with me? I told them the truth” (39). As an American naturalist, Norris’ viewpoint is fitting, but it also helped perpetuate stereotypes, racism, and ultimately a WASPish point of view that dominated America at the time. Not soon after, racially charged mass murder of Chinese Americans would become a frequent side effect of this extreme Sinophobia.

In addition to these writers, numerous lesser-known Anglo authors penned anti-Chinese short stories, many of which found serialization in popular literary magazines, novels, and newspaper op/ed articles.<sup>83</sup> Very few Anglo authors wrote favorably of Chinese Americans. Yet some problematized the plight of Chinese Americans well, exposing the harassment and racism Chinese Americans regularly experienced. Bret Harte’s controversial poem, “Plain Language From Truthful James, or, The Heathen Chineese” (1870), and his short story, “Wan Lee, the Pagan” (1874), are two early works written by an Anglo American author concerning Chinese Americans that some scholars consider to be pro-Chinese, or at least sympathetic to the small Chinese American population. Harte’s description of Wan Lee is indicative of the support for this argument, as Harte worked to debunk several stereotypes of Chinese Americans. He first instructs readers, “Before I describe him I want the average reader to discharge from his mind any



idea of a Chinaman that he may have gathered from the pantomime” (*Writings of Bret Harte* 2:264). Harte then moves to provide readers with a description of Wan Lee. Harte writes that he

did not wear beautifully scalloped drawers with fringed little bells—I never met a Chinaman who did; he did not habitually carry his forefinger extended before him at right angles with his body, nor did I ever hear him utter the mysterious sentence, ‘Ching a ring a ring chaw,’ nor dance under any provocation. He was on the whole, a rather grave, decorous, handsome gentleman...I doubt if you could have found the equal of this Pagan shopkeeper among the Christian traders of San Francisco. (*Writings of Bret Harte* 2:264)

Again, though Harte’s portrayal of Wan Lee is sympathetic, it is still an Anglo American author creating a Chinese American presence, and though Harte attempts to achieve this, the text is problematic: Wan Lee, though successful and gentle, falls in love with an Anglo Christian girl and is beaten to death in a riot against the Chinese—in California. Harte’s realism here is stark. His consideration of the plight of the Chinese is sharp, and his criticism of Christians is even more so, but Wan Lee finds himself in a typical spot for non-Anglo American characters in fictional texts, realistic or otherwise: He dies, or, in Robert F. Berkhofer’s words, becomes “safely dead” (90). Had Wan Lee remained alive, he would have remained a threat to Anglo American ideals. Moreover, his only other fitting options would be to vanish like other non-Anglo groups. In other words, Wan Lee would be exterminated through racially charged murder.<sup>84</sup>

This places Wan Lee and other Chinese Americans in a familiar spot and depicts them not unlike other minority groups. However, Chinese Americans hardly vanished:

Like other groups portrayed as vanishing, they experienced forced removal. Wu avers that Harte attempted to portray the Chinese positively, even though more often than not he placed them as insignificant characters (20). Chinese Americans had a response to this literature in the editorials they wrote as correctives to the falsehoods so prevalent in Anglo-dominant print media. As for Harte, it is much more likely he wrote his stories using a didactic literary style with an Anglo audience in mind, but his texts are ultimately problematic and served to perpetuate the stereotypes of Chinese Americans further. In the coming decades, Chinese Americans would continue to fight against Anglo racism, misconceptions, and hatred using Anglo newspapers and letters initially, and later, through literary means, including the publications of their letters as pamphlets, as well as through serializations, literary magazines, and novels.

**The Tumultuous Tide of the late 1870s: Dennis Kearney, the Workingmen's Party, Kwang Chang Ling, and Lee Chew**

Shortly after publication of these quasi-pro Chinese publications portraying Chinese Americans in California, and in the wake of an excess of anti-Chinese texts over a decade and a half, Denis Kearney emerged on the scene at the new forefront of anti-Chinese sentiment and politics. A leader of the Workingmen's Party in California, and ironically an Irish immigrant, Kearney began an anti-Chinese movement in Eureka, California, in the late 1870s that encouraged violence and racially charged mass murder against Chinese Americans.<sup>85</sup> His initiatives became part of a statewide movement to oppress if not eradicate the Chinese American population by legislation, excessive taxation, and planned acts of racially charged violence. However, this progression also

led to an immediate, direct, strong Chinese American response on the pages of Anglo dominant newspapers.

Eureka had been hit hard by the economic downturn in the 1870s, which helped spike anti-Chinese sentiments with planned acts of violence and racially charged mass murder. Kearney's speeches were blistering with the rhetoric of hate that filled not only the air but also found publication in newspapers across the country. Clearly, his message was widespread. Kwang Chang Ling, however, fought back almost immediately with his own opinions in various American newspapers. Later, Lee Yan Phou and Lee Chew also would comment on Kearney and the Workingmen's Party's anti-Chinese sentiments via literature. While Kwang Chang Ling initially used the San Francisco *Argonaut* to get his message across, his letters later were published in book format. Lee Yan Phou found space for his message in the *North American Review*, and Lee Chew later published his memoirs as well. All of these men's opinions were published in English so that there would be no doubt they would reach an Anglo American audience. Their words provided counter arguments, voice, and presence for Chinese Americans.

Kearney's "We have no Chinese" movement occurred over several years, but began in 1877, when he established the Workingmen's Party of California, based on a platform of class and racial warfare. Kearney hosted several public forums where he gave speeches and wrote editorials to support his beliefs and outcries against the Chinese, using stereotypes and nativism to secure his position as well as to rile up California's poor Anglo working people. With the campaign slogan, "The Chinese Must Go!" his party won several seats in the state legislature in 1878, but Kearney did not stop there. He was known to say such things as, "Are you ready to march down to the wharf and

stop the leprous Chinese from landing?” and “Judge Lynch is the judge wanted by the workingmen of California” (qtd. in Saxton 111). All the while, Kearney denied his rhetoric was violent or meant to cause harm to Chinese Americans. Yet his calls did cause harm to Chinese Americans in San Francisco, and his rhetoric speedily swept across the state. Racially charged violence against the Chinese in California became almost routine, though it was rarely recorded even when reported, and even less frequently prosecuted, as California’s Supreme Court case *People vs. Hall* (1854) had decided years before that Chinese Americans could not testify against Anglos.

As a result, numerous Chinese Americans lived in perpetual fear of racially charged violence from Anglos. Huie Kin, who immigrated to California in 1868 and became New York’s first Chinese Christian minister in 1885, recalled the early days of Kearney’s anti-Chinese movement in California:

The sudden change of public sentiment towards our people in those days was an interesting illustration of mob psychology.... The useful and steady Chinese worker became overnight the mysterious Chinaman, an object of unknown dread. When I landed, the trouble was already brewing, but the climax did not come until 1876-1877. I understand that several causes contributed to the anti-Chinese riots. It was a period of general economic depression in the Western states, brought about by drought, crop failures, and a presidential campaign... There were long processions at night, with big torch lights and lanterns, carrying the slogan “The Chinese Must Go,” and mass meetings where fiery-tongues flayed the Chinese... Those were the days of Denis Kearney and his fellow agitators. (26-27)

In 1903, Lee Chew publicly confronted Kearney and others' false claims regarding cheap labor when he published a literary piece, "The Biography of a Chinaman," in the New York *Independent*. Here Chew blatantly responds to Kearney's hate speech by saying, "There is no reason for the prejudice against the Chinese. The cheap labor cry was always a falsehood. Their labor was never cheap, and is not cheap now. It has always commanded the highest market price" (423). Chew also defiantly avers,

It was the jealousy of laboring men of other nationalities—especially the Irish—that raised all the outcry against the Chinese. No one would hire an Irishman, German, Englishman or Italian when he could get a Chinese, because our countrymen are so much more honest, industrious, steady, sober and painstaking. [The] Chinese were persecuted, not for their vices, but for their virtues. There never was any honesty in the pretended fear of leprosy or in the cheap labor scare, and the persecution continues still. (423)

Lee Yan Phou also comments on the mistreatment of the Chinese by the Irish in "The Chinese Must Stay." He notes, "Opposition to the Chinese is identical with the opposition to the free immigration of Europeans, and especially of the Irish" (Lee 477). Lee Yan Phou also turns Kearney's arguments back on him, saying, "It was once urged against the trans-Atlantic immigrants that their cheap labor 'would degrade, demoralize, and pauperize American labor, and displace intelligent Americans in many branches of employment'" (477). While Kearney's calls for Eureka to be free of Chinese Americans depicts a deep-seated hatred, Lee Yan Phou writes that after "a bitter conflict" over Irish immigration, "the sensible view prevailed" (477), a direct swipe at Kearney's vehement, racially charged rhetoric.

Long before Lee Chew, Huie Kin, and Lee Yan Phou recollected their experiences as Chinese Americans, however, Kwang Chang Ling published several letters to the San Francisco *Argonaut* beginning on August 2, 1878, responding to American injustices against Chinese Americans. Ling especially addressed Kearney's anti-Chinese sentiments. He later had these letters, along with another letter, "The Decay of the Chinese Empire" to the *Argonaut*, published in *The Chinese Side of the Chinese Question*.<sup>86</sup> Following the precedent set by Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing, Ling admits he "is surrounded at best by unsympathetic spectators," but promises he "intends to be just" in his response to the mistreatment of the Chinese and in the information he publishes. Moreover, Ling refers to the *Argonaut* as "especially preferred as the medium for the promulgation of these views on account of its reputed fairness to all" (2), which reaches back to Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing's choices of newspapers in which to publish. Ling also hearkens back to American promises of honesty and, to ensure his audience can identify with him, he uses Anglo-European metaphors to depict his promise. He claims his "only buckler is the truth" and his "only weapon" (2) is the English language.

Kwang Chang Ling is eloquent and direct: He holds nothing back, even noting in his second letter that Christianity is to blame for much of the united Western effort against China. He notes in his third letter, on August 17, 1878, that America has become "proud, insolent and unjust" (9) and that Americans cannot deny their part in this history. In presenting Chinese history, culture, and Chinese-European-American interactions, Ling admits in his third letter he is severely limited, which is "a great source of embarrassment for him" (8), but he explains he has an impossible task to fulfill in

representing China's long, proud history and culture to a predominantly hostile audience. Additionally, Ling finds his task impossible because he knows his audience's knowledge of China has been biased by Anglo misconception and misinformation and that most readers hold factually incorrect knowledge of China, her people, and her history. Yet, Ling strove to weave an educational and literary piece for Anglo readers.

During 1877 and 1878, the debate over the role of Chinese Americans in California became especially heated, and calls for violence against Chinese Americans were almost routine. Kearney's Workingmen's Party alleged they used non-violent rhetoric, but on several occasions, the Party found itself in grave trouble with California authorities for urging and engaging in racially charged violence against Chinese Americans.<sup>87</sup> Though he had not been held accountable in committing such heinous crimes against Chinese Americans before, Kearney was now charged with inciting racial violence. In a political editorial, Kearney sought to clear his name from accusations of violence as well as to clear the reputation of the Workingmen's Party of wrongdoing against Chinese Americans. Kearney claimed innocence in the Indianapolis *Times* on February 28, 1878: "Do not believe those who call us savages, rioters, incendiaries, and outlaws. We seek our ends calmly, rationally, at the ballot box. So far good order has marked all our proceedings" (1). Yet in the same editorial, Kearney alleged that

we know how false, how inhuman, our adversaries are. We know that if gold, if fraud, if force can defeat us, they will all be used. And we have resolved that they shall not defeat us. We shall arm. We shall meet fraud and falsehood with defiance, and force with force, if need be. (1)

The violence soon followed. Iris Chang cites violence occurred in Chico, California, two weeks after Kearney's speech on March 13, 1878, where "a group of armed white men broke into a cabin...where they shot to death five Chinese farm workers, then poured oil over the bodies and set them ablaze. One of the killers later confessed that he had acted under orders from the Workingmen's Party" (127). It became clear that Kearney and the Workingmen's Party, despite public professions, encouraged violence and ultimately planned racially charged mass murder against Chinese Americans.

In *The History of Political Conventions in California, 1849-1892*, Winfield J. Davis notes that the Workingmen's Party's "principles" included the following statute: "We propose to rid the country of cheap Chinese labor as soon as possible, and by all the means in our power, because it tends still more to degrade labor and aggrandize capital" (366). Moreover, another declaration against the Chinese vowed, "The party [would] then wait upon all who employ Chinese and ask for their discharge and it will mark as public enemies, those who refuse to comply with their request" (Davis 367). In his Indianapolis *Times* editorial, "Appeal from California—The Chinese Invasion—Workingmen's Address," Kearney fiercely preached against the Chinese in Eureka, claiming:

To add to our misery and despair, a bloated aristocracy has sent to China—the greatest and oldest despotism in the world—for a cheap working slave. It rakes the slums of Asia to find the meanest slave on earth—the Chinese coolie—and imports him here to meet the free American in the Labor market, and still further widen the breach between the rich and the poor, still further to degrade white Labor. (1)



Yet Kearney's idea of "the Chinese coolie" was a myth that Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing demonstrated years before Kearney began preaching anti-Chinese sentiments. Kearney's perpetuation of the coolie myth may portray itself as disappointing but is ultimately revealing: It shows the racism, hatred, and politics prevailed, but it is not surprising when viewing the Anglo need to rationalize the economic downturn in California in the 1870s. Ling recognized this issue in his final letter and readdresses the issue to clarify Kearney's and others' mistaken beliefs, an act that not only served to undermine Kearney but to depict him as untrustworthy.

Ling begins his letter firmly: "I am too well aware of the inveteracy and rancor of race prejudice to expect to convince my opponents so long as they refuse to join issue with me, and are satisfied merely to reiterate that demand for the expulsion of the Chinese which it has been my endeavor to show was both unjust and unwise" (13). Kearney's perpetuation of the falsehood also is not shocking in light of the anti-Chinese articles and opinions published in newspapers, literary magazines, and novels. Kearney also had a political agenda to fulfill and used this myth to further his plans and cause. While Ling did his best to argue against this behavior, he was ultimately unsuccessful in swaying public opinion. However, his letters proffered voice, presence, culture, history, and detailed information about Chinese lifestyles that no other piece at the time offered. Moreover, as Ling worked to achieve this, he presents the Chinese not as victims but as a group that not only will survive expulsion and violence but will prevail in time over these actions.

To Kearney's claims of Chinese Americans causing economic troubles in California, Ling writes,

The cry here is that the Chinese must go. I say that they should not go; that they cannot go; will not go. More than this, that, were it conceivable that they went, your State would be ruined; in a word, that the Chinese population of the Pacific Coast have become indispensable to its continued prosperity. (1)

Echoing the defense of Asian immigrants in the 1850s, Ling provides his Anglo readers with a detailed history of European aggression toward the Chinese in a literary-historical fashion. Ling notes the Europeans would have enslaved the Chinese if they had been able (5). Americans, Ling writes, “desire to possess every conceivable privilege of trade, residence, religion, etc., for Americans in China, whilst you deny all of them to Chinamen in America” (6). Several treaties with China, from the 1844 Treaty of Wang Hya to the Tientsin treaty of 1858 and the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, demonstrate these problems as the treaties often favored America and not China.

Kearney claimed that Chinese immigrants to the U.S. were “imported by companies, controlled as serfs, worked like slaves, and [then] at last go back to China with all their earnings” (1), ignoring the Chinese who set up businesses, places of worship, wash/bath houses, restaurants, and worked to establish themselves. Even in such small mining towns as Rock Springs, Wyoming, there was a Chinese American quarter. In response, Ling offered, “The Chinese picked up a living by resorting to petty industries in which you could not compete with foreign or Eastern artisans, and which you, therefore, could not have started” (12). Kearney argued, “These cheap slaves fill every place. Their dress is scant and cheap. Their food is rice from China. They hedge twenty in a room, ten by ten. They are whipped curs, abject in docility, mean, contemptible and obedient in all things. They have no wives, children or dependents”

(1). Ling retorted Kearney's complaints were not truly about religion or morality but were about economics.<sup>88</sup> Wu asserts that "white Californians claimed that the Chinese laborers could not be beaten in direct competition allegedly because they worked too hard and survived on less wages" (11). Ling recognized this and wrote, "Now that the Chinamen have built up these trades some of you would drive them away, hoping, no doubt, to fill their places, and perhaps to fill them at higher wages" (12). While Chinese immigration was smaller in numbers than Irish immigration, Kearney believed fewer Chinese workers would mean more pay for Anglo workers, but his argument is inherently flawed: Businesses hired Chinese workers *because* they would get the same work done for lower wages than what Anglo workers demanded. Fewer Chinese workers would not necessarily mean more pay for Anglo workers. Yet these recycled arguments from the decades preceding the 1870s, and Kearney's use of them, is not shocking. Ling's responses not only mimic earlier responses to racism but also work to fight for Chinese American voice and presence. While Ling overtly ignores some of Kearney's outcries, such as Kearney's example of overfilled dwellings, what he looks at instead is Kearney's claim that the Chinese are docile and obedient, which Ling points out is a cultural behavior, one that Americans might learn (12).

Kearney's nativism, however, is most troubling when considering racially charged mass murder of Chinese Americans. Ling does not ignore these but addresses them directly. Often transparent in his outcries, Kearney declared, "California must be all American or all Chinese. We are resolved that it shall be American, and are prepared to make it so" (1). Olmstead avers this was perhaps the only "catch phrase in American history that ever 'solved' a major race problem" (285). On September 21, 1877, Winfield

J. Davis notes that Kearney addressed a crowd of two thousand men, urging “every working man [to] add a musket to his household property” (Davis 365). Kearney also argued if poor Anglo laborers were “well armed, well organized,” they would be “well able to demand and take what they [wanted] despite the military, the police, and the ‘safety committee’” (Davis 366).

On November 5, 1877, Kearney told the San Francisco *Evening Bulletin* that if elected, he would “give the Central Pacific [railroad] just three months to discharge their Chinamen, and if that is not done, [Leland P.] Stanford and his crowd will have to take the consequences” (1).<sup>89</sup> The “crowd” Kearney refers to here includes the Chinese American workers Stanford had hired to build the railroad. Another call for racially charged mass murder, as it targets Chinese Americans specifically, is Kearney’s infamous call to hang any and all Chinese Americans found in the vicinity. Huie Kin recalls Kearney’s calls for extermination, quoting Kearney as saying, “There is no means left to clear the *Chinamen* but to swing *them* into eternity by their queues, for there is no rope long enough in all America wherewith to strangle four hundred millions of Chinamen” (qtd. in Hoobler and Hoobler 64). Ling acknowledges this outrageous claim by reminding readers that China “does not possess over a hundred millions of people” (16) and that there were nowhere near this many Chinese immigrants in America. However, Kearney had a hold over people, and Sinophobia continued to build while turning ordinary Anglo men into mass murderers of Chinese Americans.

Ling directly addresses Kearney and the Workingmen’s Party regarding this problem, and he does not qualify his assessment of them. Ling refers to them as “demagogue[s]...[whose] politics...have been degraded to a level scarcely higher than

incendiarism [sic], pillage and murder” (1). Ling ends his letter with a stinging slap directly at them, writing all of “this may not be perceptible to my friends of the sand-lot,” which he describes as “an amusement” (5). While Ling clearly works to slight Kearney and the Workingmen’s Party, he ends his first letter with a subtle warning: Things have become so problematic that “it may be too late to discuss the matter” (5).

Ling’s first letter not only provides cultural and historical background but carries voice, presence, and provides a firm stance against Kearney’s calls for Chinese extermination. In his second letter, Ling points out Anglo hypocrisy regarding racism. He writes, “You profess in your political constitution, your pulpit declamations, and, more than all, in your manner of living, that you are not bigoted” (Ling 7). Regarding California specifically, he asserts the issue against Chinese Americans is that the Chinese simply survive on lower wages and that Kearney and his followers are unwilling to do so.

In another move foreshadowed by Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, and Asing, Kwang Chang Ling provides a history of Chinese and European power structures and relations. This history not only provides presence and voice for Chinese Americans but works to challenge assumptions that China had no history. Ling’s narrative also works to show a multidimensional people and culture. He discusses the history of China and Western culture politically and economically, noting that while Europe was in shambles, “at the lowest point of her decadence, China stood at the height of her power and magnificence” (3). Through the course of this first letter, Ling gives a brief history of China for his Anglo readers up until about the sixteenth century; in his second letter, he provides more history; in offering this history to Anglo readers, Ling presents China as welcoming to Americans even though China did not necessarily want to interact with Americans

because, he explains, the Chinese are not aggressive or exploratory people. He also warns Americans in his third letter that American “fate as a progressive civilization is sealed...[and] the Chinaman will arise to muse over your ruined cities, and recall the ingratitude and folly that precipitated [this] fall” (10).

Ling also shows that America has abused its relationship with China. He notes America “has bombarded [Chinese] ports, and forced us into an unwilling commerce with you” (Ling 6). He also points out another fallacy of the American viewpoint: Instead of welcoming Chinese and intermingling and cooperating with them, Americans believe “the presence of the Chinese...is a menace to [American] civilization” (7). Ling’s indictment of parts of the Burlingame treaty are especially significant: For one, many readers would have been unfamiliar with it; for another, he displays a solid working knowledge of America as well as of China, her politics, culture, and history, all of which work against typical portrayals of Chinese Americans at the time. Beyond this, Ling writes eloquently and possesses a solid command of English, another way in which he can defeat stereotypes and misrepresentations of Chinese Americans.

Ling diligently works to provide history for his readers, carefully explaining the decaying relations between China and America. As he notes in this first letter,

Perhaps you may think that the Chinese Question in California has little to do with all this [history]. Well, we shall see. The trouble about the Chinese question is, that it has hitherto been viewed from too low and narrow a standpoint. It has been forgotten that nations have histories, and their relations towards one another are not to be altogether by present or local considerations” (5).

However, Ling concludes his second letter with a blunt assertion: “If you must trade with China, you must come in contact with Chinamen” (7), and to Kearney’s cries, Ling replies, “You may drive us out of California, but we shall influence your social affairs all the same” (7). Perhaps his strongest statement of Chinese presence is one that says California is not necessary for Chinese commercial success, a direct dig at Kearney. Ling writes, “The goods that we now manufacture in San Francisco will be fabricated in Canton; and no matter how high you may raise your tariff, you will walk in Canton shoes, wear Canton shirts, smoke Canton cigars, and shoot each other with Canton revolvers and gunpowder: For we can make all of them cheaper than you can” (8). Ling endows Chinese Americans with agency, voice, and presence: It describes a collection of people who will remain united in business and do not depend on California residency for its survival as a people.

In his third and fourth letters, Ling paints a vivid picture of what California’s economy would be if Kearney and the Workingmen’s Party were successful in fulfilling their agenda. Before doing this, though, Ling notes in the closing passage of his second letter that it has been a mistake on America’s part to consider itself “superior” to Chinese civilization (8). He also shows readers that American civilization and economy owe much to China, and without China’s “support” would “rapidly decay” (8). Ling compares American economic interests to those of Spain, arguing,

The cry against the Moors in Spain and the Chinese in Manila was the same: paganism, filth, leprosy, a lower civilization. It was false in both cases, as it is in the present case of California. The real offense was that the hated races were more abstemious and economical than the race in power, and much as you may

endeavor to conceal it from the world and from yourselves, this is the offence of the Chinaman in California. (10)

To conclude, Ling makes this simple statement to his readers: “I believe I have said enough to show why the Chinese should not go” (10).<sup>90</sup> More than this, however, Ling does something unprecedented in his response to Kearney: He threatens that the Chinese are prepared to go “to arms against [America’s/ California’s] injustices” (10) because American behavior violates the Burlingame treaty. However, he stresses that the Chinese would prefer friendship to animosity in their relations with America. Ling also offers up the idea of a joined empire instead of the tenuous relationship that exists between the two countries, comprised of “the oldest and newest empires of the world, joined together by the common cause of Free Trade” (11). This vision would not come to be, though, and well into the next decade Chinese Americans would continue to face violence, murder, and exclusion.

The Workingmen’s Party finally succeeded in amending the California constitution to prevent further Chinese immigration and to prevent Chinese immigrants already in the state from becoming citizens. Lee Yan Phou addressed this situation in his essay, saying, “Californians prohibited the Chinese from becoming citizens and then accused them of failure to become naturalized” (272). In 1879, Kearney’s party secured municipal rule in San Francisco, and cries for the expulsion of the Chinese escalated, helping lead to the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the continued rise of extreme Sinophobia, combined with paranoid beliefs that the Chinese would “take over” America. Ironically, in the 1880s in California, where anti-Chinese American sentiments peaked, “The rate of Chinese immigration was second to that of Irish immigrants” (Wu



11), and Takaki notes that in 1880 the Chinese American population “constituted a mere .002 percent of the United States” (206). Yet anti-Chinese sentiments continued to fester to the point of racially charged mass murder. These unfounded fears, however, helped fully form what has become popularly known as the yellow peril, and the Workingmen’s Party capitalized on these fears.

### **The 1880s: From Exclusion to the Eureka Method**

While politics and legislation continued on this trajectory, so did the dominant Anglo literature of the time. Later century novels displaying extreme Sinophobia include Pierton F. W. Dooner’s *The Last Days of the Republic* (1880) and *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of Oregon and California* by Robert Wolter (1882). Newspaper articles, editorials and pamphlets reached an acute level of Sinophobia, and by 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act had been enacted. Lee Yan Phou provides his reaction to the act in his “Graduation Speech,” where he passionately says:

Were it not for the tragic events which trod on the heels of the Chinese Immigration Bill, one might be inclined to laugh at the absurdities in the bill itself. If the law is faithfully executed (and to be worth anything it must be), all Americans born in China are disfranchised, and all Chinese natives of British colonies, like Hong Kong and India, have free access to this country. But who could laugh in the midst of indignant tears? By passing a discriminating law against an already persecuted class, the Central Government yielded to the demands of the mob, and to that extent countenanced its violence and lawlessness. The Anti-Chinese Act is a cause of all the outrages and massacres that have been since committed in Rock Springs and Denver, in Portland, San

Francisco and other parts, which, if they had been perpetrated in China against Americans, would have resounded from Bedloe's Island (whereon stands the Statue of Liberty) to the Golden Gate. But the criminals in these cases were not punished, and even the pitiful indemnity was voted down until Congress could not withhold it from very shame. (273)

Initially intended to be a ten-year moratorium on Chinese immigration to America, the Scott Act of 1888 forbade re-entry to the United States for Chinese Americans once they left. The Geary Act followed shortly after, and Chinese immigration to the United States effectively ended until 1943—more than half a century later. The numbers of Chinese Americans living in and coming to this country dropped dramatically, but it was not enough to quell Sinophobia.

In February 1885, Anglo Americans enacted what would become known as the Eureka Method—an act newspapers in Eureka and across California wrongly hailed as a nonviolent manner in which Anglos forcibly relocated Chinese Americans. This further indirectly silenced the small populace of Chinese Americans after rounding them up and holding them in warehouses only to force them onto ships out of Eureka, bound for San Francisco. Jeanne Pfaelzer notes headlines such as “wipe out the plague spots” became common and recounts what led to the exodus of Chinese Americans from Eureka.

Pfaelzer writes, “An effigy of a Chinese man swung from gallows built in the middle of the night on the edge of Chinatown. Nearby a sign nailed to a wooden post warned, ‘Any Chinese seen on the street after three o'clock today will be hung to this gallows’” (152).

Racially charged violence and mass murder against Chinese Americans did not stop in Eureka, however. In August 1885, a similar situation took place in Tacoma, Washington:

Several hundred Anglo men walked into the Chinese district and forced the Chinese American population out of the city and onto trains bound for Portland, indirectly silencing Chinese Americans yet again. Interestingly, in both these acts of forced relocation, the Chinese population was minimal: Eureka had a Chinese population of about 300, and Tacoma, about 200. Either way, the Eureka Method represents another form of racially charged violence, much like after the events in Wilmington, where African Americans people were forcefully relocated and murdered if they did not cooperate.

In 1887, in his graduation speech from Yale University, Lee Yan Phou commented on the culmination of decades of violence. He recalls,

The torrents of hatred and abuse which have periodically swept over the Chinese industrial class in America had their sources in the early California days. They grew gradually in strength, and, uniting in one mighty stream, at last broke the barriers with which justice, humanity and the Constitution of the Republic had until then restrained their fury. (269)

By the 1880s, Chinatowns across California had been burned to the ground several times, Chinese miners had been chased out of mining towns, brutally gunned down even when they agreed to leave, and had been beaten, mutilated, and even hanged. Racially charged violence against Chinese Americans had reached an alarming peak, but not many people except the Chinese Americans seemed concerned. Lee Yan Phou recalls the violence, noting, “[T]he catastrophe was too terrible, and has made too deep an impression to be easily forgotten” (Graduation Speech 269). Lee Yan Phou also alerts his audience to the gravity of a half century of violence. He says,

[T]he enemies of the Chinese laborer may be counted by the million. Yet these men, having everything their own way, are still dissatisfied and cannot rest secure until all the Chinese laborers have been driven out or killed off with the connivance of a perverted public opinion. (269)

However, the strongest contributor of violence against Chinese Americans was perception, created by stereotype. It was instilled in the public's mind over the preceding decades and remained, despite Chinese American pleas for tolerance, explanations, and outcries against hatred. The perception that Chinese Americans posed an economic threat to Anglo working families persisted, and instead of causing both sporadic and targeted planned acts of racially charged violence, a new form of anti-Chinese racially charged mass murder arose. Lee Yan Phou refers to these acts as "Mob-rule," which he believes "knows no respect for persons; the Chinese were attacked first simply because they were the weakest" (269). Chinese American populations were miniscule compared to Anglo populations, but this did not seem to matter when a perceived economic threat from Chinese Americans existed: For Anglos, especially in California, perception mattered more than reality.

While politics and legislation continued on this trajectory, so did the literature of the time. Several novels displaying extreme Sinophobia were published late in the century, though some pieces by Anglo American writers attempted to be positive toward Chinese Americans. Bret Harte's pieces, including "The Queen of the Pirate Isle" (1887) and "See Yup" (1898), exemplify the push to cast Chinese Americans in a more progressive light. For example, Harte's Anglo characters in these stories recognize their racist ways and change their behavior toward Chinese Americans. Mary E. Bamford's

novel of a Chinese pagan who converts to Christianity, *Ti: A Story of San Francisco's Chinatown* (1899), provides a detailed and sympathetic sketch of Chinese life in San Francisco. Bamford's novel stands out because of her progressive treatment of Chinese immigrants in America. Moreover, her portrayals of Chinese Americans and their presence in the novel is not one that conforms to the stereotype of the yellow peril. However, while detailing the plight of Chinese Americans in this novel, the story is not without its problems. It is a Christian conversion narrative and depicts the only road for success as one through assimilation or "conversion" to Anglo American culture, religion, and ideals. Predictably, the novel has fallen from popularity. While these Anglo authors and few others attempted to expose the maltreatment of the Chinese in America, none contains the voice of a Chinese American.

However, Lee Yan Phou's *When I was a Boy in China* (1887) provides an intimate look into life in China, comparing and contrasting social practices, including birthdays, ghost stories, parental love for children, prenatal gender preferences, and cultural expectations for women. Phou also compares both societies as deeply paternalistic, telling his readers, "The Chinese say that all depends on the son and husband" (32), an idea many Americans would have shared at the time.<sup>91</sup> He also works to explain China's educational system, the holidays celebrated by the Chinese, as well as religious practices so that the American audience will gain some understanding of Chinese culture. In an attempt to depict Chinese culture in a manner Americans can relate to, Phou writes that "some of the [Chinese] legends are really beautiful and are as interesting as a good English novel" (81). In a later chapter, Phou considers attire, explaining the cultural practices of Chinese dress, while questioning the dress of

Americans: “How can they walk or run?” (99), he asks of the men, and is mystified by the dresses women wear. He also considers men and women mingling together, which shocks him (99-100), because the Chinese never would permit men and women to mingle socially. Phou also describes his first experiences in America in a generally positive tone until he recalls his first train ride. During his first transcontinental journey from California eastward, he experiences a train robbery, which he describes as full of “confusion and terror” (107). Though the robbery is rather jarring for him, Phou’s experiences in America are largely positive, and though he expresses shock he is never condescending or racist toward Anglo American ideals.

Twenty-two years later, Yung Wing published his memoir, *My Life in China and America* (1909), another attempt to depict Chinese Americans in a positive manner. In 1912, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, a collection of Chinese American stories by Sui Sin Far (aka Edith Maude Eaton), would provide a female voice and presence, fiction and non-fiction, concentrating especially on the female Chinese experience in North America. Sui Sin Far’s works provided voice and presence for immigrant workers in Canada and the eastern United States.

Chinese American authors finally appeared more permanently on the literary scene in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Collectively, albeit independently from one another, they depict Chinese Americans as a regular part of American society, framing them as hard-working individuals who regularly faced persecution in the worst forms, based solely on their ethnicity. Yet Chinese Americans did not allow themselves to be seen merely as victims: Instead, they fought back, using print media to fight Anglo racism, nativism, and falsehoods. In the end, each work

published in U.S. print media is an act of survivance as well as a challenge to stereotypical portrayals of Chinese Americans. Norman Asing, Hab-Wa, and Tong A-chick, Kwang Chang Ling, Lee Yan Phou, Lee Chew, and other authors strove to give Chinese Americans voice and presence using print media, and their works were acts of survivance.

## Conclusion

It is essential to note that the hard work of each of the authors covered in this dissertation did not always lead to stellar success or the correction of falsified news even in their use of the dominant Anglo press in order to challenge and undermine popular, purposeful misconceptions and misrepresentations throughout newspapers and literature. Additionally, even today the texts covered in this dissertation are not necessarily canonical. Consider, for instance, how students of American literature are far more likely to have read Chesnut's *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) than they are to have read *The Marrow of Tradition* (1903), or even *The Colonel's Dream* (1905)—Chesnut's most serious attempt to discuss race issues in America. *The Colonel's Dream* flopped due to blatant racism despite Chesnut's best attempts to combat misinformation and challenge what the dominant Anglo press published.

Yet, for all the issues these texts face in becoming canonized or even overcoming their own issues (*Wynema* comes to mind here), each of the texts in this dissertation offers a route of entry for a discussion of American literary text production that no one else has considered. The texts I consider in this dissertation are equally as important as the traditionally canonical and popular texts. However, they have not received the recognition necessary to begin the conversation of this dissertation: just as Anglo authors used newspaper accounts to make arguments in their novels, diverse minority authors worked to contradict the narratives of hostility perpetrated by the Anglo presses in the novels they published, while offering voice, presence, thus enacting survivance.

While the majority of nineteenth century Anglo texts erase, misrepresent, and perpetuate racism and lies, these texts offer presence and voice; instead of offering



readers catharsis after a group “vanishes,” these texts offer a description of events from those who experienced them. Reading any of the texts covered in this dissertation alongside traditional American literary texts would make for an eye opening study for students that could lead to the further questioning and a challenging of what we know about history and literary culture of American. Essentially, studying these texts and texts like these would offer not just an alternative history, but a more well-rounded understanding of race issues in America as the focus would not be on a single group of oppressed people. As a result, texts such as those covered in this dissertation serve as non-traditional texts to question, research, study other facets of American literature, culture, and history that the literature of the canon that the dominant Anglo literature still traditionally taught, will *never* reveal.

While the canon is regularly in flux now and has changed vastly over the past several decades, there is still opportunity for more growth and change, as well as new and different perspectives, methods of approach, and interpretations. As the literary canon has opened up, and oppressed, non-Anglo American groups continue to gain voice and presence every day in American literature. Though this has not always been an easy transition, the canon now includes far more non-Anglo voices and presences than it did even twenty years ago, and continues to expand by the year. This expansion is integral: it reveals several different Americas forming simultaneously, and will further allow marginalized groups to have voice and presence, moving them from the periphery to the center. This does not mean traditional texts should be ignored; rather, it would be more productive to read all of these texts concurrently.

One of most appealing aspects of this approach is that considering racially charged mass murder and nontraditional representations of racially charged mass murder is that each text works to expose contemporaneous portrayals of events. The texts covered in this dissertation work to correct the dominant Anglo historical and literary representations of events, and offer voice and presence, instead of absence and erasure for marginalized people within America, or misrepresentation (or even non-representation). More than this, though, these texts work to include *all* people within marginalized groups who really represent marginalized Americans. I would like to continue to consider marginalized group experiences from within the larger context or idea of being American, especially for groups who faced racially charged mass murder.

An unintentional problem studying American literature actually arises out of the growth of the canon: literature classes often segregate groups. In English language and literature departments across this country, students can study Native American literature, Chicano literature, African American literature—all generally acceptable and even a solid approaches to learning about racial groups and cultures within America. However, classes that focus solely on one group can inadvertently separate or even obfuscate larger problems minority groups in America not only faced historically, but still face today as Americans. In looking at what various groups experienced together may shed new light on what each group experienced singularly, but also as persecuted Americans. This approach could lead to a more inter-disciplinary approach to literature and even help keep the humanities afloat in a time when literary studies is, alas, not as strong as it used to be.

The nineteenth century marks a solid starting point for this, as the American landscape physically and racially changed dramatically, quickly, most often violently.

Especially throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, contact zones in the United States became especially violent and racially charged mass murder of non-Anglo groups by Anglo Americans occurred on several occasions. The dominant Anglo press largely controlled mass print media in the United States, from newspapers to literary pieces. Their hold on print media publication reveals gross amounts of misinformation regarding non-Anglo groups, from stereotypical portrayals to cultural misrepresentations and outright falsehoods pertaining to criminality and racially charged mass murder.

As the dominant American print/mass media market consisted largely of Anglo readers during the latter half of the nineteenth century, who read various texts written by other Anglo American authors who had little or no contact with minorities, the problem not only persisted, but helped solidify and institutionalize racism. Moreover, the majority of Anglo authors chose to write about non-Anglo peoples in a stereotypical or condescending manner, even if the author's ultimate goal was sympathy towards the group under discussion. Such is the case in the majority of canonical and popular novels—especially regarding Anglo dominant pieces of literature from the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Most often, these texts express an imagined minority voice that is either romanticized or stereotyped both through the misrepresentations of minority characters, but also through the use of journalistic references from Anglo newspapers. Although one might be able to argue that some of these novels do give a form of presence to minority groups who would otherwise be absent, the portrayal is always already problematic as many based their ideas on stereotyping, nineteenth century pseudo-science, and white

condescension and racism. Moreover, none of these texts enacts survivance after racially charged mass murder, and instead offers imaginary, problematic voice and presence for the minority group.

However, as I have shown, authors including Charles Chesnutt, S. Alice Callahan, and John Rollin Ridge, Norman Asing, and Hab Wa and Tong A-chick, Kwang Chang Ling, Yan Phou Lee, and Lee Chew penned and published responses to the distortions of the dominant Anglo press, thus challenging the “literature of dominance.” Ultimately, I argue their works helped to expose the misrepresentations of minorities, racially charged events, and violent encounters printed regularly in newspapers, novels, and other forms of US print media. Their works challenged pieces locally and nationally, and each author achieved the goal of exposing what the dominant Anglo press covered up, re-created, or twisted to Anglo favor: racially charged mass murders of minority groups.

Their use of newspapers is especially significant because of the sheer numbers of readers and coverage across the continent. Too, for readers of texts and novels, their inclusion of newspaper stories or what I refer to as references to journalistic moments within literary texts allowed each of these authors to present larger conversations and debates to readers that they might have otherwise been unfamiliar with, or unaware of. For example, eastern readers could consider the issues of the west via newspapers or books that included journalistic moments and references within them, and as the authors in this dissertation show, could read a different viewpoint from the dominant Anglo one.

As I have demonstrated, the marginal, non-canonical authors covered in each chapter of this dissertation used this technique in order to undermine dominant Anglo portrayals, stereotypes, and misinformation pertaining to what really happened at each

event. Their use of actual newspaper articles within their literary texts helped to debunk the fabrications perpetuated by numerous Anglo publishers at the time, and also offered Anglo readers a re-telling of events as minority groups saw and experienced them. In turn, each of the authors covered in this dissertation attempted to challenge Anglo readers' apathy and willing acceptance of such misinformation. In doing so, the authors in this dissertation all engaged in enacting various forms of survivance in order to repudiate the victimry that popular Anglo novels of the time depicted in order to perpetuate societal norms and expectations. Along with giving agency to those who experienced racially charged violence and mass murder, these texts also work as a force fighting against the various journalistic narratives of hostility aimed in demeaning and silencing specific racial groups. Thus, each author also actively participated in challenging what Ida B. Wells referred to as "the Malicious and Untruthful White Press" (*Southern Horrors* 70).

Each author's work is vastly important in this regard; while minority presses flourished within minority communities and minority communities clearly understood racially charged mass murder was occurring, the Anglo population at large did not necessarily know. Too, Wells noted of African American newspapers, that they often "lacked the means to employ agents and detectives to get at the facts" (*Southern Horrors* 70). The dominant Anglo presses reached larger audiences and had more financial power. Just as this issue left African Americans without the same representation they might have otherwise had, it represents an issue many minority presses faced across the United States. Beyond this, many Anglo American papers employed numerous editors

and staff writers who were ready to make a profit, even by publishing lies—an issue the authors in this dissertation clearly wanted to rectify.

Evidence of purposeful misrepresentation of information exists throughout US print media sources, from speeches to political cartoons, novels, pamphlets, films, and newspapers, but each text in this dissertation attempts to undermine the misinformation that is so prevalent throughout these print media sources. This use of the dominant Anglo press allowed for minority voice, space, and presence, as well as a different representation than what Anglo authors would offer for readers. Thus, these authors offer alternative but concurrent histories for each act of racially charged violence and a counter-narrative to that of the Anglo depictions of events. By using the dominant press to publish their works, each author successfully moved minorities from the periphery to the Anglo dominant center, ultimately using traditionally Anglo dominant spaces to undermine the dominant Anglo viewpoint, as well as the literature that dominated the period.

One of the goals of this dissertation is to lead readers to a better understanding of the blatant, overt, purposeful, and horrific violent crimes committed against African, Native, Mexican, and Chinese Americans across the United States that are *still* covered up, ignored, and white-washed. However, the more important goal is to show how these groups fought back using Anglo presses to achieve voice and presence within dominant Anglo literary spaces. Moreover, their use of print media show an attempt to undermine the dominant Anglo presses and their anti-non-Anglo American information while fighting erasure and misrepresentation, but also that the stereotypes of non-Anglo people were unfounded and wrong. In using the dominant Anglo press, each of the authors

covered in this dissertation did something innovative. While countless numbers of presses in other languages existed at the time, and flourished, these authors were able to reach an Anglo American audience—the audience they needed to reach perhaps more than any other, since an Anglo audience did dominate the newspaper market. At this point, many newspapers claimed to have switched from being overtly political to holding a more neutral stance. Anglo papers still published pieces that specifically sensationalized events and vilified minority groups.

While violence committed against minority populations of the nineteenth century may not occur now as often as it did then, many of the beliefs, emotions, fear, and acts of isolation and alienation are still very much alive today in the twenty-first century, and in various forms, from print media to newer forms of media. Occasionally Americans do not tolerate racially motivated violence and perpetrators face legal punishment or chastisement in some form. However, more often than not, racially motivated violence remains largely unpunished in many American states, cities, and towns. Moreover, gatekeeping, under the guise of institutional policy, money, religion, racial profiling, and linguistic discrimination surreptitiously strive to perpetuate these problems. These problems continue to persist in different forms today via institutionalized racism, hate crimes, hate speech, and racially charged violence. The recent case of George Zimmerman, an overzealous, self-appointed neighborhood watchmen brutally beat and shot a young African American teenager named Trayvon Martin in Florida—a media extravaganza surrounding the situation exemplifies this, from Geraldo Rivera’s warnings about people of color wearing “hoodies” as threatening, to others judging the case without the facts. On March 23, 2012, Rivera told *Fox and Friends* viewers he was

personally “urging the parents of black and Latino youngsters particularly to not let their children go out wearing hoodies...I think the hoodie is as much responsible for Trayvon Martin’s death as George Zimmerman was.” In fact, all one needs to do is simply read, listen to, or watch the “news,” where so-called non-racists like Chris Matthews declared on his cable television show *Hardball* on Jan 27, 2010, that he “forgot [Obama] was black...for an hour.” Or, one can venture out to a movie theatre where movies like *Avatar* (2009) and *The Help* (2010) are box office hits. Beyond this, the majority of Americans do not recognize that these issues still exist, are a problem, or need attention. Yet, these issues clearly exist,—even within the humanities—from scholarship to the classroom. While so many authors have made so much progress in expressing voice and presence and have challenged the dominant Anglo presses, there is space for more scholarly and pedagogical growth. This could not only help uncover more texts like the ones covered in this dissertation, but also in combatting institutionalized racism, which leads to, justifies, and always excuses racially charged violence.

Yet, there is more space to engage in Gerald Vizenor’s idea of survivance here, which he defines as “more than survival, more than endurance or mere response; stories of survivance are an act of presence...[I]t is an active repudiation of dominance, tragedy, and victimry” (*Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* 15). This would be through considering institutionalized racism while considering the relay of information through media outlets since the moment of contact in America—even to current times, and looking at the Anglo dominant press’s portrayals of events alongside minority press portrayals. In conducting such comparative studies of the ways in which the dominant Anglo press presented information juxtaposed with a minority



press' relay of information; another way would be to find multiple versions of retellings of instances of racially charged mass murder as told by the group suffering but also the dominant Anglo press. A comparative approach would offer a new lens for readers, one that not only took history and culture into consideration, but also one that considered slanted speech publishing demands, profits, and editorial choices. While scholars have written and unearthed vast amounts of information, this is an area lacking in American literary studies. As a result, these texts serve as a non-traditional passage to research which will develop literary studies further. Additionally, this progression will serve as a tool for students in order to teach students about other facets of American literature, culture, and history that the literature of the canon, the dominant Anglo literature still traditionally taught, will *never* reveal. While the canon is regularly in flux now and has changed vastly over the past several decades, there is still occasion for more growth and change. However, this does not mean traditional texts should be ignored; rather, it would be more productive to read all of these texts concurrently.

While this dissertation discusses human behavior that is in many ways sadly disappointing, as the dominant Anglo press was shameless in printing misinformation and encouraging hatred of and violence against minority groups, what it also reveals is the strength of the oppressed in a fight for voice, presence, representation, space, and recognition within dominant literary space. In my scholarship, I plan to make every effort to work towards continuing this research so that scholars and students can see how marginalized authors successfully used the Anglo dominant press to challenge and undermine hatred, racism, and racially charged mass murder that came as a result.

The next step is to continuing what this dissertation does in considering how each of these non-Anglo authors gained presence and voice within Anglo dominant space for marginalized people to expose how marginalized groups faced erasure, misrepresentation and racially charged mass murder, but also how each achieved voice, presence, and representation within the same literary space. If possible, recovering more lost texts would help nurture this, but perhaps in re-reading already recovered and maybe even popular texts will prove fruitful, and in effect, would continue fostering a repeated form of survivance for each group via scholarship and teaching. Maria Cristina Mena's works in several literary journals, including *The Century* and *The American* offer a hint of a starting point for a continuation of this project.

## *Notes*

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<sup>1</sup> There are several definitions of mass murder in use today, but for this dissertation, mass murder occurs when a person or group murders several people at one time or within a period. While mass murder can be indiscriminate, the mass murders I consider in this dissertation are *not* in that they include Anglo targeting of non-Anglo racial groups.

Racially charged mass murder refers to those killings of a powerless group by the group who holds or wants to hold power (here, either Anglo citizens, state governments, or the United States federal government/ military).

<sup>2</sup> The United States has a long history of prejudice, racism, and institutionalized racism that are still prevalent today. Working definitions of prejudice include irrational thoughts regarding a group of people usually formed out of ignorance, fear, or learned ideas regarding a group of people. Racism refers to an ideology formed by a privileged group (in this case, Anglo Americans) that dictates attitudes or beliefs, policies, or initiatives to subject, subordinate, and repress a group by another group socially, politically, and economically. In America, Anglos have repressed people of color systematically for centuries. While some groups of people have earned “whiteness” or experienced less mistreatment over time, this has led to misinformation regarding non-Anglo groups, as well as stereotypes, which has led to rationalized or justified racism and maltreatment, as well as exclusion from political, social, and economic aspects of society. This allows one group to remain in power over another group, as the group in power perpetuates and replicates misinformation regarding the repressed group, which carries into social, economic, and political issues. In other words, racism becomes institutionalized, and ultimately a “normalized” aspect of society that the dominant group does not generally

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recognize or acknowledge). Many in turn perpetuate the institutionalized racism without recognizing or acknowledging it, or, worse, recognize it but are apathetic towards it.

<sup>3</sup> In *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* [NY: Routledge 1992], Mary Louise Pratt coined the term "contact zones," which she defined as "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination-like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (4). America is *still* a contact zone in every sense of Pratt's definition, especially regarding asymmetrical power relations. I would add to this by noting the strength of institutionalized racism, which is still a serious problem in America, even with laws designed to negate this issue.

<sup>4</sup> The original publication of Hab-Wa and Tong A-chick's piece *misspelled* A-chick's name as Long Achick, and the reprints of their letter continued the error. In the spirit of this dissertation, I will refer to Tong A-chick by his correct name. Whether the typographical error was a mistake or not, the misspelling of A-chick's name is yet another form of indirect silencing forced on minority figures by Anglo Americans, but at least his letters survive and have not been "removed" or bleached from the annals of Anglo dominant American "history."

<sup>5</sup> I do not wish to discredit the flourishing minority presses that existed at the time. Rather, this dissertation considers minority use of Anglo dominant presses to represent minority peoples who suffered racially charged mass murder, to alert the Anglo public as to what really happened, and to enact a form of survivance. There are several solid texts pertaining to non-Anglo newspapers. For example, see Nicolás Kanellos and Helvetia Martell's *Hispanic Periodicals in the United States, Origins to 1960 : a Brief History and*

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*Comprehensive Bibliography* [Houston, Tex. : Arte Público Press, 2000]. *Outsiders in the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century: Multicultural Perspectives*, edited by Frankie Hutton and Barbara Strauss Reid [Bowling Green: Bowling Green Univ. Popular Press, 1995]. Chinese Americans, African Americans, and Mexican Americans all had newspaper circulations, but my point in this dissertation is that to reach Anglo Americans, minority authors had to use Anglo dominated newspapers.

<sup>6</sup> After Day switched the format of the *New York Sun*, as Dary notes, James Gordon Bennett (founder of the *New York Herald*) and Horace Greeley (who established the *New York Tribune*) “followed suit” (66).

<sup>7</sup> Despite these problems, I would argue that this text is similar to Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in that it opened the eyes of readers to the issues African Americans faced at the hands of the Ku Klux Klan. However, just as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is an exceptionally problematic text in its portrayals of African Americans, *A Fool’s Errand* displays similar problems. With that noted, I would also argue that *A Fool’s Errand* disparages the Reconstruction and the governmental policies put forth just as much as it criticizes Southern behavior.

<sup>8</sup> In *The Commercialization of the News in the Nineteenth Century* (Madison, WI: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1992), Gerald J. Baldasty avers, “by 1900, sensational, mass-circulation newspapers dominated in New York City” (4).

<sup>9</sup> See Baldasty, pp. 36-37. Baldasty argues that a shift occurred in journalism after the Jeffersonian period, and that papers began shifting to politically neutral stances that relied more on a business and advertising format, but he admits, “The penny press was not entirely apolitical. [James Gordon] Bennett, founder and owner of *The New York*

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*Herald*] retained political opinions, supported Harrison in 1840 and Taylor in 1848.

When Horace Greeley established the *New York Tribune* in 1840, he did so as a spokesman for the Whigs” (48). Baldasty is quick to note that both of these men were not necessarily steadfast in their political support, though. He also cites Hearst’s *New York Journal* and its involvement with the 1897 mayoral election (7).

<sup>10</sup> The term “yellow journalism” did not appear until 1897, though the origin of the word is a disputed topic. Joseph Campbell argues Ervin Wardman coined the term in 1897, but Mark Winchester asserts that it appeared in 1898. See Mark Winchester, “‘Hully Gee, It’s a War!!!’ The Yellow Kid and the Coining of ‘Yellow Journalism,’” [*Inks, Cartoon and Comic Art Studies*, 2 (1995): 23-47], and Joseph Campbell, *Yellow Journalism: Puncturing the Myth, Defining the Legacies* [Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001].

<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, *The Leopard’s Spots* is Dixon’s own retelling of the events in Wilmington, North Carolina. Narrated from the Southern Anglo perspective, Dixon eliminated important historical events, including the coup d’état engineered by Wilmington Democrats. Dixon also justified the brutal violence against the African American community in his retelling by arguing African American aggression was the root cause.

<sup>12</sup> Chesnutt was familiar with Anglo attempts to disfranchise African Americans. Among other pieces, he read John L. Love’s pamphlet from The American Negro Academy Occasional Papers “The Disfranchisement of the Negro” (6 [1899]). See his October 21, 1899 letter to John L. Love where he laments that the information was “buried in a pamphlet” (Joseph McElrath and

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Robert C. Leitz III, *To be an Author: the Letters of Charles W. Chesnutt* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997], p. 135). Earlier that year, Chesnutt attempted to publish a piece in the *Century*, titled “The Negro’s Answer to the Negro Question,” but editor Richard Watson Gilder (1844-1909) rejected it. Chesnutt next submitted the essay to the *North American Review*, only to receive a similar reaction. See his letter to George Washington Cable from May 24, 1899, where he laments the rejection came with “the usual polite regrets” (*To be an Author* 40).

<sup>13</sup> A majority of nineteenth-century texts participate in the erasure of African Americans, especially when the topic covered involves lynching. Consider, for instance, Dreiser’s “Nigger Jeff” (*Ainslee’s*, 8 [November 1901], 366–75). Readers never learn what Jeff’s alleged crime is and never receive an African American viewpoint. Interestingly, Dreiser revised this story several times, according to Patricia D. Hopkins and Roark Mulligan in their article, “Lynching the Black Male Body in Theodore Dreiser’s ‘Nigger Jeff’: Did He ‘Get it all in’?” [*American Literary Realism* 45.3 (Spring 2013), pp. 229-247], and in each subsequent revision of the story, African American voice and presence is further erased. Not all Anglo writers depicted events this way, though some expressed feeling unsettled and angered by lynching. See for example, Twain’s “The United States of Lyncherdom,” which he wrote in 1901 as a reaction to a Missouri lynching and the newspaper coverage of it. However, the essay did not see publication until after Twain’s death, when Albert Bigelow Paine published it in *Europe and Elsewhere* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1923).

<sup>14</sup> The definition of lynching can be a complicated one, and scholars do not agree as to the word’s specific meaning. See, for instance, Ashraf H. A. Rushdy’s definition in

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*American Lynching* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012], where he notes the “political agendas behind the definition of the term” (5). Indeed, Jacqueline Goldsby’s assertion in *A Spectator Secret Lynching in American Life and Literature* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006] that “the history of lynching poses too great a burden for one word to carry” (282) is possibly the best conclusion. Commonly, definitions are complicated in that they elide groups of victims, or exclude types of lynching, involve law enforcers, or vigilante groups. Other times, definitions lack detail or even essentialize lynching into a single category. For example, in *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995], Robyn Wiegman offers an underexplored definition of lynching, defining it by arguing “lynching is about the law” (81). Certainly, there are times when authors presented lynching as being “about the law” (for a literary example of this, see Owen Wister’s *The Virginian* [1902] or Thomas Dixon’s and Thomas Nelson Page’s Reconstruction novels [both of which make problematic arguments regarding lynching as a legal issue, and both of which are racist to an extreme]). However, Wiegman’s definition in this piece (as do many other scholars’ definitions) fails to consider the myriad reasons cited as acceptable for lynching. Moreover, a definition such as this one reflects the dominant Anglo perspective of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. David Carrigan and Clive Webb also consider definitional issues regarding lynching in “The Lynching of Persons of Mexican Origin or Descent in the United States, 1848 to 1928” [*Journal of Social History* 37.2 (Winter 2003): 411-438]. While lynching involved all races in America, in this chapter, the issue of lynching is perhaps less complicated because it specifically focuses on the most frequently lynched group in America: African Americans. Jason W.



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Miller's breakdown of lynching into four categories is useful in considering definitions of lynching. For Miller, there are legal lynchings, which included informal, fast trials; mob lynchings, the result of an accusation; sensational lynchings which included large crowds and were advertised; and lynchings of "domestic terrorism," which he defines as the fear and intimidation set on the African American community by the Anglo population. See *Langston Hughes and American Lynching Culture* [Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011], p. 4. It is interesting to note that while Miller's classification of the various types of lynching that occurred in America, Chesnut's portrayals of Green and Barber (Alexander Manly) reflect all types of lynchings and sometimes blend Miller's specific definitions. It seems reasonable to conclude that Chesnut (and others) might generally agree with this breakdown of lynching into specific categories but that each "type" of lynching is not necessarily discrete. I would argue that Chesnut's inclusion of all four types of lynching is uncommon but is historically accurate, works to expose the horrors of lynching, and presents an attempt to show the perpetual, intense fear African Americans lived in.

<sup>15</sup> The threat of lynching was a constant for African Americans, especially from the late 1800s through the early twentieth century. For more on this, see Stewart Tolnay and E. M. Beck, *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), p. ix. The authors note that "on average a black man, woman or child was murdered nearly once a week, every week, in the South between 1882 and 1930" (ix). Reasons for lynching varied greatly, from "gambling" and "acting suspiciously," to "voting for [the] wrong party" (47), according to Tolnay and Beck. See especially pp. 46-48.

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<sup>16</sup> The “Secret Nine” include those involved in the orchestration of events and was named so by Harry Hayden—a white supremacist and Wilmington citizen who named these men the “Secret Nine” in celebration of their success. See Umfleet, *A Day of Blood: the 1898 Wilmington Race Riot* [Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2009]. For a detailed comparison of historical events and the events in the novel, see Sheila Smith McKoy, *When Whites Riot: Writing Race and Violence in American and South African Cultures* [Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin P, 2001], p. 63. See also, LaRae S Umfleet, *A Day of Blood: the 1898 Wilmington Race Riot* [Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2009].

<sup>17</sup> Chesnut’s May 24, 1899, letter to George Washington Cable expresses disdain for how newspapers perpetuated violence against African Americans. Chesnut wrote, “I see from the papers that the chapter of Southern outrages is not yet complete, but the work of intimidating voters and killing prominent negroes on trumped-up charges (the true character of which is not discovered until after the killing) still goes merrily on” (*To be an Author* 40).

<sup>18</sup> After *The Marrow of Tradition* saw publication, many reviewers expressed outrage and disbelief regarding Anglo behavior, ideals, and practices. Some accused Chesnut of being too blunt, harsh, or holding a grudge against Anglo Americans, including Howells. Chesnut inadvertently succeeded in upsetting Howells so greatly that their friendship ended shortly after the book’s publication. Beyond this, Houghton, Mifflin refused to publish *The Colonel’s Dream*, Chesnut’s next novel, though Doubleday, Page, & Co. issued the novel in 1905. Readers, however, expressed extreme alienation to the book and Chesnut’s literary career began to dissipate more rapidly.

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<sup>19</sup> Chesnutt tried to publish with Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. for quite some time with no luck. In November 1891, the publishers rejected a collection of short stories Chesnutt submitted, where the editors encouraged Chesnutt “to build a following of readers” (*To be an Author* 76-77). Years later, Chesnutt befriended Walter Hines Page, and when Hines became an adviser and editor for Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., Chesnutt’s fate changed—for a time. See especially, *To Be an Author*, pp. 100-101 and 102-104. Chesnutt later wrote Page on August 14, 1898, to thank him, noting, “Editors kindly send me marked copies of magazines & papers containing approving notices. I get compliments right & left...” (*To Be an Author* 112). Houghton, Mifflin, & Co. finally agreed to publish Chesnutt’s *Conjure Stories* in September that year (*To be an Author* 112).

<sup>20</sup> Though Chesnutt was born in 1858 as a “Free Man of Color,” he could pass for an Anglo. Gene Andrew Jarrett argues Chesnutt “was reluctant to disclose his racial identity at the outset of his career” (*Deans and Truants: Race and Realism in African American Literature* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007] p. 192-93).

<sup>21</sup> See “British Anti-Lynchers,” *New York Times*, 2 August 1895, p. 4, which referred to Wells as “a slanderous and nasty-minded mulattress.” This, of course, did not deter Wells from her powerful crusade against lynching. This does not mean Chesnutt did not face criticism, but it is important to note that Chesnutt’s race was not clearly known in the literary world until late in his career.

<sup>22</sup> Scholars regularly debate Chesnutt’s audience for *The Marrow of Tradition*. See William L. Andrews, “William Dean Howells and Charles W. Chesnutt: Criticism and Race Fiction in the Age of Booker T. Washington” [*American Literature* 48.3 (1976):

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327-339]. See also James Manchor, *Reading Fiction in Antebellum America: Informed Response and Reception, 1820-1865* [Baltimore, MD: John's Hopkins UP, 2011], and Ryan Simmons' *Chesnutt and Realism: a Study of the Novels* [Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2006]. Chesnutt himself struggled with the idea of audience, writing to Josh P. Green of the "difficult[ies]...[of] writ[ing] race problem books so that white people will read them" (*To Be an Author*, 156).

<sup>23</sup> There are debates regarding Chesnutt's role as a Realist that ultimately stem from Howells' reviews of Chesnutt's work. The issue is manifold, but several main issues seem to prevail. First, the portrayal of life Chesnutt presented to many readers was foreign. Daniel H. Borus notes a major tenet of Howells's idea of realism included "a unifying picture of common life" (*Writing Realism: Howells, James, and Norris in the Mass Market* [Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1989], p. 172), but Chesnutt's portrayal was not a life many readers could identify with. Secondly, the book's realism was too blunt for many readers, as it did not display and secondly, though the majority of scholars place Chesnutt as the "first" African American realist writer, some argue that his writing reflects that of a Romantic. See, for instance, Joe McElrath's "Why Charles W. Chesnutt is Not a Realist" (*American Literary Realism* 32.2 [Winter 2000], pp. 91-108). McElrath makes interesting points considering content and form to define the genre of American realism (using *Daisy Miller*, *The Rise of Silas Lapham* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware* as the basis of his argument), arguing, "The fact that a writer gives fictional treatment to real-world social problems...does not mean that he or she is a Realist" (93). However, Chesnutt based his presentation of events in historical fact, and the events that transpire, though dire and heated, reflect realism. One could argue this is not the realism

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of *Daisy Miller*, *The Rise of Silas Lapham* and *The Damnation of Theron Ware*, but the worlds of these works differ so greatly from each other that the argument seems moot. The worlds of the latter reflect white, middle-class life in the American North and Europe, while *The Marrow of Tradition* reflects the clash between races in the American South. These are vastly different regions and cultures with different focuses, populations, issues, and ideals. More than this, race and ethnicity are seminal topics within Realistic texts.

<sup>24</sup> On November 2, 1901, New York *Press* review that claimed the book was written “with a clear conception of the difficult problems which confront the South, and yet with decided opinions where justice and wisdom lie.... In its dramatic qualities, as well as in theme, it bears a decided likeness to ‘Uncle Tom's Cabin’” (7). The Newark *Sunday News* did not agree and averred, “[T]hose who...seek literary charm will probably be disappointed. Mr. Chesnutt’s novel is capital in point of construction, but is lacking in grace and distinction of style, as well as in vitality of character drawing or the deep emotional power which distinguishes Mrs. Stowe's great work” (“Mr. Chesnutt and the Negro Problem” 6). The idea of creating a book akin to Stowe’s is problematic today, but in Chesnutt’s time, it is an understandable desire: not only was Stowe’s work a “best seller” but it helped to bring awareness to the gross mistreatment of African Americans by Anglos. The other issue with this, of course, is that Stowe’s book is highly sentimental and romantic as well as racially problematic and paternalistic. However, Chesnutt wanted to write a realist piece that would sell as well as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and many reviewers regarded the book positively regardless of the issues that come with the text. On October 8, 1901, a week before *The Marrow of Tradition* was published,

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Chesnutt referred to it as “the best thing I have ever done” in a letter to Booker T.

Washington (*To be an Author* 158).

<sup>25</sup> A look at the use of the word Negro within this chapter will appear to be inconsistent on my part, but it is not. Some Anglo-dominant papers and published works, including *The Marrow of Tradition*, did not capitalize the word, though many argued it should be capitalized. In *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word* [New York: Pantheon Books, 2002], Randall Kennedy asserts, “Blacks furiously objected to *Negro* being spelled with a lower as opposed to an uppercase *N*” (114 original emphasis). Kennedy notes that even into the twentieth century this was an issue, and that finally, “on March 7, 1930, the *New York Times* announced that the paper would henceforth capitalize the *N* in *Negro*. The U.S. government office followed suit three years later. Within a decade, capitalization would become the rule at the Supreme Court as well” (114). I have preserved the lowercase use where it appears in texts but wish to note the problem so it draws attention to continual institutionalized racism that persists today in reprinted texts. While the word Negro is unfashionable today, reprints that do not acknowledge this issue inadvertently continue to degrade a people. I am indebted to Dr. Cindy Murillo for her recommendation of this text.

<sup>26</sup> Scholars continue to debate this topic. See William L. Andrews, *The Literary Career of Charles W. Chesnutt* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1980], as well as Ryan Simmons’ *Chesnutt and Realism: a Study of the Novels* [Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2006]. See also, James Manchor, *Reading Fiction in Antebellum America: Informed Response and Reception, 1820-1865* [Baltimore, MD: John’s Hopkins UP, 2011]. In *Reading for Realism* [Durham: Duke UP, 1997], Nancy Glazer neither mentions

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Chesnutt's name, nor his works. Finally, see Joe McElrath's "Why Charles W. Chesnutt is Not a Realist" (*American Literary Realism* 32.2 [Winter 2000], pp. 91-108).

<sup>27</sup> For more information on this, see Timothy Tyson's contribution to the *Raleigh News and Observer*, "The Ghosts of 1898," from November 17, 2006, section 1h. See also Helen G. Edmonds, who writes that the Secret Nine successfully created a single-party state of "Democratic election law, Democratic control of county governments, gerrymandering, intimidation, manipulation, and corruption" (14). This issue still exists today: until recently, textbooks printed misinformation regarding the actions at Wilmington, with very few acknowledging what really happened.

<sup>28</sup> Manly escaped the town and thus avoided being lynched—but the events reflect an example of a mixture of lynching types. The lynching of Manly was planned, but not directly advertised. Rather, it was encouraged through the reprinting of his editorial in a heavily edited, sensationalized version that notified people a lynching was on the horizon. See Miller, p. ix.

<sup>29</sup> Greatly outspoken, Felton's argument was not limited to this single event. For more on Felton's beliefs and ideas, see Eric Sundquist's introduction to *The Marrow of Tradition* [New York: Penguin, 2003], pp. xvii and xviii. In *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940* [Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 2009], Amy Louis Wood notes Christianity played an important factor in lynching: "Lynch mobs and their defenders," she writes, "envisioned themselves as Christian soldiers, battling the evil in their midst, much as evangelicals waged war against vice and moral transgression. In the hangings, shootings, mutilations, and burnings that far exceeded the social need to avenge a crime...lynch mobs re-creat[ed] divine judgment on earth" (65).

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<sup>30</sup> The mythical trope of the African American rapist of virginal Anglo women became especially popular in the Reconstruction novels of Thomas Dixon and Thomas Nelson Page but also was especially popular in numerous short stories and novels in the late nineteenth-century. This trope continued well into the twentieth century in various media forms and persists today in several forms.

<sup>31</sup> The *Morning Chronicle* is not italicized in the Chesnutt's text. I have preserved this in quotations referring to the newspaper, but have italicized the name of the fictional paper outside of quotations involving it.

<sup>32</sup> In the past, scholars have identified Carteret mostly with Daniels, but if we consider that there were none people involved in the movement to rig the election, it seems reasonable to condense three men into one. It also allows Chesnutt to have more freedom in reconstructing the characters and their movements, judgments, and so on.

<sup>33</sup> The county's Democratic Party consisted of George Rountree, Edgar Parmele, Walker Taylor, and Frank Stedman. Rountree also was a member of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce.

<sup>34</sup> Clawson, among many others, also was a member of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, which was directly involved in the campaign for white supremacy.

<sup>35</sup> Another reaction to Manly's article includes Senator Ben Tillman's, who asked North Carolinians on October 22, 1898, "Why didn't you kill that nigger editor [Manly] who wrote that?" See the Fayetteville, North Carolina's paper, *The Observer*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>36</sup> This is not unlike the issue Ida B. Wells speaks of in *Southern Horrors* where she acknowledged that African American newspapers often "lacked the means to employ



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agents and detectives to get at the facts” (70), which unfortunately left African Americans without the same representation they might have had otherwise.

<sup>37</sup> Joyce Pettis shows that Chesnutt based “at least two” (42) of his African American characters on men from Wilmington: Miller and Josh Green. For more discussion on prominent African American men in Wilmington, see Helen Edmonds, *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina: 1894-1901* [Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 1951]. See also Umfleet, who offers a possible identity of Watson: William E. Henderson, “an African American attorney” (136), known for being outspoken.

<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, in 1902, just after *The Marrow of Tradition* was published, then President Theodore Roosevelt appointed an African American port collector in Charleston, South Carolina, named William Demos Crum (1859-1912). However, the appointment caused such protest that Crum did not receive confirmation from the Senate until 1905 for the position. In “Theodore Roosevelt and the South,” Henry F. Pringle notes, “The storm of protest over Dr. Crum was almost as violent as that which came after the Washington dinner [with Booker T. Washington]. Roosevelt made it worse by openly defending his action, by declaring that he would do everything in his power to force confirmation of Dr. Crum by a reluctant Senate. [Roosevelt said] ‘I cannot consent,” he said, “to take the position that the door of hope, the door of opportunity, is to be shut upon any man no matter how worthy, purely upon the grounds of race and color”” (*Virginia Quarterly Review* [9.1] p. 23).

<sup>39</sup> According to William Gleason in his essay, “Voices at the Nadir: Charles Chesnutt and David Bryant Fulton,” (*American Literary Realism* 24.3 [1992]: 22-41) “Waddell’s white, Democratic interpretation of the riot stood unchallenged by American historians

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until the 1954 publication of Helen G. Edmonds' *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina, 1894-1901*" (23). I would add that this issue continued, though: See Timothy Tyson's contribution to the *Raleigh News and Observer*, "The Ghosts of 1898," from 17 November 2006, section 1h.

<sup>40</sup> In 1921, the 1890 census suffered partial damage due to a fire. For more on this, see Kellee Blake, "'First in the Path of the Firemen: The Fate of the 1890 Population Census,'" *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives*, 28.1 (Spring 1996): pp. 64-81.

<sup>41</sup> For a good visual representation of how reservations suffered land loss, see William S. Coleman, *Voices of Wounded Knee* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 11. Coleman's illustration includes maps of the Great Sioux reservation's lands from the original reservation creation in 1858 to the 1889 agreement. The agreement divided the large area into six smaller reservations in this last agreement, which became the Standing Rock Reservation, the Cheyenne River Reservation, the Lower Brule Reservation, the Crow Creek Reservation, the Pine Ridge Reservation, and the Rosebud Reservation. Carlson notes "the Sioux were pressured by federal agents to accept the treaty" (11). Carlson also quotes Commissioner Thomas Morgan who argued "a grand total of 17,400,000 acres" was gained from the Dawes Act, and that while the amount "might seem like a...rapid reduction of land...the land relinquished was not being used for any purpose whatsoever...[and] the Indians did not need it and would not likely need it" (11).

<sup>42</sup> Muscogee is sometimes spelled Muskogee; technically, the two are interchangeable. For the sake of ease, I have maintained the spellings scholar use, but when referring to the Creek/Muscogee myself, I will use the spelling of Muscogee with the letter c.

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<sup>43</sup> For more information on Callahan's life and experiences in Muskogee, Oklahoma, see Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "S. Alice Callahan: Author of *Wynema, A Child of the Forest*" [*Chronicles of Oklahoma* 33 (1955)]: 306-315.

<sup>44</sup> It is unlikely readers would reject the book when considering that very few would have recognized Callahan's problematic portrayal of the Creek/Muscogee and the Lakota in the 1890s. I would argue that Callahan's bizarre inclusion of the Creek/Muscogee in teepees as an example: The stereotype for many was one that would have essentialized *all* Native American groups as living in teepees and would not have acknowledged differing cultural practices, ways of living, or even languages in some instances.

<sup>45</sup> There are countless nineteenth century and early twentieth century texts that depict women in this way. The most popular perhaps include Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), where Hester Prynne is relegated back into domesticity permanently. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) works to show the ideal woman through the characters of Emily Shelby, but also the more typical Anglo woman through Miss Ophelia, who finds slavery repugnant but is still discriminatory towards African Americans. In John De Forest's *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* (1867), De Forest initially presents Miss Ravenel as a shallow, racist, unworldly woman, but she becomes educated and changes her ways. William Dean Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) presents northern Anglo women who detest slavery but unknowingly participate in institutionalized racism. Later Thomas Nelson Page's *Red Rock* (1898), Charles Chesnutt's *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), Thomas Dixon's *The Leopard's Spots: A Romance of the White Man's Burden* (1902), and Charles Chesnutt's *The Colonel's Dream* (1905) would all portray Southern Anglo

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women as True Women who neither left the prisons of their homes nor challenged their husbands or conveyed thoughts of their own (or thoughts other than their husband's). Conversely, women who *did* challenge these ideals faced punishment frequently—usually death: James' Daisy Miller also dies because she challenges social norms in "Daisy Miller" (1878). Maggie is brutally murdered in Crane's *Maggie: a Girl of the Streets* (1893); Wharton's Mattie Silver suffers permanent paralysis, and even Kate Chopin's character Edna suffers a fate that remains unclear: death or the return to a stifling life controlled by men where she is neither free nor happy. Too, countless literary magazines were dedicated to reifying this system. See Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, 18.2 Part 1 (Summer 1966): 151-174.

<sup>46</sup> I would argue this is yet another of the text's problems, as women are educated by men in the book, even though they are sometimes proto-feminist in their beliefs. Genevieve's refusal to marry her longtime suitor, Maurice, best displays this: she refuses to marry him because his ideas reveal he is an "old fogey" (Ruoff 48). If Genevieve had not lived, or had succumbed to Maurice's desires to be a proper Southern woman, we perhaps could classify the book as a female bildungsroman. Even considering how Genevieve is "shaped" or "molded" into proper behavior and thought by Keithly could lend itself to this classification, as Genevieve does not grow into her own woman but instead into the woman Keithly desires her to be. This is suggestive of Annis Pratt's definition of a female bildungsroman where women "grow down" instead of "grow up" as their male counterparts do. See *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981): 14.

<sup>47</sup> All references to text from *Wynema* refer to Ruoff's publication.

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<sup>48</sup> Hadjo's piece may have been written in response to an overtly racist and biased editorial that appeared on November 3, 1890 in the *Chicago Tribune*. In the anonymously written piece, the writer refers to Native Americans as "marauding savages" and argues, "[I]f the army had charge of the Indians as common sense and common prudence demand, Sitting Bull would be shut up very shortly" (7).

<sup>49</sup> Though a Kiowa, and not a Lakota, Old Lady Horse's story regarding the decimation of the Buffalo is important in understanding the devastation more completely, and from a Native perspective. "Everything the Kiowas had came [sic] from the buffalo. Their tipis were made of buffalo hides, so were their clothes and moccasins. They ate buffalo meat. Their containers were made of hide, or of bladders or stomachs. The Buffalo were the life of the Kiowas. Most of all, the buffalo was part of the Kiowa religion." See *Native American Testimony*, ed. Peter Nabakov (NY: Penguin, 1991), pp. 174-75.

<sup>50</sup> For an in-depth discussion on this, see William S. E. Coleman, *Voices of Wounded Knee* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000). See also, Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (xxx: Holt, 1970), pp. 415-438.

<sup>51</sup> For more on this, see Richard E. Jensen, R. Eli Paul, John E. Carter, and James Austin Hanson, *Eyewitness at Wounded Knee* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press) 1991.

<sup>52</sup> In *The Lakota Ghost Dance of 1890*, Rani-Henrik Andersson describes James W. Finley as a "local entrepreneur and postmaster" who ran the local hotel where the majority of the Pine Ridge reservation reporters stayed. Andersson notes the reporters gathered "in the evenings to discuss the day's events and to compare notes" [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008] p. 193.

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<sup>53</sup> Ironically, *The New York World* was one of the original “yellow” or sensational newspapers.

<sup>54</sup> This newspaper has an interesting history: It originally was edited by B. H. Stone, who was later murdered by the famous editor of the Cherokee paper *The Cherokee Advocate*, E. C. Boudinot, over political disagreement. Carolyn Thomas Foreman notes that the two competitors “became very antagonistic and Boudinot finally shot Stone in his office on October 1, 1887. Stone died... and Boudinot pleaded self-defense when charges were filed against him. The trial was delayed and Boudinot died before the case came to court,” (S. Alice Callahan: Author of *Wynema, A Child of the Forest*” [*Chronicles of Oklahoma* 33 (1955)] pp. 306-316). For more on Boudinot, see Barbara F. Luebke’s article, “Elias Boudinot and ‘Indian Removal’” in *Outsiders in 19th-Century Press History: Multicultural Perspectives*, ed. Frankie Hutton and Barbara Straus Reed [Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1995], pp. 115-145.

<sup>55</sup> While the piece Callahan cites here was written by Masse-Hadjo, who also went by the name John Daylight, Callahan’s choice of Wynema’s father’s name Choe *Hadjo* remains unclear. Though both characters read as logical, level-headed, and strongly opinionated, the historical Hadjo’s editorial presents him as frustrated and even angry at the Anglo public while Choe works in harmony with Anglos. Perhaps Callahan wanted Choe Hadjo to be the remodeled, well-behaving Christian Masse Hadjo could not be.

<sup>56</sup> Valentine McGilicuddy (1849-1939) had been an Indian Agent for the Lakota since 1879; though many praised him as progressive and friendly towards Native Americans, McGilicuddy helped assure their destruction economically, and participated in the ration system that led so many Lakota to starve.

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<sup>57</sup> For a more complete list of those involved, see pp. 208-10 of Watson's article. For Moorehead's contribution to the Ghost Dance, see "Ghost-Dances in the West," in *The Illustrated American*, 17 January 1891, p. 327. Interestingly, Moorehead's visit to Pine Ridge in the fall of 1890 led him to "witness one of the [Ghost] dances" (qtd. in Allen 261).

<sup>58</sup> Daniel M. Voorhees was the Democratic senator from Indiana from 1877-97. For an in-depth look at how Voorhees sought to help the Lakota, see William S. Coleman, *Voices of Wounded Knee* [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000].

<sup>59</sup> See James W. Parins, *John Rollin Ridge: His Life and Works* [Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004] pp. 62-69.

<sup>60</sup> Alonzo Delano (1806-1874), whose pen name was "Old Block," was a famous American writer. He arrived in California during the Gold Rush and also was a merchant / banker. Not much information is available about Joseph Grant, but reading Delano's letters reveals the two maintained correspondence. See *Alonzo Delano's California correspondence: being letters hitherto uncollected from the Ottawa (Illinois) Free trader and the New Orleans True delta, 1849-1952* [Sacramento, CA: Sacramento Book Collectors Club, 1952.]

<sup>61</sup> There is not much information available about Rollin Dagget and J. Macdonough Foard; however, all available sources paint the two as avid entrepreneurs. One can read about them briefly in Lannie Haynes Martin's piece, "The Literature of California," in *Out West*, 35-36 (1911), 62. Parins notes the two as well (p. 76), and James Caron briefly

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mentions the two in *Mark Twain: Unsacred Newspaper Reporter* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), p. 218.

<sup>62</sup> Horace Greeley (1811- 1872) founded the New York *Tribune* and was an avid abolitionist and political reformer. For more on Greeley's life and works, see Coy F. Cross II, *Go West Young Man* [Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995].

<sup>63</sup> See Shelley Streeby, "Joaquín Murieta and the American 1848." In *Post-National American Studies*, ed. John Carlos Rowe. [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000]: pp. 166-199.

<sup>64</sup> For details on the republication of *Joaquín Murieta* in 1871, see Parins, p. 107.

<sup>65</sup> The list here goes on, and though I have not specifically cited the following scholars and their work, they at least should be noted. See also Josiah Royce, *California From the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948); Charles H. Shinn's *Mining Camps: a Study in American Frontier Government* (New York: Knopf, 1948); Leonard Pitt's "The Beginnings of Nativism in California," in *The Pacific Historical Review* (30.1 [1961], pp. 23-38).

<sup>66</sup> The same accusations would be made against Chinese immigrants who came to America and settled. Chapter 4 will focus on their experiences in California.

<sup>67</sup> Parins (and many others) lists the five Joaquín's as Murieta (or Murrieta or Murietta), Valenzuela, Carillo, Ocomorenia (spelled by Ridge as O'Comorenia, and Botellier (or Botilleras)" (98). Several scholars takes their work from Ridge as well as from newspaper accounts of various Joaquíns. For detailed information on this, see Shelly



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“Joaquín Murieta and the American 1848,” in *Post-Nationalist American Studies*, ed. John Carlos Rowe (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 166-99.

<sup>68</sup> I have maintained the spelling of Joaquín without the accent here, in an attempt to preserve the newspaper’s printing of the article. I will do so when necessary for the rest of this essay. The same format will be used for the misspelling of Joaquín’s last name as Murrieta. However, when not reserving spelling errors, I will spell Murieta with one *r*.

<sup>69</sup> Harte’s portrayals of Chinese Americans are sometimes positive: he writes positively of the Chinese population in many instances, and yet refers to the Chinese as a religiously questionable group. See Gary Scharnhorst, *Bret Harte’s California*, [Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1990], pp. 113-115. According to Harte, the Chinese “pray to the devil and buy [their] wi[ves]” and argues they have “an absurd system of moral philosophy” but that “his vices are not obtrusive...and affect no one but himself...he is amiable and patient, civil and decorous” (114-115). See also William F. Wu, *The Yellow Peril: Chinese Americans in American Fiction, 1850-1940* (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1982), pp. 13-17.

<sup>70</sup> John McDougal (ca. 1818-1866) initially served as California’s first lieutenant governor from 1849-1851. He was elected California’s second governor in 1851 and served until 1852.

<sup>71</sup> In *When I was a Boy in China* was published, one of the first things Yan Phou Lee tells readers is how he was named: He writes, “I started with the surname ‘Lee’ which my family and clan possess in common and to that, ‘Yan Phou’ which signifies ‘wealth by Imperial Favor,’ was added—Lee Yan Phou. But now I arrange my name in accordance with American custom” (9). An indirect form of silence, Lee Yan Phou’s name change

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reflects a form of naming (or renaming) that non-Anglos in America faced regularly. In the spirit of this dissertation, and in the spirit of allowing voice and presence, I will refer to Yan Phou Lee by his given Chinese name, not the Americanized version he succumbed to being called.

<sup>72</sup> The *Alta California* suddenly became anti-Chinese in its sentiments after a change in editors. See Mary Roberts Coolidge's *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), p. 58.

<sup>73</sup> Chinese Americans already had a sizeable presence via newspapers, though these papers were written in Chinese and therefore were limited in audience. In the 1880s, Lee Yan Phou and Yung Wing published memoirs, and in 1903 Huie Kin published *Reminiscences*, autobiographical pieces meant to portray the Chinese in a positive light while recalling their lives in China, their arrival in the United States, and how they were (mis)treated as Chinese Americans.

<sup>74</sup> Citations for this piece will come from the reprint of the article in *Littell's Living Age*.

<sup>75</sup> The idea of the Chinese coolie is not Bigler's alone and was prevalent in Anglo American literature about Chinese Americans. According to William F. Wu, "the prevailing stereotype of the Chinese...at this time was that of a 'coolie,' or unskilled laborer" (*The Yellow Peril: Chinese Americans in American Fiction, 1850-1940* [Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1982], p. 13).

<sup>76</sup> In 1844, the first American commissioner to China, Caleb Cushing, worked to negotiate the Treaty of Wang Hya in 1844. This treaty gave United States the same privileges and allowances Britain had with China.

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<sup>77</sup> It is uncertain whether Chew refers here to the Tientsin Treaty of 1858 or to the Burlingame Treaty of 1868, as he provides no dates for his birth or arrival in America. However, it seems fitting that Chew would recall tales of Americans being “false,” in the wake of the *Herald's* article. The Burlingame Treaty ratified the Tientsin Treaty.

<sup>78</sup> In 1885, a method known as the Eureka Method would quietly undermine this decision. I will discuss this later in the chapter.

<sup>79</sup> Pun Chi's appeal to Congress, “We Chinese Are Viewed Like Thieves and Enemies” (1860) was written in Chinese, and so this dissertation will consider it only briefly here. William Speer, a missionary and Christian minister in San Francisco's Chinatown, translated Chi's work and published it in 1870; it is especially significant in the Chinese fight for rights in America. Set up much like a legal treatise, Chi is explicit in his descriptions of Chinese American mistreatment, from harassment to unacknowledged crimes against the Chinese.

<sup>80</sup> Speer's successor at the San Francisco mission became a lobbyist for the Chinese, but nothing concrete seems to have developed from the Reverend A. W. Loomis' work.

<sup>81</sup> See, for instance, the pamphlet prepared by California State Senate Committee, “An Address to the People of the United States Upon the Evils of Chinese Immigration” in 1877. This pamphlet claimed the Chinese were sojourners, criminals, pagans, prostitutes, etc. The pamphlet includes “testimony” from Anglo Californians. Perhaps the most interesting arguments in this pamphlet include a state's rights argument (34-35) and an argument that with Chinese immigration, Christianity was not being “advanced” (35-41) and the call that Chinese immigration represented a “dangerous unarmed invasion of [American/ Californian] soil” (48).

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<sup>82</sup> In 1914, Jack London wrote a short story responding to this fear in an extreme manner. “An Unparalleled Invasion” [New York: Macmillan, 1914], pp. 71-100, tells the imagined results of “the culmination” of problems “between the world and China,” though the tale is more about American vengeance through biological warfare that other countries willingly participate in. In this story, nativism and racism lead a scientist, Jacobus Laningdale, to develop the ultimate weapon: a combination of the deadliest viruses that exterminate the Chinese population via multiple plagues. Ambrose Bierce also published on this theme: in the short piece, “A Radical Parallel” [in *The Collected Works of Ambrose Bierce* (New York: Neale Publishing Company, 1911), VI, 212-13, a group of Anglo Americans “engaged in driving Chinese Heathens out of an American town” come upon a Chinese newspaper. When they demand it be translated, they learn of an “appeal to the people of the province of Pang Ki to drive the foreign devils out of the country and burn their dwellings and churches” so the Anglos decide to “carr[y] out their original design” (212-213). Both pieces reveal an acute level of Sinophobia.

<sup>83</sup> For an in depth, exhaustive study on literature written by Anglo Americans about Chinese Americans in the latter half of the century, see William F. Wu, *The Yellow Peril: Chinese Americans in American Fiction, 1850-1940* [Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1982], pp. 30-127.

<sup>84</sup> Harte’s later short story, “Three Vagabonds of Trinidad” (1901) displays this exact problem in American literature: A Chinese American man named Li Tee is driven out of “civilization” into a forest and takes up with a Native American man and dog—and then, shortly after, all die. Li Tee starves, and the Native American man and his dog are shot by Anglo hunters.

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<sup>85</sup> Upon arrival in America, the Irish experienced horrific racism—especially the Irish who were Catholic. Even in Ireland, Irish Catholics faced gross mistreatment. Though it is ironic, the Irish “earned” whiteness and subsequently became a part of what Noel Ignatiev identifies as the “oppressing race in America” (2). See *How the Irish Became White* [New York: Routledge. 1995].

<sup>86</sup> The page numbers will correspond with the book. It is interesting to note that Ambrose Bierce was the founding editor for this San Francisco newspaper in 1877, and Jerome A. Hart edited it during the period these letters were written.

<sup>87</sup> See Winfield J. Davis’ *History of Political Conventions in California, 1849-1892* (Sacramento: California State Library, 1893).

<sup>88</sup> Hab-Wa, Tong A-chick, Norman Asing, Lee Chew, and Lee Yan Phou were Christians. Lee Yan Phou notes the myth of non-Christian Chinese Americans in “The Chinese Must Stay,” where he avers “more than 500 have been admitted to the church” (481) despite “doubtful inducements” where he quotes Henry Ward Beecher as claiming, “We have clubbed them, stoned them, burned their houses, and murdered some of them; yet they refuse to be converted” (qtd. in Lee 481). Lee further quotes Beecher as saying, “I don’t know any way [to convert them] except to blow them up with nitroglycerine [sic], if we are ever to get them to heaven” (481).

<sup>89</sup> Leland Stanford (1824-1893), one of the Big Four, along with Collis P. Huntington, Mark Hopkins and, Charles Crocker, owned the Southern Pacific Railroad. The Big Four also owned the Central Pacific Railroad, the nation’s first transcontinental railroad. Several railroad strikes occurred over the years, including the Great Railroad Strike of

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1877, the Union Pacific Strike of 1884, and the Great Railway Strike of 1894, all of which occurred over wages.

<sup>90</sup> At the same time literature by Anglo Americans regarding Chinese Americans and the “Chinese Question” began to be popular, a rise in speeches published as editorials by Anglo Americans were published in newspapers throughout the nation in response to Denis Kearney’s editorial. In B. E. G. Jewett’s editorial, “To the editor,” from the *Detroit Socialist*, on May 4, 1878, Jewett declared, “The Chinaman coming here of his own accord and at his own expense of accumulated earnings, has as much right here as you or I or any German, Russ, Switzer, Frank, Turk, Pole, Irish or Ethiopian in the land; and true Socialism demands that as air, land and water are eternally free to the whole race who *wish to live*, they shall NOT be debarred their privilege.” In an anonymous editorial from the *Labor Standard* on June 30, 1878, under the headline, “The Chinese Must Go,” the writer argues “The cry that the ‘Chinese must go’ is both narrow and unjust. It represents no broad or universal principle. It is merely a repetition of the cry that was raised years ago by Native Americans against the immigration of Irishmen, Englishmen, Germans and others from European nations. It now ill becomes those, or the descendants of those, against whom this cry was raised in past years, to raise a similar tocsin [sic] against a class of foreigners who have been degraded by ages of oppression.”

<sup>91</sup> On an interesting side note, Lee Yan Phou addresses a topic still debated in the United States. Phou writes, “I am indignant that there should be a popular belief in America that Chinese girls at their birth are generally put to death because they are not wanted by their parents. Nothing can be further from the truth.... [I]nfanticide is as rare in China as it is in this country” (43). He notes that sometimes female children do not prosper when born

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into poverty but strongly asserts they are not killed because of their gender; rather, he says, “The same ceremonies of christening are observed with girl babies” (44). Lee Yan Phou even declares the practice of binding noble women’s feet to be “torture” for the sake of being “fashionable” (47) and showed it was a practice only among the upper class, not working class, and therefore a miniscule amount of the population in China.

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